

**Question for written answer E-009063/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Lorenzo Fontana (NI)

Subject: Actions to support apple growers in the north of Italy

Italy is Europe's second largest apple producer, according to statistics from 2013 and forecasts for 2014, and is committed to providing consumers with quality produce, with its northern regions being particularly fertile.

However, the current geopolitical climate is causing serious problems for growers in this sector, due in large part to the present embargo which is blocking exports of quality produce to the core market of Russia.

In addition to the factors highlighted above, the importing of apples from countries outside the EU means that competition is stronger now than in previous years.

Taking the above into consideration, can the Commission please answer the following questions:

1. Does it have any up-to-date statistics to hand that would make it possible to assess the impact these sanctions are having on the quality apple market?
2. Is it working with the relevant Italian authorities in assessing the issue?
3. Does it believe that adequate appropriations have been put aside, and is it contemplating further support measures to help apple growers in the areas mentioned above?