

Question for written answer E-000665/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Georges Bach (PPE)

Subject: Support for farmers adversely affected by a change in Union law

A young dairy farmer was allocated a milk quota as from the 1989/1990 marketing year. Initially he kept Jersey cows, which are known for the high fat content of their milk. Under the rules applicable to 'SLOM' producers, the reference fat content is calculated on the basis of the milk delivered during the first 12 months.

For reasons linked to the availability of reproductive material, the farmer gradually replaced his Jerseys with Holsteins. As a result, the fat content of the milk he sold fell from 7.2% to 4%, which enabled him to produce more and invest in new infrastructure.

With effect from 2007/2008, the EU changed the negative correction system for the dairy sector. Since breeding has to be planned ahead over a period of three to four years, the farmer was unable to reduce the size of his herd in good time. In addition to the extra costs he had to pay, his investment in new infrastructure proved to be for nothing.

Is the Commission aware of other exceptional cases of this kind?

What measures can be taken at EU level and what leeway is there at national level for supporting these farmers, whose livelihoods have been jeopardised by a change in Union law?