

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2413/02
by Michiel van Hulten (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Further questions concerning the agricultural subsidy granted to Queen Beatrix

On 18 July 2002 I put questions to the Commission concerning the subsidy which Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands reportedly received in connection with the establishment of an olive grove at the Netherlands Royal Family's foreign residence in Porto Ercole, Italy. In the meantime, the Royal Family has informed me that this project was carried out at the Queen's farm in Tavernelle, Italy, and I therefore ask the Commission to take account of that fact when answering my questions of 18 July 2002.

In response to press reports concerning my questions, a spokesman for the Queen has stated that she tried to turn down the subsidy, but was unable to do so because of its 'more or less automatic' nature.

1. Can the Commission state what procedure was employed in connection with the grant of the subsidy? Could the Queen have refused the subsidy? Are subsidies granted which are 'more or less automatic' in nature?
2. Can the Commission confirm that the subsidy in question was a European one, and not a subsidy granted under a national scheme and approved by Brussels, as suggested by a Commission spokesman on 19 July 2002?
3. What sum of money was granted per olive tree and how many olive trees did the Queen plant?
4. Was it a one-off subsidy, or did the Queen also receive similar subsidies in subsequent years?