

**Question for written answer P-000827/2014
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Maria do Céu Patrão Neves (PPE)

Subject: International Year of Family Farming

The United Nations has designated 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming, in recognition of this type of farming's fundamental contribution to world food security. Family farms produce 70% of the world's food. In the European Union, 97 % of agricultural holdings are family-based, with 69 % of Europe's agricultural land being given over to some 12 million family holdings which employ 77% of the overall agricultural workforce.

Unlike other more intensive forms of agriculture, which are essentially motivated by profit, one of the hallmarks of family farming is its unparalleled emotional link to the land, expressed in greater concern for the environment, which leads it to develop more sustainable and lasting forms of land use and contribute positively to maintaining rural populations, revitalising the countryside, promoting territorial and social cohesion, employment, management of natural resources, environmental protection and, in general, to the development and sustainable use of rural areas.

Given that the reform of the Common Agricultural Policy was concluded in 2013 and will be implemented in 2015, we feel that the celebration of the International Year of Family Farming in 2014 offers an excellent opportunity to draft specific measures to support and develop family farming in the EU, in order to strengthen its role in the rural environment.

1. Does the Commission recognise the specific difficulties faced by family farmers in terms of access to land and credit, excessive bureaucracy, technical training and promoting their products in the current context of imbalances along the agro-food chain?
2. What specific measures does the Commission plan to draw up during this international year of Family Farming?