

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3175/00
by Mariotto Segni (UEN)
to the Commission

Subject: Blue tongue disease

The alarming spread of blue tongue disease (sheep virus) has led to a livestock crisis in Sardinia. The virus could cause considerable damage to sheep, goat and cattle farms and to wild animals that are sensitive to it.

It has spread with extreme rapidity and other EU regions, such as Corsica, could also soon be affected. Over 33 000 animals have already been slaughtered.

In the past the Commission has provided financial support under the 'EAGGF emergency veterinary fund' to regions affected by similar disasters in order to limit the damage done by the spread of disease, to support scientific research on vaccines and to compensate farmers for the necessary slaughter of their livestock.

Given the current emergency in Sardinia, what practical measures does the Commission intend to take to keep the virus in check?

What measures does it intend to take to provide financial aid to compensate the damage resulting from the slaughter of cattle, the lack of income and the need to acquire new stock?

How does it intend to restore the market balance in the dairy and sheepmeat sectors?

How will it support scientific research in order to avoid irreparable damage being done throughout the Union?