

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002546/25
to the Commission
Mireia Borrás Pabón (Pfe)
(25 June 2025)**

Subject: Critical situation affecting cereal crops in Spain

The European cereal sector, especially in Spain, is going through a severe crisis, driven by high production costs, low prices and massive imports from third countries.

Over the last 20 years, Spain has lost almost 1 000 000 hectares of cereal-growing land. At the same time, its imports and dependency on third countries have increased exponentially. Since 2022 alone, Spain has gone from importing around 3 million tonnes of maize, wheat and barley annually from Ukraine to over 10 million tonnes.

In view of the above, and considering the fall in cereal prices (40% lower than in 2022, 15% lower than in 2024):

1. Does the Commission intend to grant direct aid to farmers affected by low prices and high production costs?
2. Does the Commission plan to substantially change the preferential quotas under the future EU-Ukraine Association Agreement in order to protect EU farmers?

Submitted: 25.6.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(11 August 2025)**

The reduction of cereal acreage in Spain over the last 20 years reflects broader trends across the EU partly explained by a shift towards more oilseed crops.

Despite the difficulties posed by recurrent droughts in Spain, the outlook for the current season is very positive, with crop production well above historical levels.

Yet, Spain will remain a major cereal importer due to its traditional deficit and the rapid growth of its pigmeat sector, which has increased by about 40% over the last 10 years.

Given higher domestic production this season the Commission anticipates lower imports, notably of soft wheat from Ukraine.

Moreover, as per the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) agreement reached in principle, as announced on 30 June 2025 ⁽¹⁾, the revised volumes of the tariff rate quotas for imports of maize, wheat and barley from Ukraine will be limited to 1 000 000, 1 300 000 and 450 000 tonnes respectively, far below imports of these products in 2023 and 2024.

This market access is conditional on Ukraine's alignment to the EU agricultural production standards by 2028. The agreement includes also a robust safeguard mechanism to protect EU markets.

While global and EU cereal prices are currently relatively low, they remain roughly 10% higher than during the same period in 2020.

The Commission is actively monitoring the market, as well as trends in farmers' operating costs and gross margins. As things stand, the analysis of the Commission services indicates that there is no significant disturbance warranting the activation of additional measures.

Moreover, the Common Agricultural Policy, in particular through its income support measures, provides stability to farmers' income. The Commission remains fully committed to supporting EU farmers.

⁽¹⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/api/files/document/print/en/ip_25_1672/IP_25_1672_EN.pdf.