

**Question for written answer E-000493/2019
to the Commission**
Rule 130
Ignazio Corrao (EFDD)

Subject: Microplastics in vegetables in Catania

A recent investigative report has revealed that, according to the findings of chemical tests carried out by the University of Catania, vegetables sold in Catania's markets contain toxic substances (drugs and animal poisons).

Furthermore, plastic microparticles were found in the tissues of all the vegetables tested, no matter where these had come from or how they had been grown. The researchers say that the cause of the problem is contaminated water passing to plants through soil.

Plastics are endocrine disrupters and can transfer toxic substances directly into the human body. No threshold concentrations or fixed limits have been laid down for them, even though they are potentially carcinogenic and have a strong impact on fertility and fetal health.

The microplastic contamination was detected by the Catania Department of Hygiene with the aid of an innovative patent involving micron-scale analysis, marking a first at international level.

- 1) Is the Commission aware of the above case and other similar studies on microplastics in vegetables?
- 2) What forms of regulation are currently being employed to keep microplastics out of vegetables?
- 3) What will the Commission do to protect public health from the chemical hazards caused by microplastics?