

**Question for written answer E-002974/2019  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

**Cláudia Monteiro de Aguiar (PPE) and Álvaro Amaro (PPE)**

Subject: Impact of the TR4 fungus on European banana production

According to recent press reports, in August 2019 Tropical Race 4 (TR4), a fungus representing a serious risk to world banana production, reached Colombia. Once it takes hold, TR4 can destroy an entire crop yield. What's more, another fungus, Black Sigatoka was discovered as early as January 2016.

Bananas, grown in 130 countries, are a staple food for millions of people. Similarly, banana production is a core agricultural activity in the EU's outermost regions – Madeira and the Azores, the Canary Islands, Guadeloupe and Martinique – and is essential for their socio-economic development.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the best way of combating the disease is preventive and phytosanitary measures, in addition to crop diversification and making better use of the available genetic resources so as to build up long-term resistance to the disease.

1. What are the risks to EU banana production and what will the Commission do to reduce the potential impact on European production?
2. What economic impact will the spread of fungi have on European production, in particular in Madeira?
3. What measures are the Commission considering, in collaboration with the FAO, in the third countries affected?

Supporters<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Question supported by Members other than the author: Lídia Pereira (PPE), José Manuel Fernandes (PPE).