

WRITTEN QUESTION E-3007/03
by Giacomo Santini (PPE-DE)
to the Commission

Subject: Role of the European Rural Carrefours in CAP information campaigns

The 'Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 814/2000 on information measures relating to the common agricultural policy' (COM (2003) 235 final) expresses satisfaction at the results achieved by the information campaigns conducted in 2000, 2001 and 2002, but also stresses that their impact on the public and their cost-effectiveness could be improved. The Commission states, on the basis of data obtained from "flash" Eurobarometers, that the general public's lack of knowledge about the CAP, WTO, food safety and other issues linked to agricultural policy confirms more than ever the need to step up information measures and improve their impact.

For some years now the European network of Rural Carrefours has been playing a role in informing the public about the common agricultural policy, thanks to the existence of about 140 European rural information and promotion centres supplied with publications, newsletters and websites and staffed by people competent to deal with CAP issues. The European network of Rural Carrefours can make a worthwhile contribution to achieving the objectives of Regulation (EC) No 814/2000¹, as regards improving both the impact on the general public and cost-effectiveness. In order to achieve this result, the Commission's Agriculture DG should ensure structured involvement of the 'Carrefours', in the interests of running information campaigns more efficiently and making the information measures carried out by the Commission more coherent.

One of the measures undertaken by the Commission was, precisely, to train those working in the Rural Carrefours in a number of specific CAP-related subjects, under the auspices of the Agriculture DG, which demonstrated the need for functional links with these centres. The Rural Carrefour network has accompanied Commission staff on information stands at agricultural fairs.

Can the Commission say:

1. whether it intends to broaden its collaboration with the European network of Rural Carrefours in order to carry out activities relating to measures taken on the Commission's initiative;
2. what role the European network of Rural Carrefours will play in the measures taken on the Commission's initiative to implement the aforementioned Regulation (EC) No 814/2000?

¹ OJ L 100, 20.4.2000, p. 7.