

**Question for written answer E-001526/2012  
to the Commission**  
Rule 117  
**Jean-Luc Bennahmias (ALDE)**

Subject: Agriculture and standards

Sheep farmers are concerned about being heavily penalised by the very recent European law which classifies wool fleece among other by-products of carcass disposal. Thus, all the hygiene and traceability requirements legitimately applying to horn, skins, hooves etc., would apply to wool fleece. Wool, a noble material, would be treated, in both symbolic and practical terms, as health waste.

This will require the following to be paid for:

- the creation of shearing platforms at each farm, whereas temporary sheeting was all that was needed heretofore;
- separate collection and transport for each farm, where farmers previously made arrangements amongst themselves to share transport;
- undoubtedly, in the long term, a 'health' approach to the profession of shearer, with constraints.

My question is therefore threefold:

1. Can the Commission remind us of the reasons that lie at the bottom of this initiative?
2. Has it assessed the impact of this measure on European farmers?
3. In the aim of guaranteeing perfectly fair competition, has it made an effort to take identical measures in relation to imported products and how does it intend to ensure that there are checks on the implementation of this new standard for producers from outside the European Union?