

Question for written answer E-004967/2018
to the Commission
Rule 130
Adam Szejnfeld (PPE)

Subject: Equal standards for unprocessed foods in the European Union

Consumers from a number of countries, in particular those in Central and Eastern Europe, have complained more and more frequently that the quality of some goods is lower in their country than the same products from the same producer in other countries.

The EU institutions have already taken action to standardise the quality of processed food across the EU. It appears, however, that the action taken has not entirely resolved the issue in the area of unprocessed agricultural goods. There are reports that certain categories of fruit, vegetables and cereals are being produced in different ways depending on the market for which they are intended. This may involve, for example, the excessive use of synthetic fertilisers or pesticides for the purpose of achieving better results in a shorter period of time. Lower-quality products tend, apparently, to be sold to consumers in Central and Eastern Europe, who are considered less demanding.

This attitude towards consumers should be considered as unfair and at odds with the fundamental idea, principles and rules of the single market, which is based on free movement and access to goods and services in all EU Member States on an equal basis and without discrimination. Does the Commission have any detailed information on the use of discriminatory practices in the area of unprocessed foods, and to what extent has this issue been addressed in the EU strategy for tackling dual standards?