

**Question for written answer P-010176/2013
to the Commission
Rule 117
Kartika Tamara Liotard (GUE/NGL)**

Subject: Pesticide contamination of fruit and vegetables exceeding acute reference dose

On 9 September, the Environmental Defence and Foodwatch NGOs published a report in the Netherlands expressing concern that the acute reference dose was being exceeded by the contamination of fruit and vegetables in European food chains by pesticide residues, affecting not only vulnerable sectors of society but also the population as a whole.

1. Does the Commission acknowledge that the maximum residue limit (MRL) applicable to a number of pesticides may allow the acute reference dose for certain sectors of the population (in this case young children) to be exceeded, as indicated in table 3 of the report entitled 'Inadequate statutory limits in respect of toxic residues in vegetables and fruit' (2013).
2. If so, can the Commission take prompt action to reassess existing limits and introduce safety standards accordingly so as to ensure that acute reference doses are not exceeded in respect of any population sectors?
3. If the Commission disagrees with the conclusions of the report, does that mean it is satisfied that the acute reference dose cannot be exceeded under any of the European maximum residue limits?
4. Article 1 of Regulation EC No 1107/2009 underlines the need to ensure that active substances or products placed on the market do not adversely affect animal or human health or the environment. However a number of pesticides, while remaining within statutory legal limits, still exceed the acute reference dose. To what extent do statutory safety limits run counter to the provisions of Article 1 of Regulation EC No 1107/2009?
5. The report also expresses concern at the cumulative risk of consuming certain fruits and vegetables resulting in the ingestion of certain types of pesticide. To what extent has research been carried out into the health risks of pesticide combinations? What specific research has been carried out into the cumulative effect on health of various types of authorised pesticide? Has research been carried out on the basis of consumption patterns in the various Member States?