

WRITTEN QUESTION E-6277/07
by Adriana Poli Bortone (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: Internal allocation of production quotas in connection with the reform of the CMO in fruit and vegetables

The reform of the CMO introduces a degree of flexibility, but only for the purpose of increasing the competitiveness of all undertakings in that sector. Over 80% of Community funds for the fruit and vegetable sector in Italy are distributed to only 22% of Italian agricultural units (according to the Confederazione Italiana Agricoltori, the Italian farmers' confederation). In Puglia, meanwhile, the fruit and vegetable sector, and particularly the citrus fruit sector, is undergoing a severe crisis - exacerbated by the extensive damage caused by recent natural disasters - caused by the sector's structural problems and competition, sometimes of an unfair nature, from non-EU countries. Puglia could be penalised by the Ministry of Agricultural Policy when citrus production quotas and the associated payments per hectare are allocated, which would damage the agricultural sector not only in Puglia but throughout the Ionian region.

In view of the foregoing, would the Commission state:

- What precisely are the criteria governing the allocation of aid, and what margin of discretion has Italy been granted with regard to the internal allocation of production quotas?
- What measures does the Commission intend to adopt to ensure that regions such as Puglia are not penalised by an uneven system of allocating quotas in sectors of vital economic importance such as the citrus sector?