

**Question for written answer E-002569/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Daniel Buda (PPE)

Subject: Agricultural specialists report major difficulties caused by reducing the number of pesticides

Representatives from Romania's Plant Protection Industry Association (AIPROM) have assessed the plant protection product situation for the most important crops, for specific diseases and pests, and have demonstrated substantial production losses in the absence of these solutions.

Protecting crops from disease and pest attacks has become increasingly difficult in the context of the reduced number of solutions available on the European market. Currently, only 30-40% of phytosanitary products remain available. The specialists show major problems associated with reducing these types of solution, citing the example of straw cereal crops, which currently occupy the largest proportion of cultivated surface area in Romania (approximately 2.6-2.7 million hectares). To reach maturity, straw cereals spend around 10 months in the field and are exposed to a very high number of pathogens. The most efficient weapon against these pathogens is chemical control; all other agrotechnical measures have a role in reducing pathogen attacks but they cannot control them effectively. The initiative to reduce consumption of pesticides in agricultural crops has meant that farmers are no longer able to cope with the significant pressure caused by the most common pathogen attacks.

What instruments does the Commission have to protect crops in the context of this significant reduction in pesticides?