

Question for written answer E-004159/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: Direct sale as a way of tackling food waste, assisting low-income families and maintaining Europe's agro-food cultural heritage

Unfortunately, it is not permitted in every EU Member State for unprocessed agricultural products to be sold directly by the producers of those products. It is even more difficult, however, for small farmers and gardeners to get authorisation to process the agricultural products they have produced – turning them, for example, into compotes, jams, preserves, cheese, smoked meats, baked goods, dried fruits, juices, etc. – and sell them at home, on their farms, or in town marketplaces and other places designated by the municipalities for that purpose.

Direct sales of this kind are incredibly useful, however:

1. They help to prevent agricultural goods from being wasted. When this is not permitted, most farmers cannot, by themselves or with the help of family, make use of all the foodstuffs they cultivate, and so these foodstuffs are thrown away.
2. Direct sales can also be a source of significant financial support for low-income allotment and garden owners and small farmers, who are often pensioners.
3. Home or small-scale production activities also help to maintain the traditional production of local and regional unprocessed or little-processed food products, which should be considered important in the context of bringing to life the European concept of unity in diversity and celebrating the European Year of Cultural Heritage.

Would it not be worth harmonising the rules applicable to small farmers so that they can help to achieve the objectives and concepts outlined above in each Member State?