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Answer given by Mr Borg
on behalf of the Commission
(14.11.2013)

For the current export season, the Commission has been monitoring very closely the interceptions of citrus fruit from South Africa due to the presence of "Guignardia citricarpa" or citrus black spot. In addition, the Commission has been in regular contact and met the South African authorities and South African and EU stakeholders.

The Commission met South African authorities after the fifth interception of citrus black spot at the beginning of September to clarify mitigating factors and alternative measures. At that time South Africa committed to put in place a much stricter protocol for the certification of citrus fruit. Given this commitment, it was decided that the EU should not immediately take further measures. However, by that time, several consignments that had already left the South African territory were found infested at their arrival into the European Union. For that reason, the Commission is considering the next steps. Any potential measures need to be discussed and approved by Member States in the Standing Committee.