

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3480/02

by Francesco Fiori (PPE-DE) and Paolo Bartolozzi (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Olive oil

Regulation (EC) No 1019/2002<sup>1</sup> on marketing standards for olive oil, which was adopted on 13 June 2002 and which came into force on 1 November 2002, provides for the sale of olive oil in labelled, non-resealable containers with a maximum capacity of five litres. By means of Regulation (EC) No 1964/2002<sup>2</sup> the deadline for implementation of the regulation was extended to 1 November 2003.

In Italy the system of direct sales from the producer involves approximately 300 000 producers and some 200 000 tonnes of olive oil (virtually all of it extra virgin). Direct sales are part of a cultural tradition which combines the purchase of a product 'at source' with an opportunity for exploring or rediscovering small localities and hence rural areas, landscapes and heritage which are of major significance within the Italian people's collective experience.

The practice described above mainly involves the use of containers with a capacity exceeding five litres. Does the Commission not therefore think that the same containers could be used as are allowed under Article 2(2) of the Regulation in the case of oils intended for consumption in restaurants, hospitals, canteens and other collective establishments? In that paragraph the Member States are indeed empowered to set a maximum packaging capacity exceeding five litres.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 155, 14.6.2002, p. 27

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 300, 5.11.2002, p. 3