

**Question for written answer E-001328/2018
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Interception of harmful organisms - citrus black spot disease

One of the cornerstones of agriculture in the European Union is food safety. This is guaranteed to consumers through strict compliance with plant-health standards for products such as fruit and vegetables. Citrus fruits are no exception in this regard.

According to Europhyt (the European Union reporting system dealing with interceptions for plant health reasons, which aims to protect Community territory in order to prevent the spread of plant diseases), in 2017, there were 36 interceptions of citrus fruits with citrus black spot disease, an increase of 500% compared to the previous year. Two thirds came from South Africa.

This is not a new occurrence. In 2014, the European Food Safety Authority warned of this risk. The Commission took measures, and in 2015 and 2016 there was a fall in the number of interceptions of citrus fruits with citrus black spot. However, after Implementing Decision 2016/715, the number of interceptions has increased again.

With that in mind,

1. How does the Commission intend to counteract the growing number of interceptions of citrus fruits with citrus black spot?
2. In addition, does the Commission intend to take exceptional measures for markets like South Africa?