1. Is the Commission aware of this case?

2. Did the Commission check bone meal imported from Switzerland? If so, what was the result of the checks?

3. Into which EU Member States was Swiss meat-and-bone meal imported up to 1997?

4. Is there information on how this meat-and-bone meal entered the food chain?

5. Did the Commission take steps to prevent further imports of meat-and-bone meal from Switzerland?

6. Is the Commission aware of any further such cases?

Answer given by Mr Byrne on behalf of the Commission

(14 February 2000)

The Commission is not familiar with the facts mentioned by the Honourable Member and intends to request the Swiss authorities for more detailed information. The Commission will notify the Honourable Member once it has received these particulars.

Generally speaking the Swiss health authorities keep a very close eye on trends in Community regulatory activity and integrate into their national legal order certain decisions adopted by the Member States. Hence, in May 1996 they began introducing into their regulations prescriptions equivalent to those provided for in Council Decision 96/449/EC of 18 July 1996 on the approval of alternative heat treatment systems for processing animal waste with a view to the inactivation of spongiform encephalopathy agents (1) (since replaced by Council Decision 1999/534/EC of 19 July 1999 on measures applying to the treatment of certain animal waste to protect against transmissible spongiform encephalopathy and amending Commission Decision 97/735/EC (2)), which laid down minimum criteria for treatment systems to be used in animal waste processing establishments (133°C, 20 minutes, 3 Bar).

The Commission's Food and Veterinary Office has carried out inspection visits to evaluate the measures put in place by the Swiss authorities to control and eliminate bovine spongiform encephalopathy on their territory. These visits have not revealed any shortcomings by comparison with the European rules governing animal waste processing.

All the information contained in the inspection reports can be consulted on the Internet at the following address: http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg24/health/vi/index_en.html.

(1) OJ L 184, 24.7.1996.
(2) OJ L 204, 4.8.1999.


by Marialiese Flemming (PPE-DE) to the Commission

(11 January 2000)

Subject: Hunting of migratory birds in Italy


Italy has not to my knowledge transposed the directive on the conservation of wild birds. In some regions of Italy hunting is permitted of species (e.g. chaffinch, tree sparrow, starling, blackbird) that are not classed as species which may be hunted under Annex II. Furthermore, hunting with nets takes place, for example, although Article 8 of the directive prohibits the use of non-selective hunting methods.
Is the Commission aware of this fact?

If so, what measures has the Commission taken or will it take to ensure transposition of Directive 79/409/EEC in Italy?

Is the Commission considering instituting proceedings for infringement of the Treaty against Italy?


Answer given by Mrs Wallström on behalf of the Commission

(24 January 2000)

Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds has been transposed in Italy by law no 157 of 11 February 1992 on the protection of warm-blooded wild animals and on hunting. This is a framework law laying down the principles on the basis of which the regions adopt detailed rules. Under Article 13 of that law, hunters may use only shotguns, bows and arrows or falcons. Any hunting methods or weapons not expressly authorised in that Article are banned. Article 21 reinforces the ban by specifying which activities and methods are prohibited, including hunting with nets. As for the wild bird species, only those listed in Annex II of the Directive can be hunted under the above mentioned Italian legislation. Therefore, the capture of protected wild bird species and the use of nets are generally prohibited in Italy.

However, the system of wild bird protection set out in the Directive allows for some derogations. Article 9 of the Directive lists the requirements and conditions under which derogations to the provisions of the Directive are allowed. The Commission is aware that these conditions are not fully respected by the Italian legislation. The way of implementing the above mentioned derogation regime of the Directive in Italy does not comply with the provisions of Article 9 of the Directive. In the light of that, the Commission decided in 1998 to bring the matter before the Court of justice. The Commission had considered that Italy had failed to ensure respect for all conditions of the regime in certain situations where derogations are invoked and to correctly regulate the capture of three wild bird species for use as decoys. The case is now pending before the Court.


by Richard Corbett (PSE) to the Commission

(11 January 2000)

Subject: Updating of driving licences

As it is no longer necessary to exchange driving licences when moving to a new Member State, which national authorities are now responsible for any necessary updating (e.g. change of address on the licence)?

Is the Commission aware that problems have arisen because of the country of residence's claiming that this is a question for the Member State of origin, whereas the Member State of origin says that this is a matter for the new country of residence? If so, what does the Commission advise?

Answer given by Mrs de Palacio on behalf of the Commission

(31 January 2000)