

**Question for written answer E-011103/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Energy contracts and the cost of energy consumption

Certain agricultural holdings, in common with other sectors and indeed members of the public, have production processes that need to use energy more intensively and have higher consumption at certain times of year. This is the case of irrigation systems, which operate only in given months, when they require high power and their consumption is high. Producers find themselves obliged to sign up for the maximum power capacity that they need at these times for the whole year, despite the fact that for the rest of the year they will not use it at all, or very little of it. In addition, as a result of the Spanish regulatory framework, the amount they must pay has substantially increased since the tariff for the fixed capacity component of electricity bills was raised and the tariff for the energy consumed was lowered¹. One way in which consumers might cut costs is to sign up to a contract and then cancel it at the end of the minimum term, but that is not viable since to do so is financially penalised.

In the light of the foregoing, does the Commission consider that priority should be given to the need for electricity contracts that are flexible over the course of the year, and that it should be possible for contracts to be tailored to the needs of consumers, thereby generating a positive impact on the competitiveness of agricultural holdings located in Catalonia and in the rest of Spain?

¹ <http://www.coag.org/?s=2&id=7c3f1f3791e6182e7774589e2bf51f3d>