

**Question for written answer P-000961/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Jan Huitema (ALDE)

Subject: Free-range eggs

Because of the risk of infection with highly pathogenic bird 'flu, Member States are taking necessary measures, including requiring poultry to be kept indoors. Trading standards stipulate that, if access to the free-range area is restricted for more than 12 weeks on veterinary grounds, free-range status lapses (Regulation (EC) No 589/2008, Annex II).

1. Some countries are circumventing this twelve-week rule by temporarily suspending the requirement to keep birds indoors – doing so, in fact, only very temporarily. Does the Commission consider this to be permissible and legally tenable, and, in view of the urgency of the problem, will it answer these questions within one week?
2. If so, does this mean that other Member States can apply the same measure?
3. If not, why is this not permissible, when and how will the Commission enforce the rules which it has itself drawn up, and how soon will the Commission put forward a permanent solution to this very urgent problem?