

**Question for written answer E-001500/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

Izaskun Bilbao Barandica (ALDE)

Subject: Phytosanitary control of *Epitrix*

Potato producers in designated regions such as A Limia, in the Autonomous Community of Galicia, complain that the phytosanitary rules established to combat a possible *Epitrix* infestation in potatoes does not allow the scale of the risk to be properly assessed. In particular, the rules establish an isolation zone of 500 m around the point at which a confirmed infestation is detected. However, if individual zones are spread over a wide area, the total area of isolation can end up being disproportionately extensive. The entire crop from these areas must then be brushed, adversely affecting quality and presentation and increasing production costs, and must be sold accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate; the crop concerned may not be exported. For these reasons, the producers consider that on-site potato inspections would be a much more effective means of combating this infection without harming the interests of producers.

- 1) Is the Commission aware of this problem?
- 2) Are there any plans to review procedures for the prevention of *Epitrix* infections in potatoes?
- 3) Does the Commission consider that inspections during harvesting could usefully replace the current system of identifying at-risk areas?