

WRITTEN QUESTION P-5824/08
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to the Commission

Subject: Counterfeit plant protection products

Counterfeiting has long been a problem in many trade sectors. In such a sensitive area as plant protection, in which the preparations used are subject to strict controls, the existence of counterfeit products poses a major threat to the public and to the environment. Counterfeit pesticides can differ substantially from genuine products, with some containing poor quality active substances with a high level of toxic pollutants and others a lower active substance content than is shown on the label. According to an ECPA (European Crop Protection Association) report, some products have even been found to contain active substances different from those shown on the label.

Given that an increasing number of counterfeit plant protection products are being detected in Europe, can the Commission say whether:

1. DG SANCO will be taking steps to coordinate the information and education campaigns for officials and farmers that are conducted in a number of Member States (Spain, Poland, Italy, Greece) by plant protection market supervisory agencies and other bodies, with a view to passing on the experience gained in those countries to other Member States?
2. DG SANCO will be taking part in the international conference on the matter that is being held in Warsaw on 13 November?
3. DG SANCO can ask DG Enterprise to carry out, under its authority, a study into counterfeit plant protection products along the lines of the study on counterfeit pharmaceutical products in Europe that is currently being conducted?