

WRITTEN QUESTION P-3636/03
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to the Commission

Subject: Reform of the CMO in olive oil

Regulation (EC) No 1638/98¹ amending the common organisation of the market in oils and fats lays down that: 'No aid ... may be paid to olive growers in respect of additional olive trees or the relevant areas planted after 1 May 1998'.

Under the recent Commission proposal, aid for olive oil would be calculated on the basis of the aid received in the period 2000-2002. Olive groves begin to yield fruit five years after being established, and only reach full productive capacity ten years after planting. As a consequence, the entitlements for olive trees planted between 1990 and 1 May 1998 would, despite their being eligible for aid, be inferior to those for other olive trees. Similarly, the Council regulation of 1998 established guaranteed national quantities which, if exceeded, trigger the application of penalties, and therefore the granting of less aid. In this way, if the approach announced by the Commission were to be applied, there would be a reduction in the aid entitlements for olive trees planted between 1988 and 1 May 1998. Olive groves that are the subject of restructuring or replanting measures in these periods would also be affected by both sets of circumstances.

The Commission has commissioned studies and investigations - Olistat, Olisig, Oliarea and Olicount, Olicount 2000, Oliarea and Geomatics - to obtain reliable information on Community olive groves, and has been able to use GIS for this.

What surface area of olive groves planted prior to 1998 in each Member State would not have come into full production in 2000? What surface area of olive groves subject to restructuring or replanting measures in each Member State would not have come into full production in 2000? How many producers fall into each of these two categories in each Member State?

¹ OJ L 210, 28.7.1998, p. 32