

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2633/03  
by Maurizio Turco (NI)  
to the Commission

Subject: Refunds on exports from Member States to the Vatican City State of fresh and frozen beef (code 0201) for 2000. Inconsistencies between CATS and OECD data.

In response to questions E-1477/03 and E-1480/03<sup>1</sup> relating to refunds on exports of agricultural products from Member States to the Vatican City State (VCS), Commissioner Fischler stated on 21 May 2003 that the Commission was collecting the information it needed to answer the question and would communicate its findings as soon as possible.

The following supplementary data can be supplied in relation to the export of fresh and frozen beef (code 0201):

- a) the European Commission's CATS (Clearance Audit Trail System) database shows that in 2000:
- 46 404,210 kg were exported from Ireland to the VCS with a refund of EUR 38 323,65, equivalent to aid of EUR 0,83/kg;
  - 389 850 kg were exported from Italy to the VCS with a refund of EUR 305 341,16 equivalent to aid of EUR 0,78/kg;
  - 294 544 kg were exported from Holland to the VCS with a refund of EUR 211 144,95 equivalent to aid of EUR 0,72/kg;
- b) the OECD (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development) database shows that in 2000:
- 249 700 kg were exported from Italy and 266 700 kg from Holland to the VCS,

This indicates that:

- unwarranted aid of EUR 168 053,03 was paid on an additional 214 398,21 kg not shown in the OECD data;

Does the Commission not agree that the increasingly patent omissions and the discrepancies between the data from the different institutional sources seriously affect the credibility of these institutions and might be due to possible fraud against Community funds, or is it already able to discount this possibility of fraud?

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<sup>1</sup> OJ C ...