

WRITTEN QUESTION E-1475/08
by Adriana Poli Bortone (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: Indication of the origin of olive oil

1. Having regard to Commission Regulations (EC) No 2152/2001¹ and (EC) No 1019/2002², pursuant to which it is optional for olive-oil producers to state on the label the country from which the olives come;
2. Whereas, on the other hand, Italy – by means of Law No 206/2004 and the associated Implementing Decree No 243 of 18 October 2007 – requires producers to state on the label the country from which the olives used come;
3. Whereas on 28 February 2008 the Commission sent Italy a warning letter opening a further infringement procedure on account of the above-mentioned requirement laid down in Italian law;
4. Whereas olive oil is the most extensively counterfeited foodstuff and whereas current European law in effect assists unscrupulous producers, who deceive consumers by using mixtures of oils, including ones from non-EU countries;

In view of the above facts, will the Commission answer the following questions?

- (a) What economic reasons justify such a firm stance against Italy and against the only means of informing European consumers?
- (b) Should clear, transparent and comprehensive information not be provided concerning the origin of the foodstuffs available to European consumers?
- (c) With a view to future legislation on food labelling, does the Commission intend to raise the 'country of origin' issue in respect of olive oil?
- (d) What tools does Europe make available to honest olive-oil producers in order to help them combat food piracy?

¹ OJ L 288, 1.11.2001, p. 36.

² OJ L 155, 14.6.2002, p. 27.