

**Question for written answer E-008594/2013  
to the Commission**

Rule 117

**Patricia van der Kammen (NI)**

Subject: Report on possible requirement to use only EU-approved seed (follow-up question)

On 11 June 2013, Mr Borg answered Written Question E-004674/2013 on behalf of the Commission. One of the questions was whether the Commission could refute or deny that the Commission's plans or draft plans could result in consequences outlined in the article, such as a ban on individuals sowing their kitchen gardens with seed that they have obtained themselves or a ban on small farmers exchanging seed with their fellow farmers.

The Commission's answer is downright contradictory, because on the one hand it states that the claims in the report have no basis in fact while at the same time indicating that exchange in kind between persons, other than professional operators as defined in the proposal, is outside the Regulation's scope. In other words, the answer to the question as to whether the regulation will result in a ban on small farmers exchanging seed with their fellow farmers is first 'no' and then 'yes'.

1. Does the Commission consider small farmers to be professional operators?
2. In view of the Commission's contradictory answer, can it say whether or not the exchange and subsequent use of seed by farmers will be subject to the regulation?
3. Can the Commission indicate what disasters have befallen humanity during the past 100 000 years because seed was not 'approved' by the Commission?
4. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that no regulation should be imposed if no problem whatsoever exists, or only imaginary problems?
5. Is it conceivable that the Commission might to a large extent have allowed itself to be swayed by the 'information' provided by large companies in the seed industry, for whom a regulatory requirement to register and use EU-approved seed would have the convenient outcome that every farmer would be virtually compelled to consume their products?

Mr Borg also writes in his answer: 'As in other Union policy areas, those requirements are necessary to ensure the functioning of internal market (...)'.  
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6. Does the Commission agree with the PVV that the Commission is seriously distorting the internal market by preventing the free use of seed?