

**Question for written answer P-002783/2017
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Florent Marcellesi (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Plant health checks on citrus fruit imports

In December 2016, the European Parliament voted against the Commission's proposal to amend Directive 2000/29/EC. However, on 27 January 2017, the Commission presented the proposal again to the Member States in the Standing Committee on Plant Health. At the same time, documentation from the Citrus Growers Association of Southern Africa was published which revealed great disparity between Spanish and Dutch ports in plant health inspections.

In the Netherlands, a private company carries out the checks instead of civil servants, and the number of cases detected is 24 times less than that detected in Spain.

Since 2015, South Africa has been avoiding Spanish ports, sending its citrus fruits to the EU via Rotterdam and England. Furthermore, the private body which carries out plant health inspections in the Netherlands, the Kwaliteits Controle Bureau (KCB), depends on the actual importers of Dutch fruit and vegetables.

1. Is the Commission considering disregarding Parliament's opinion on the inappropriateness of amending Directive 2000/29/EC?
2. Has the Commission considered the need to demand that third countries exporting citrus fruits carry out cold treatment for their exports to the EU?
3. Does the Commission take the view that the checks carried out at the port in Rotterdam guarantee that pests, which could affect European plantations of citrus fruits, do not enter the EU?