

Committee on International Trade
The Chairman

MIK/zu
EXPO-COM-INTA D(2012)47595

315664 25.09.2012

Ms Erminia Mazzoni
Chairman of the Committee on Petitions
European Parliament

Subject: Petition 1268/2010

Dear Ms Mazzoni,

The Committee on International Trade has recently received Petition 1268/2010 by Cristóbal Aguado Laza (Spanish), on behalf of the ASAJA Valencian Farmers' Association, concerning plant protection products, pests and plant diseases.

The petition forwarded to INTA calls for extension of accelerated procedure to authorise active plant protection substances, stricter plant health control rules governing imports of plant products from third countries and elimination of setting "import tolerances" for maximum residue levels for pesticides.


The INTA Coordinators have considered the concerns expressed in the petition during their meeting of 17 September.

INTA has no competence in either EU plant protection and health regime or fixing maximum residue levels and "import tolerances": these issues fall under the remit of ENVI. Nevertheless, INTA closely monitors Commission's work in the WTO Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Committee, aiming to ensure that unjustified trade barriers do not emerge and that legitimate SPS concerns of trading partners are taken into account.

International SPS obligations do not allow arbitrary and unjustifiable restriction on international trade: import bans must be based on scientific evidence showing that products pose an unacceptable risk to human, animal or plant health. This includes imports of agricultural products treated with pesticides, irrespectively whether a pesticide is used in the importing country or not.

Imported products must comply with the legal limits for pesticide residues, and only in cases where residues of pesticides present a consumer risk, no import tolerance is granted. Elimination of the concept "import tolerances" is not in line with the EU's international obligations and would have disastrous effects for the Unions trade interests.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Vital Moreira', written in black ink.

Vital Moreira