

As part of the Community's regional policy, there are also a certain number of aid schemes aimed at small enterprises and craft enterprises, provided that these are located in regions which are eligible for regional development funds.

(<sup>1</sup>) Doc COM(96) 591.

(98/C 82/112)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-2372/97**

**by Patricia McKenna (V) to the Commission**

(10 July 1997)

*Subject:* Proposals for an EU ban on hormone-treated meat

The European Farmers' Coordination (EFC) has called on the EU to ban hormone-treated meat and campaign for an international ban. The World Trade Organization is currently dealing with this issue and an international arbitration panel has been set up because of differences of opinion between the EU and the US.

According to the EFC, 'neither farmers nor consumers need hormones and the principle of long-term health precaution must prevail'.

Because recent policy statements from the Commission have indicated that it too believes in the principle of long-term health precaution, will it work for a ban on hormone-treated meat both in the EU and internationally?

**Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission**

(4 September 1997)

The Commission is aware that the European farmers' co-ordination is in favour of the maintenance of the ban on hormone treated meat, both in the Community and for its import from third countries.

In the context of the World trade organization (WTO) panel on hormones in Geneva, the Commission invoked the precautionary principle in support of its claims, and defended the position that the Community's right to decide what level of sanitary protection it deems appropriate for its citizen should be fully recognised by the Sanitary and phytosanitary agreement.

The Honourable Member may rest assured that the Commission will use all the legal means at its disposal in the appeals procedure at the WTO to defend the present Community legislation.

(98/C 82/113)

**WRITTEN QUESTION E-2373/97**

**by Juan Colino Salamanca (PSE) to the Commission**

(10 July 1997)

*Subject:* Aid to the table olive sector

The table olive sector is at present going through a serious crisis. The high costs of this product — which, apart from promotional measures, is not the subject of Community aid — cause prices to rise, which in turn leads to a fall in consumption and a loss of competitiveness for Community production compared with third countries.

The Commission options paper on the reform of the olive oil sector COM(97) 57 final mentions the seriousness of the situation the what the sector expects from the reform.

Does the Commission intend to take steps to ensure the survival of this truly European product?

Has it considered the possibility of granting a specific form of aid, as requested by producers, which does not come into conflict with the olive oil sector?