

**Question for written answer E-005105/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Sotirios Zarianopoulos (NI)

Subject: Compensation for EU peach growers

Peach growers in Greece (especially in the prefectures of Pella, Imathia and Larisa) are in a desperate situation as a result of losses caused by heatwaves and heavy rain, but mainly because of EU sanctions against Russia, which was purchasing around 80 % of the crop prior the resulting embargo. Over 20 000 tonnes of peaches are now rotting in refrigerators. As cultivation continues, prices have tumbled to levels below production costs, with one kilogramme of peaches commanding a miserly 15 cents from wholesalers and industrial processors.

Despite the stiff insurance premiums paid by growers, the ELGA is failing to meet the losses in full because of public funding cuts.

In the meantime, production costs have risen as a result of a sharp increase in taxes and ELGA and IACS insurance contributions, in line with the memorandums endorsed by the EU and successive governments. As a result, growers are effectively being forced to part with their land.

Although the EU and Member State governments are responsible for the embargo on farm produce, they are now refusing to compensate growers. A mere fraction of the crop (6 500 tonnes) is being channelled into 'food aid', while 200 000 tonnes of table peaches have been produced in Imathia alone.

In view of this:

- Will the Commission take action to ensure that growers receive prompt and fair damages for the effects of Russian embargo prompted by EU sanctions, compensation for lost earnings and guaranteed prices for their crops?