

WRITTEN QUESTION E-4441/08  
by Ioannis Gklavakis (PPE-DE)  
to the Commission

Subject: Certification of agricultural products

Greece applies the national certification standard of AGROCEPT, AGRO 2-1 and 2-2, and the GlobalGap Protocol to certify the primary production of agricultural produce in Greece. Although Greek production and standardization undertakings for fresh agricultural produce apply the national certification standards, they are 'obliged' to certify the products repeatedly, which represents a significant financial burden for them and also affects their competitiveness. Furthermore, it is becoming an increasingly widespread practice for large supermarket chains in EU Member States to demand that their suppliers apply and certify different health and safety protocols during the reception and standardisation procedure for fresh agricultural produce, depending on the importing country involved.

In view of the above, will the Commission say whether it is aware of similar circumstances in other Member States and how it intends to deal with the situation? Could uniform European standards for agricultural products (both for primary production and for health and safety during standardisation) acceptable to all Member States be adopted and applied? If so, would such European standards be accepted by third countries which would then no longer oblige Community exporters to undertake additional special certification procedures in order to import their products?