

**Question for written answer E-003684/2022/rev.1
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Pests and pesticide residues on citrus fruit from South Africa and Argentina consumed in the EU

For the fourth year in a row, the Union of Farmers of the Valencian Autonomous Community has detected phytosanitary products that are banned in the EU on citrus fruit from South Africa and Argentina. The active substances in question, such as carbendazim, have been banned in the EU since 2016. The organisation also found other substances that can be used legally provided that, when sold, the maximum residue level on the produce is equal to zero. Therefore, there was a failure to comply with that requirement.

Other problems were also identified, such as the presence of citrus black spot (*Phyllosticta citricarpa*), a fungus that can be transmitted to citrus fruit intended for fresh consumption, thus reducing their value. It is important to note that production for fresh consumption represents 65% of local production.

Despite the controls in place in the EU, some countries do not have a protocol for the minimum percentage of imported lots to be analysed, which puts consumers and the Spanish agricultural sector in a vulnerable position.

1. What initiatives will the Commission put in place to improve border control standards and prevent the entry of third-country produce contaminated with pests or phytosanitary products that are banned in the EU?
2. What checks does the Commission carry out to ensure that exporting countries have performed reliable controls of residues of phytosanitary products that are banned in the EU?

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