

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001655/26
to the Commission
Galato Alexandraki (ECR)
(22 April 2026)**

Subject: Prioritising checks at Greek entry points for fruit and vegetables with residues of substances banned in the EU

The Commission has announced an impact assessment and possible further legislative action to prevent the most hazardous pesticides banned in the EU from entering via imports, while measures have already been proposed for benomyl, carbendazim and thiophanate-methyl.

At the same time, it has announced a 50% increase in audits in non-EU countries, a 33% increase in audits at border control posts and a special task force focusing on pesticide residues, among other things.

For Greece, the issue is of particular importance. There is a need for the clear prioritisation of checks at implementation level and not just a general reference to mirror clauses.

Can the Commission answer the following:

1. Will it include specific Greek entry points and categories of high-risk imported fruit and vegetables in its priorities for checks and audits for 2026-2027?
2. Does it intend to organise coordinated EU monitoring for residues of banned substances in fruits and vegetables entering the EU via Greece?
3. What interim measures will it take until the legislative change is completed, in order to prevent unfair competition to the detriment of Greek producers?

Submitted: 22.4.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(3 July 2026)**

Food products from third countries, regardless of their origin, must comply with EU food safety requirements laid down in EU legislation.

According to Regulation (EU) 2017/625⁽¹⁾, Member States must carry out risk based official controls and enforcement activities among others at the stage of distribution, including for imports.

Where food of non-animal origin from third countries poses a risk, the Commission may adopt measures through Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2019/1793⁽²⁾.

The Commission performs audits in Member States and in third countries to ensure that their official control systems guarantee that goods intended for export to the EU comply with the applicable EU rules⁽³⁾.

An audit on import control system in Greece is planned in late 2026 which will include the official controls on high-risk imported fruit and vegetables.

The Task Force on Import Controls⁽⁴⁾ launched in January 2026 aims to maintain and reinforce the EU's ability to ensure imports meet EU standards, with pesticide control identified as one of its priority focus areas.

The general monitoring of residues in the EU coordinated multiannual control programme is operated based on a design assessment of European Food Safety Authority which identified 36 products constituting the major components of Europeans diet but doesn't single out Greece or banned substances exclusively.

Member States tailor their risk-based sampling programmes, taking into account factors like the significance of food products in trade or national diets, historically non-compliance residues and pesticide usage patterns.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/1793/oj.

⁽³⁾ Health and Food Audits and Analysis, https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/official-controls-and-enforcement/health-and-food-audits-and-analysis_en.

⁽⁴⁾ Import controls of food and feed Questions and Answers; Food Safety: https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/official-controls-and-enforcement/import-controls-food-and-feed-qas_en.