

**Question for written answer E-013910/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Patricia van der Kammen (NI)

Subject: EU grants EUR 500 000 subsidy to non-existent farms

According to media reports¹, over a three-year period, eight Romanians received around EUR 500 000 in EU agricultural subsidies for farms that only existed on paper. The Romanians applied for a European Union subsidy for keeping cattle in 2010. On paper, the application related to 1 860 cows, in respect of which the eight applicants received EUR 100-150 per cow. After three years, it turned out that neither the farms nor the cows exist. The accused are required to pay the money back, but three of them have lodged an appeal. They argue that it was not clearly stated anywhere that subsidies can only be applied for in respect of real-life cattle.

1. Is the Commission aware of the reports that subsidies were paid out for three years for non-existent farms and no less than 1 860 cows?
2. Does the Commission agree with the Dutch Party for Freedom (PVV) that the wasting of subsidy money represents a serious insult to taxpayers, specifically those of the net contributor Member States who, after all, generated that money? If not, how would the Commission describe it?
3. Has the Commission now finally come to the conclusion that control over agricultural policy, including the appurtenant funding, must be returned to the Member States? If not, why not? What else has to go wrong before the Commission reaches this conclusion?
4. Can the Commission explain how it can be that this fraud went unnoticed for so long?
5. What view does the Commission take of the immoral position of the three fraudulent appellants, who apparently see themselves as in the right, despite having received money on spurious grounds?
6. Is the Commission prepared to deduct the money directly from Romania's agricultural contribution? If not, why not?

¹ <http://nutech.nl/games/3646107/eu-geeft-500000-euro-subsidie-nep-boerderij.html>