

**Question for written answer E-008719/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Organic farm contamination - integrated production in South Tyrol

About 95 % of fruit-producing farmers in South Tyrol (Italy) participate in an integrated production (IP) programme. The IP programme in South-Tyrol is called Agrios (Arbeitsgruppe für den Integrierten Obstanbau in Südtirol).

The programme requires participating farmer to meet certain requirements in order to be eligible for direct or indirect financial support from the EU agriculture budget.

According to the Agrios guidelines¹, “in compliance with ecological, economic and toxicity principles, the use of chemical-synthetic substances should be reduced to a minimum [in order to achieve] the best possible protection for human health and the environment”.

In product tests conducted by organic farmers neighbouring on conventional farms, the residual values of chemical-synthetic substances exceed the quantities allowed even for conventional farming. Ultimately, crops harvested in affected organic farms cannot be sold, whether as organically or conventionally grown produce, leading to a loss of revenue for organic farmers. Daily monitoring by organic farmers neighbouring on conventional farms suggests that while the production of many Agrios-certified farmers is not in line with the abovementioned principles, they are nonetheless benefitting from the financial support.

1. Can the Commission clarify the procedure to halt financial support to farmers participating in the Agrios programme when the guidelines are not respected?
2. Can the Commission provide financial support for organic farmers damaged by the misapplication of guidelines by conventional farmers?

¹ http://www.agrios.it/doc/agrios_richtlinien_2015.pdf.