

**Question for written answer E-008709/2016
to the Council**

Rule 130

Daciana Octavia Sârbu (S&D) and Pavel Poc (S&D)

Subject: Dual-quality foodstuffs

Recent press reports have again brought to light the issue of dual-quality foodstuffs, whereby foods sold in identical or similar packaging vary in their composition depending on where they are sold. Brand-name foodstuffs have been found to contain different ingredients in different Member States. Foods which consumers may assume to be identical can vary in composition and in the quality of their ingredients¹.

There is a concern that consumers are being misled when brand-name foodstuffs, packaged by global brands using internationally recognised logos, vary in content and quality. There could be potential health implications.

There are effectively double standards in food quality in the EU, which appear to be characterised by an East-West divide. Previous suggestions that using lower quality ingredients can provide cheaper products have been called into question; a 2015 study found examples of higher prices being charged for products with lower-quality ingredients².

1. Does the Council consider double standards in food quality within the EU to be acceptable?
2. Does the Council accept that such varied food quality may increase health inequalities in the EU?
3. Will the Council take steps to address this situation and to ensure that brand-name foods contain the same ingredients, of the same quality, throughout the EU?

¹ <http://www.politico.eu/article/a-snack-by-any-other-name-varying-food-standards-irk-new-eu-countries/>.

² <http://www.sehnalova.cz/soubory/rozdily-potravin/Prezentace.pdf>.