

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000152/26
to the Commission**

**Daniele Polato (ECR), Carlo Fidanza (ECR), Nicola Procaccini (ECR), Sergio Berlato (ECR), Francesco Torselli (ECR),
Francesco Ventola (ECR)**

(14 January 2026)

Subject: Possible increase in Tunisian olive oil imports and their potential impact on agriculture, the olive oil industry and consumers

In the first months of 2025, Tunisian olive oil imports to Italy increased by 38%, causing Italian extra virgin oil prices to slump by over 30%.

Tunisian olive oil is now being sold at under EUR 4/litre, pushing Italian olive oil prices below production costs, leading the product to be viewed as a low-cost good and undermining years of investment in quality and environmental and social standards, which are higher than those in Tunisia.

Over the years, the rules on inward processing have eroded transparency as to the true provenance of this product, to the detriment of Italian producers.

The recent news of a further possible increase in imports from Tunisia at zero rate duty has added to a situation which is already critical and in which there is absolutely no reciprocity.

In view of the above, can the Commission state:

1. Why it considers it necessary to increase the volume of these olive oil imports at zero rate duty, when this is severely affecting the quality olive oil industry in Italy and the EU?
2. How it intends to protect European agriculture, bearing in mind also the need to ensure reciprocity?
3. What it will do to ensure a clearer indication of the country of origin and stop inward processing rules muddying transparency for consumers as to the origin of this product?

Submitted: 14.1.2026

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission

(23 March 2026)

On 29 January 2026 the Commission received an official communication from the Tunisian authorities requesting a revision of the Protocol on agriculture of the Association Agreement with Tunisia.

However, the Commission does not envisage additional trade concessions for agricultural products originating in Tunisia including olive oil.

The Commission recognises the importance of a high level of protection of human health and the environment in the Vision for Agriculture and Food ⁽¹⁾. Food imported from third countries and food produced in the EU must comply with very strict sanitary requirements.

The Commission committed to a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products and a strengthening of import controls ⁽²⁾.

The Commission launched an impact assessment ⁽³⁾ with a view to strengthening alignment of the EU's production standards on most hazardous pesticides with requirements applicable to imported products.

The origin of extra virgin and virgin olive oils must be labelled pursuant to Article 8 of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/2104 ⁽⁴⁾.

In particular, for such oils it is mandatory to inform consumers if the product comes from one of the Member States or from a third country, or if it is a mix of EU and non-EU oils. The inward processing regime does not affect this mandatory labelling.

⁽¹⁾ https://agriculture.ec.europa.eu/overview-vision-agriculture-food/vision-agriculture-and-food_en.

⁽²⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_2979.

⁽³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_25_2809.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R2104&qid=1769620624009>.