

**Question for written answer E-005545/2016
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Norbert Erdős (PPE)

Subject: Maximum limit value for chlormequat and interests of mushroom producers

The Commission proposal of 7 March 2016 on the maximum limit value for chlormequat recommends significantly reducing the maximum residue level applicable to mushrooms from 10 mg/kg at present to 0.06 and 0.15 mg/kg.

Chlormequat is a stalk-thickening substance widely used in cereal production. Its use is widespread principally in colder regions with higher precipitation. The primary product of cereal production, grain, and its secondary product, straw, contain residues of the substance, as this does not degrade either with heat treatment or with long-term storage.

Owing to the specific technology of mushroom production, it is not possible to reduce the residue levels. The growing medium for mushrooms is compost, which may be produced by a complex chemical and microbiological process from cereal straw, horse manure and poultry manure, and by tissue transfer using the mushroom mycelium. In this process, as the main basic materials may contain residues of the substance, this is directly transferred to the mushroom tissue. If the more stringent limit values are adopted, mushroom producers would have to comply with tighter limit values than cereal producers, which would result in very serious problems with obtaining straw and horse manure.

1. What does the Commission recommend with a view to restoring the situation of mushroom producers?
2. How does the Commission intend to reduce the additional control and inspection costs for mushroom producers entailed by obtaining chemical-free straw?
3. In the Commission's view does chlormequat have any impact on human health, and if so, what precisely is this effect?