

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1772/04  
by Béatrice Patrie (PSE)  
to the Commission

Subject: End of the EU food aid programme to the most poverty-stricken

Several French NGOs, such as Secours populaire and Banque alimentaire, have contacted me to express their concern at the end of the programme for free distribution of EU agricultural surpluses to charitable organisations. Local representatives of the recipients have also expressed these fears, which are now a central concern of many MEPs.

In view of the reduction of stocks, and since many stocks, such as meat and wheat, are already exhausted, which places the charitable organisations in a very embarrassing situation, what solutions does the Commission envisage to alleviate this problem?

Is the Commission prepared to support opening a budget line for the amount of the food aid which has been given free until now?

Is it true that some surpluses (particularly those containing a large starch content) have been sold to industry rather than given to charitable organisations according to the provisions of the food aid programme?

Some charitable organisations would like to see the food aid programme opened up to new products such as fruit and vegetables, fish, pork and poultry. Does the Commission think it is possible to satisfy this request?