

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1103/05

by Hiltrud Breyer (Verts/ALE) and Marie-Hélène Aubert (Verts/ALE)
to the Commission

Subject: Limit values for radionuclide contamination of foodstuffs

The Codex Alimentarius Committee on Food Additives and Contaminants (CCFAC) is currently discussing a proposal to introduce limit values for radioactive contamination of foodstuffs (ALINORM 04/27/12, Appendix XXIII). To date, such values have applied only temporarily after an accidental release of radioactivity. However, the proposal provides for temporary and exceptional limits to apply unchanged across the board.

1. Will the Commission oppose this proposal in the framework of the Codex Alimentarius?
2. Does the Commission consider it appropriate to introduce generally applicable limit values for radionuclides? Does the Commission agree that such values should be set at a much lower level than the temporary limits applicable after a radioactive accident?
3. Is the Commission aware that certain molluscs, crustaceans and fish are highly contaminated by radionuclides isotopes, particularly in the Irish Sea and in the area around the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant (see New Scientist of 12 October 2004)? Do equivalent studies exist for the area around the French nuclear reprocessing plant at La Hague? Does the Commission think that there should be trade restrictions on those fishery products in order to protect EU consumers against radiation exposure and the associated health risks?