

**Question for written answer E-001766/2023
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Sarah Wiener (Verts/ALE), **Thomas Waitz** (Verts/ALE)

Subject: Pesticide drift from intensive fruit farming – measures to protect local residents and organic farmland

In South Tyrol (Italy), according to annual report of the Italian National Institute of Statistics, 45 kg of active substances per hectare are applied to orchards and vineyards per year, which is extremely high in comparison with both Italian and Europe-wide levels.

Given that South Tyrol's intensively farmed orchards exist alongside residential and tourist areas, other sensitive areas such as children's playgrounds and organic farmland, synthetic chemical pesticides very often drift onto and contaminate these areas.

Conflicts with neighbouring residents, organic farming and tourism businesses are, therefore, a common occurrence. From March to September a cloud of poison hangs in the air above orchards (*Süddeutsche Zeitung*, 25 January 2023). The case of south Tyrol's *Kräuterschlössl* herbs is just one example of how much damage can be done to organic farming in particular¹.

Although contamination of sensitive areas is prohibited under Italy's national action plan and EU standards, the interests of the synthetic chemical pesticides industry generally prevail in disputes and, above all, in the daily use of pesticides.

1. What does the Commission intend to do to protect people, including in particular young children and other sensitive groups of people, from the potential effects of exposure to synthetic chemical pesticides?
2. What does the Commission intend to do to better protect organic farmland close to intensively farmed orchards from synthetic chemical pesticides and to enforce the polluter pays principle in the event of yield losses?
3. What does the Commission intend to do to protect tourists from synthetic chemical pesticides?

Submitted: 1.6.2023

¹ <https://www.suedtirolnews.it/wirtschaft/vinschger-bio-baeuerin-reist-nach-bruessel-und-fordert-eu-kommission-zum-pestizidverbot-auf>