

ORAL QUESTION WITH DEBATE O-0085/06

pursuant to Rule 108 of the Rules of Procedure

by Joseph Daul and Janusz Wojciechowski, on behalf of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
to the Commission

Subject: Situation of the sector of soft fruits and cherries intended for processing

On 28 June 2006, the Commission presented the report on the situation of the sector of soft fruits and cherries intended for processing (COM(2006)0345 final). The report confirms what is known about the current situation and indicates that the soft fruit market is undergoing a lasting crisis. The crisis mainly affects the new Member States, particularly Poland, and its negative consequences in the poorest regions of the EU are considerable. Although Parliament has repeatedly emphasised the importance of this problem, the Commission has yet to take any of the steps necessary to resolve this crisis. Could the Commission indicate what measures it intends to propose in order to:

1. decrease imports from third countries of soft fruits intended for processing, particularly by putting a stop to the dumping practices that characterise certain imports;
2. introduce a support mechanism for groups and organisations of producers specifically adapted to the situation of the new Member States;
3. make it easier to obtain compensation for damage caused by adverse weather conditions;
4. give growers the possibility of obtaining compensation for crop abandonment in the event of an unexpected temporary adverse situation caused by excessive supply on the market;
5. call on the Member States to introduce financial incentives for the destruction of soft fruit plantations in the event of a situation of excess on the market;
6. release funds to promote the consumption of soft fruits in the EU?

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Deadline for reply: 25.07.2006