

**Question for written answer E-005903/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

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Subject: Animal health: EU-wide coordination of research on chronic /visceral botulism

For a number of years now, there have been repeated reports in various scientific journals and in the media to a disease in cattle herds known as chronic or visceral botulism, which allegedly leads to a severe decline in performance and increased mortality. The disease profile of chronic botulism is not clearly defined, but it is thought to be caused by a toxic infection with *Clostridium botulinum*. There is a great deal of uncertainty surrounding the causes of chronic botulism, its differentiation from other conditions, its diagnosis and treatment.

In the light of the above:

1. Does the Commission class botulism as a threat to animal health in the EU? Does it regard this disease as a risk to the health of animals and the food chain?
2. Does the Commission plan to gather information on the incidence and causes of botulism in the EU, and is it working to promote coordinated research into the disease?
3. Is the Commission considering recognising chronic botulism as an animal disease?