

**Question for written answer E-000209/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: Production and marketing of artificial honey in the European Union

The Italian association 'Miele in Cooperative', which has around 390 000 hives in Italy, has warned against the dangers of the 'artificial honey' produced and marketed in the United States, which could enter Europe in the form of a counterfeit product.

Several non-European companies, such as Beeio Honey Ltd, have patented a 'honey' that is artificially produced, without bees, and are placing that product on the market. This practice would seem to be growing.

The European Anti-Fraud Office report for 2022 showed that almost half the honey imported from countries outside Europe is artificial, counterfeit, adulterated or otherwise fails to satisfy the transparency and quality parameters set in the Honey Directive (2001/110/EC).

Given that Annex I to the current European law on honey defines 'honey' as 'the natural sweet substance produced by *Apis mellifera* bees', can the Commission indicate:

1. What measures it plans to take to protect European honey production against the growth in 'artificial honey' and the expansion in the counterfeiting of honey in recent years?
2. Whether all products described as 'honey' when no bees are involved in their production do not constitute fraud against European consumers in the light of Directive 2001/110/EC, meaning that legal action should be taken to prohibit their placing on the Community market?

Submitted: 24.1.2024