

**Question for oral answer O-000302/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 115

Bairbre de Brún

on behalf of the GUE/NGL Group

Subject: Transparency and fairness in the food supply chain

There is an ongoing crisis in the agriculture sector, with farmers and agricultural enterprises facing rising and unaffordable production costs which are not reflected in what farmers receive in return.

If farmers are not guaranteed a fair price for their produce, many of them will leave the sector. A fair, decent wage for farmers must be an EU priority otherwise we risk the abandonment of many small farms.

Farmers and their organisations need to see a significant increase in their bargaining power and we need fairness and transparency in the food chain to avoid big-buyer abuses.

Parliament has made its opinion on these matters clear through reports such as Jose Bové's 'A better functioning food supply chain in Europe'. However, the situation continues to deteriorate. The price paid by consumers is not reflected in the price paid to farmers.

How will the Commission address this issue, which is of fundamental importance to both the European Parliament and the agri-food industry?

How will the Commission tackle 'big buyer' abuses in the food supply chain? What will it do to ensure fairness in the relationship between food producers retailers and suppliers?

What progress has been made on the European Parliament's request for transparency in this area and the suggestion for the Commission to recommend national ombudsmen to monitor the situation in this area?

Tabled: 15.11.2011

Forwarded: 17.11.2011

Deadline for reply: 24.11.2011