

**Question for written answer E-001168/2018
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Carolina Punset (ALDE)

Subject: Importation from South Africa of citrus fruit with exotic pathogens

As many as 36 cases of citrus black spot were detected at the EU's borders in 2017, with two thirds of the imports concerned coming from South Africa, with which the EU has recently signed a trade agreement. This disproportionate increase over 2016 follows the EU's relaxation of the rules applicable to the trade agreement and conflicts with the stated aims of the EUROPHYT Community control programme, which is designed to protect the EU from new plant pests and diseases.

The opinion issued by the European Food Safety Authority¹ and Council Decision 2014/422², stipulate that control should be strengthened when six or more cases are detected in the same year. We therefore consider the Commission to have systematically failed to fulfil the decision to freeze imports from South Africa if more than five cases are detected. Can the Commission state:

- 1) What measures it is thinking of taking to control this disease?
- 2) Whether it has considered suspending or terminating the agreement with South Africa, from where the largest number of citrus black spot imports originated in 2017?

¹ <https://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/090120-0>

² <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014D0422&from=EN>