

Question for written answer E-014769/2015
to the Commission
Rule 130
Zoltán Balczó (NI)

Subject: Standing up for European bee-keepers

It was an enormous scandal when, in 2001, a prohibited antibiotic derivative was found in honey imported from China, in response to which imports of Chinese honey into the European Union were banned for some time. This incident indicated that the authorities ought to monitor the quality of honey far more strictly.

On a number of occasions in 2015, members of the Hungarian National Bee-keepers' Association, witnessed by a notary public, purchased honey from Hungarian supermarket chains and sent it to a laboratory in Bremen for analysis. The analyses showed that in many cases high-quality Hungarian honey was being adulterated with honey imported from China. Some producers explained this by saying that the aim of mixing a different product with Hungarian honey was to improve the quality of industrially produced Chinese honey which, by itself, was inedible.

The EU's food safety rules are intended to ensure that 'food and feed are safe and wholesome' and that 'unequivocal and transparent information is available concerning the origin, composition, quality and use of food'.

- Will the Commission amend the relevant legislation to ensure that consumers receive precise information about the origin of honey and that the country of origin has to be indicated precisely on packaging?
- Bearing in mind the EU's determination to guarantee supplies of quality food to its population, will the Commission monitor the quality of imported honey more strictly?