

**Question for written answer E-007701/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Therese Comodini Cachia (PPE)

Subject: Potential illegal use of slurry in agricultural practice in Malta

Several media reports in Malta have indicated that untreated slurry is being used on fields by farmers and that this may lead to food-borne infections. This is creating a major health risk. Experts in Malta are flagging this concern, and pointing out that this practice could potentially lead to bacterial and viral infections in human beings.

Given that this raises a serious public health concern in a Member State, that those flagging this concern have indicated that washing the produce would not necessarily eliminate the risks, and that reports of use of slurry from animal farms by some farms as fertiliser have not been challenged:

Does the Commission deem it necessary to investigate the health and environmental risks emanating from such a practice which, prima facie, seems to go against the Nitrates Directive 91/676/EEC, which aims to prevent nitrates from agricultural sources polluting ground and surface waters by promoting the use of good farming practices?