**Question for written answer E-012276/2011**
**to the Commission**
Rule 117
**Michail Tremopoulos (Verts/ALE)**

Subject: Controversial approval of Amflora, a genetically modified (GM) potato variety, in the EU

In March 2010, the Commission approved Amflora, the GM potato developed by BASF, for cultivation in the European Union. The Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO) in its recent report[1] has investigated the background to this decision, including the controversial scientific opinion given by the European Food Safety Food (EFSA).

The Centre found that more than half the members of the EFSA committee had links with the biotech industry. Their opinions, which infringed the instructions of the World Health Organisation (WHO), contributed to the approval of the GM potato variety - and are likely to lead to the approval of similar GM crops in future. Furthermore, even though none of the members of the EFSA Committee on Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) is a medical expert on the use of antibiotics in medicine, they decided that neomycin and kanamycin were antibiotics with no or very little therapeutic value. However, in 2005 the World Health Organization (WHO) had classified these antibiotics as 'very important'.

In light of these new findings, will the Commission say:

1. Does it intend to carry out an immediate independent review of the positive scientific opinion given for Amflora, the GM potato developed by BASF, and the risks to health and the environment posed by marker genes in GM plants?

2. Does it consider that the ongoing process of approval for cultivation in the EU of other GM plants containing the nptII gene in question should be put on hold?

3. Will it undertake to exert pressure on the EFSA to remove members of the committee on GM who have ties to the biotech industry and replace them with a team composed entirely of independent scientists?

[1] http://www.corporateeurope.org/sites/default/files/publications/Amflora_COI_report_2011.pdf