

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001801/26
to the Commission
Lefteris Nikolaou-Alavanos (NI)
(4 May 2026)**

Subject: Greek rice ‘victim’ of EU trade agreements and unscrupulous merchants

Rice producers in Greece are being hit hard by the policy of the EU and Greek governments. Our country is one of the biggest producers in the EU.

For the last two years, Greek farmers have despaired over mass imports of rice from non-EU countries. Merchants and processing groups — exploiting the common agricultural policy — import rice of dubious and inferior quality, often produced with pesticides banned in the EU. The consequences are disastrous.

The producer price has fallen to levels that do not even cover production costs. High-quality Greek rice remains unsold. Months after the farmers’ protests, producers have still not received a single euro, as the so-called ‘support’ of the Nea Demokratia Government has not materialised. The situation is the direct result of the ‘free market’ and the CAP.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. What view does it take of the fact that EU trade agreements under the CAP are stifling Greek production, permitting the entry of products that do not even meet the necessary standards adhered to by our farmers?
2. What is the Commission’s position on the urgent need to immediately and fully compensate Greek rice producers for their lost income, beyond the *de minimis* amounts, which are insufficient to meet their needs and have not yet been paid out?

Submitted: 4.5.2026

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(1 July 2026)**

The Commission closely monitors the situation of Union rice production, where rising input costs and low prices, similar to other crops, have been increasing.

Rice is sensitive in all trade negotiations. Most duty-free rice imports fall under the Everything But Arms arrangement of the Generalised Scheme of Preferences (GSP) ⁽¹⁾.

As of 2027, under the new GSP ⁽²⁾, a new rice-specific automatic safeguard will be available, in addition to three other safeguards also available to the Union rice sector.

All food products on the market, including imported foods, must comply with the same non-negotiable Union standards on safety and health, which are enforced through rigorous import controls, regular audits in countries exporting to the Union, and immediate corrective actions when needed.

Where imported rice poses a risk, the Commission may adopt measures under Regulation 2019/1793 ⁽³⁾. Currently, rice from India and Pakistan is subject to increased controls at entry into the Union.

Under the Vision for Agriculture and Food, measures will be adopted to ensure the highest level of food safety, including more audits in other countries and more audits of European Border Control Posts. The Commission will also pursue a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products.

The proposal for the new multiannual financial framework includes an enhanced crisis response in case of market disturbances through the Unity Safety Net, doubling the current crisis reserve and helping farmers when markets are disrupted.

Under the promotion policy, EUR 205 million are available to launch programmes and actions in 2026 to boost the Union's agri-food competitiveness and its export market diversification.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2012/978/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2026/1395 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2026 on applying a generalised scheme of tariff preferences and repealing Regulation (EU) No 978/2012, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2026/1395/oj>.

⁽³⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2019/1793/oj.