

**Question for written answer P-009519/2013
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Rebecca Taylor (ALDE)

Subject: Testing for GM content of all rice products imported from China

Humdinger Ltd, a company operating in my constituency, is experiencing considerable disruption to its supply of rice crackers as a result of the testing requirements and regimes being imposed on rice and rice-containing products from China under Commission Implementing Decision 2011/884/EU, recently amended by Decision 2013/287/EU.

Humdinger reports that it has put a considerable amount of effort into maintaining the integrity of the products it sources. Despite this, the company has had two consignments of rice products tested positive for GM content by the Port Health Authority. On both occasions the company has had samples tested by both an independent laboratory and the Laboratory of Government Chemists (LGC): the results of the tests have been negative. Humdinger believes that the screening analysis methodology and the lack of scope of interpretation of test results are allowing false positive results to occur. The latest EC Decision states that there were 56 cases of rejection since initial implementation; however, there does not appear to be consideration of when there have been challenges which have been proved to be false.

The latest Commission Decision (2013/287/EU) also appears to have resulted in the local Chinese authorities ceasing to issue the GM-free hygiene certification. A statement released by AQSIQ (the Chinese quality standards authority) insists that documentation allowing the export of rice products which meet EU requirements is still being issued. This is not supported by Humdinger's experience in China.

Can the Commission state whether steps are being taken to ensure consistency in testing methodologies and interpretation of results, and whether support is available to assist companies affected by the current requirements?