Question for written answer E-006237/2017
to the Commission
Rule 130
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Subject: Financial responsibility for an infestation of exotic pests

South Africa has cold treatment protocols that guarantee the elimination of pathogens and quarantine pests in its citrus fruit exports to the USA, Japan, South Korea, China, Thailand, India, Indonesia, Taiwan, Nigeria, Mauritania and Jordan amongst other citrus-producing countries, similar to the standards required for European citrus growers and endorsed by the EFSA.

Since South Africa does not adopt the same protocols for its citrus exports to Europe,[1] which creates the risk of dangerous pathogens reaching European farms, would the Commission absorb the cost if our citrus-growing areas were hit by a major infestation?

Unlike cold treatment, the current controls on citrus fruit entering Europe from South Africa do not provide a 100% guarantee that all pathogens will be eliminated. Yet in spite of this risk, the Commission says that the current system did 'not raise major concerns'.[2] Has the Commission assessed the potential damage that the introduction of diseases and quarantine pests from South Africa would cause to European citrus growers economically and socially, and is this enough to be considered a cause for 'major concerns'?

Is the Commission prepared to cover the economic and social cost if this productive sector were wiped out by an infestation of harmful pathogens and pests, such as *Phyllosticta citricarpa* and *Trioza erytreae*?

[1] http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-14-614_en.htm
[2] http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=WQ&reference=E-2017-000985&language=EN