

ORAL QUESTION H-0690/02
for Question Time at the part-session in October 2002
pursuant to Rule 43 of the Rules of Procedure
by Anneli Hulthén
to the Commission

Subject: Exports of organic food from developing countries

Imports of organic goods from countries outside the EU will be hindered in the near future by rules which may operate as trade barriers against third countries. When Commission Regulation (EC) 1788/2001¹ enters into force in the Member States, importing organic food will become a complicated, bureaucratic procedure.

Anyone wishing to import organic food from a third country will need a certificate of inspection. This certificate must accompany each consignment of products subject to the requirements, such as bananas and coffee beans. The certificate of inspection must be signed by four different authorities or other bodies. The risk is that the organic food will rot before the formalities are concluded.

Sales of organic food are an opportunity for third world countries to enter the world market. At the Johannesburg conference on the environment, delegates were agreed that the rich world must increase its imports from the third world and that organic produce was a particular priority.

Can the Commission explain how Regulation (EC) 1788/2001 is consistent with these international commitments and does the Commission intend to work towards a simplified procedure for importing organic produce from countries outside the EU?

Tabled: 09.10.2002

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¹ OJ L 243, 13.9.2001, p.3