

**Question for written answer E-005231/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Estefanía Torres Martínez (GUE/NGL) and Lola Sánchez Caldentey (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Duck minimum weight

Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008 established that 300g for ducks and 400g for geese are the minimum weights for the livers used in foie gras production in order for the product to be called 'foie gras'. Products in which lighter liver weights are used must be marketed under different names.

In reality, liver weights such as these can only be obtained through force-feeding, which undermines the possibility for farmers to adopt better welfare production methods (i.e. gavage-free methods), because they would lose market share.

If minimum weights are an indispensable element of the Regulation, they should be set at levels that can be reached without force-feeding.

Is the Commission in possession of reliable information with regard to how liver weights are presently attained in ducks and geese by EU producers that do not use force-feeding?

If this information is not available, does the Commission not think that it should be actively sought through contacts with farmers and competent authorities in the Member States in order to amend the current minimum weights given in Commission Regulation (EC) No 543/2008?

If this information cannot be made available, should minimum weights not be completely removed from the Regulation?