

(English version)

Question for written answer E-002368/26
to the Commission
Valentina Palmisano (The Left), Mario Furore (The Left)
(9 June 2026)

Subject: Crisis in the extra virgin olive oil sector and protecting EU producers' competitiveness

According to sector organisations, the extra virgin olive oil sector is experiencing a period of severe economic difficulty.

The Calabria and Puglia regions have requested an urgent debate on the crisis in the sector, in order to highlight to the Italian Government the challenges faced throughout this area of the economy ⁽¹⁾. In addition to falling profitability, there are rising production costs, price volatility and growing concerns about competition from third-country imports. In this context, a number of producers are speaking out about the risk of a progressive loss of competitiveness in EU olive growing and insufficient producer remuneration.

In the light of the above:

1. Is the Commission aware of the crisis affecting the extra virgin olive oil sector in various regions of the EU, and what assessments has it made of the economic impact of the crisis on producers' incomes?
2. Will it adopt or consider adopting extraordinary support measures or crisis management instruments under the common agricultural policy to safeguard the sector's competitiveness and economic sustainability?
3. What checks and inspections are carried out to ensure that imports of olive oil from third countries meet standards equivalent to those required of EU producers from an environmental, phytosanitary and social point of view, and does the Commission agree that the principle of reciprocity in this area should be strengthened?

Submitted: 9.6.2026

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(3 August 2026)

The Commission is fully aware of the concerns mentioned by the Honourable Member. Production recovery in Spain and Italy, after years of drought and record prices, together with faltering demand, are putting pressure on olive oil prices. In the meantime, record harvests in third countries and geopolitical events add uncertainty and higher input costs.

Regulation (EU) No 1308/2013 ⁽¹⁾ provides tools to address market volatility, such as Article 167a allowing Member States to regulate supply, improve and stabilise the olive oil market.

The Commission may, in case of severe imbalance, activate private storage aid for olive oil. The continued income support from the Common Agricultural Policy through direct payments plays an important role for farmers.

In terms of costs, the Commission is aware of high input and energy costs and has taken measures to address them ⁽²⁾. Finally, the promotion policy is available for the sector, co-funding campaigns to promote consumption both in the EU and third countries.

Food products from third countries must comply with import requirements laid down in EU legislation. Member States must carry out risk-based official controls on products from non-EU countries ⁽³⁾.

The Commission performs audits in Member States to verify the application of substantive and control rules. The Commission also performs audits in third countries to ensure that goods intended for export comply with EU rules and control systems are capable of ensuring it ⁽⁴⁾.

¹ https://press.regione.puglia.it/-/olivicultura-su-richiesta-della-puglia-la-crisi-dell-evo-approda-in-commissione-politiche-agricole-il-4-giugno?fbclid=PARITSASMEEdleHRuA2FibQIxMABzcnRjBmFwcF9pZA8xMjQwMjQ1NzQyODc0MTQAaafk5eqNDzs2DPjCTOxZwJfPcgjMyp992tGav-17iZKI0QdpQjJFCssea21weg_aem_3Tz9rfHWji5HpcMkxRGiHw.

⁽¹⁾ <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1308/oj>.

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TEXT/?uri=omnat:COM_2026_0310_FIN; https://energy.ec.europa.eu/document/download/7fac9eea-5717-4182-a368-bd68c427ff4c_en?filename=Communication.pdf.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/625/oj>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/official-controls-and-enforcement/health-and-food-audits-and-analysis_en.

The Commission recently announced a series of measures to strengthen these controls ⁽⁵⁾, while pursuing, in line with international rules ⁽⁶⁾ and based on impact assessment, a stronger alignment of production standards applied to imported products, notably on pesticides and animal welfare ⁽⁷⁾.

⁽⁵⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/es/ip_25_2979.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022DC0226>.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52025DC0075>.