

(1999/C 297/022)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2399/98**by Marjo Matikainen-Kallström (PPE) to the Commission**

(27 July 1998)

Subject: Additional set-aside and sowing times in Finland

Finland has been experiencing very hard times for spring sowing. Because of the bad weather conditions it was not possible to cultivate the land even in June. The Commission's decision on the possibility of additional set-aside quotas for Finland has been postponed until the end of June. Farmers, however, need to decide whether to set land aside or sow their crops into the frosty and waterlogged land in the hope of subsidies. In Finland the farming conditions in spring are often relatively difficult and are not comparable to those in southern Europe.

Would it not be better for the time of sowing and, where appropriate, the need for additional set-aside, to be decided at national level rather than having to wait for the sometimes long-winded decisions of the EU? Decisions taken at national level might help speed up and simplify decisions on sowing and increase farmers' confidence in the EU.

Answer given by Mr Fischler on behalf of the Commission

(17 September 1998)

Sowing times and additional set-aside are not related. The Community fixes a deadline by which producers have to adopt their cultivation plans. Producers have to submit aid applications based on those cultivation plans under the Integrated Administration and Control System for the compensatory payments scheme by 15 May at the latest. For Finland, this date has been put back until 15 June to take account of the country's climate.

If weather conditions prevent this date from being met, measures can be adopted to allow the amendment of aid applications. This was the case in Finland this spring and Commission Regulation (EC) 1552/98 of 17 July 1998 derogating from Regulation (EEC) 3887/92 laying down detailed rules for applying the Integrated Administration and Control System for certain Community aid schemes⁽¹⁾ was adopted to remedy the situation by allowing areas declared as 'arable crops' to be changed to 'set-aside areas'. Since the adoption of such decisions requires a request from the national authorities to the Commission, it is up to those authorities to weigh up the situation in good time. The Commission is prepared to respond at very short notice if such requests prove justified.

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 202, 18.7.1998.

(1999/C 297/023)

WRITTEN QUESTION E-2404/98**by Ria Oomen-Ruijten (PPE) to the Commission**

(27 July 1998)

Subject: European ban on the use of the pesticide Drione

Is the Commission aware that the presence of the pesticide Drione in the water of the Meuse is causing problems for drinking water supply in the Netherlands?

When will the assessment committee be releasing its opinion on a ban on Drione?

Are there likely to be any initiatives or recommendations concerning the voluntary discontinuation of the use of Drione, as in the Netherlands?

Answer given by Mrs Bjerregaard on behalf of the Commission

(23 October 1998)

Under the obligation laid down in Council Directive 91/692/EEC of 23 December 1991 standardizing and rationalizing reports on the implementation of certain directives relating to the environment⁽¹⁾, the Netherlands submitted a report concerning the period 1993-1995 on a number of water related directives