

**Question for written answer E-009938/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Potato market

The EU is a major player in world potato production. It is self-sufficient in the sector, which has increased its export quota by 75 % in the last 10 years.

Potatoes are the most widely-consumed vegetable in Europe and play an important role in the diet of European families.

As a result of increased production and an unfavourable international situation which has been exacerbated by the Russian embargo, farm-gate potato prices have slumped dramatically, reaching EUR 0.05 a kilo in Portugal.

It is worth noting that this increase in production is due to a 3 % increase in the area cultivated in the five EU countries which account for over half of Europe's potato production: Germany, France, Belgium, the UK and the Netherlands.

What type of measures does the Commission intend to introduce to regulate this market, in order to prevent price volatility from bankrupting thousands of small-scale farmers? Is it not time to create a COM for potatoes, particularly in view of the fact that a COM already exists for potato starch?