

**Question for written answer E-001715/2024
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)

Subject: Action to combat the canker disease affecting chestnut crops

Chestnut cultivation is one of the mainstays of the economy and of rural life in many mountainous areas of Greece, particularly the Pelion area. In recent years, however, aside from climate conditions, chestnut growers have been facing serious problems because of chestnut blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*), which has led to significant losses in production and destroyed thousands of trees.

Despite the attempts at biological control and other management measures applied in some areas of Europe, the disease continues to spread, causing irreversible damage to crops. Chestnut producers have expressed concern for the future of their crops and the financial viability of their families. Their output this year is down by some 50%.

Taking into account the critical nature of the situation and the need to support growers:

1. What additional steps does the Commission intend to take to support research and the application of pioneering biological methods of controlling the disease, such as the use of hypoviral agents which have succeeded in other regions of Europe?
2. Is there any provision for giving financial support to Greek growers affected by the disease in order to reduce the consequences of production losses and secure the viability of the crops?
3. How does the Commission intend to promote the exchange of expertise and practices between Member States so that the blight on chestnut crops is dealt with effectively?

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