

**Question for written answer E-002998/2023  
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Gluten contamination from plant-based packaging

Against the backdrop of the EU's circular economy action plan and its environmental goals, the use of biodegradable, compostable or low environmental impact products has become increasingly common. That is the case for food contact materials (FCMs)<sup>1</sup>: as a result of measures banning the use of plastics<sup>2</sup>, a number of innovations have been introduced in the areas of food and drink packaging and single-use tableware.

FCMs of a presumed or certain plant origin are increasingly common on the market and, in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1935/2004, they should not transfer components to food in quantities that might pose a problem for human health. However, recent studies<sup>3</sup> show that plant-based FCMs can expose their users to gluten at a level higher than their tolerance limits and should, therefore, be avoided by coeliacs<sup>4</sup>.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the evidence obtained in those studies?
2. Given that the EU legislative framework does not provide for an explicit obligation to provide end consumers with the plant origin of FCMs, does the Commission believe it should be compulsory, as it is for food and drink within the meaning of Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011, to include information on the presence of allergens on labels?

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<sup>1</sup> Food contact materials (FCMs) include all packaging that comes into direct contact with pre-packaged food and drink, together with disposable tableware.

<sup>2</sup> Measures taken include the adoption of Directive (EU) 2019/904 (Single-Use Plastics Directive), which bans the use of some specific disposable materials made of plastic.

<sup>3</sup> Studies carried out by the Italian Coeliac Association and other member associations of the Association of European Coeliac Societies (AOECS) (aoecs.org): <https://epha.org/biodegradable-food-contact-materials-what-is-a-stake-for-coeliacs/>.

<sup>4</sup> In some cases, FCMs consisting wholly or in part of components derived from the grain of cereals containing gluten (e.g. wheat, barley, spelt) release significant amounts of gluten to food or drink.