

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0368/03
by Luciano Caveri (ELDR)
to the Commission

Subject: Problems affecting the truffle market

The truffle is still one of the most highly prized gastronomic products in a number of Member States, in particular Italy and France. However, the increase in consumption has given rise to three phenomena, which to some extent are interconnected: firstly, imports from countries outside the Community of large quantities of truffles which are sometimes indistinguishable from European ones, secondly, the use of essences of various kinds (sometimes hydrocarbons), which may be harmful to health, to enhance the flavour of truffles, especially imported ones, and thirdly, a growing fashion for truffle-flavoured products (pasta, oil, butter, etc.), often containing these same chemical flavourings.

Can the Commission say what the situation is and what measures can be taken on the basis of the facts outlined above?