

**Question for written answer E-008681/2016
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Why does the Commission want pesticides in organic products?

The Commission is currently preparing a review of European policy on organic farming. In particular, it proposes to introduce thresholds for unauthorised substances – pesticides and GMOs – above which an organic product will automatically lose its organic certification.

Pesticide residues can currently be found in 15% of organic products. But they do not result from fraud by farmers, which continues to be very infrequent. They are the result of adventitious contamination, mostly in the fields, or during the various stages in production: transport, packaging and distribution.

Is the Commission aware that by taking the action it intends it will doubly penalise organic farmers who fall victim to contamination by downgrading their entire harvest, even though they were not responsible for such contamination?

Other means must be found for guaranteeing the quality of organic labels.

Why is the Commission not proposing instead to combat the pervasiveness of pesticides present in conventional agriculture, which makes it impossible for an organic farmer to protect himself fully against pesticide use by his neighbours?