

**Question for written answer E-006150/2017
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Miguel Viegas (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Fipronil scandal

Fipronil has been used as an insecticide since 1994. It works by disrupting insects' central nervous system, which hyperexcites their nerves and muscles and kills them. It is used in a number of anti-parasitic products for pets, such as sprays and tick and flea collars. The chemical is used in farming to combat infestations that attack maize, sunflower and green apple crops. In 2004, its use as a pest control in the sector was banned in France and a number of other European countries after it was blamed for killing off bees.

Although banned in livestock farming, its fraudulent use in a disinfectant led to eggs contaminated with fipronil being found in 24 Member States and in Switzerland and Hong Kong. Portugal was among the countries affected. The contamination has caused farmers several hundred million euros' worth of damage.

Taking into account the WHO's view on the substance, is the Commission considering banning the use of fipronil outright? Bearing in mind that many countries continue to authorise fipronil and that aid exists to compensate producers who were unaware that it was in the disinfectant, what can the Member States do to protect themselves against assaults on public health of this kind?