

**Question for written answer E-000704/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Humanitarian aid: sourcing of seeds and ethical procurement

The distribution of seeds for planting can play an important role in the EU's humanitarian aid and food assistance. In order for such action to deliver for food insecure communities, it is vital that the seeds be adapted to local conditions. The socio-economic resilience of communities can be further strengthened through the establishment of community-based seed systems and seed banks where farmers can access saved seeds freely and promptly when they face emergency situations.

Can the Commission elaborate on the types of seeds for planting that are distributed through European humanitarian aid and food assistance and, more specifically, whether those seeds are of improved plant varieties that require the use of expensive inputs and are potentially protected under intellectual property rights, or are of locally adapted open-pollinated varieties that farmers can use continuously and save for future planting?

If the Commission uses the seeds of improved plant varieties, how does this practice respect the principle of ethical procurement, especially the 'concern for social rights and environmental aspects' enshrined in the 2011 Humanitarian Aid Guidelines for Procurement, and the concept of resilience, the importance of which has been recognised in the 2017 evaluation of the EU approach to resilience to withstand food crises.