(English version)

Question for written answer E-003297/26
to the Commission
Sakis Arnaoutoglou (S&D)
(19 August 2026)

Subject: Early harvesting and illegal trade of Greek kiwi fruit — need to protect their quality and reputation in EU markets

Greek kiwi fruit is one of the country's most dynamic agricultural export products, with a significant presence in the single market and in non-EU countries. However, there have been recurring complaints about early harvesting and trade of kiwi fruit that do not meet the required maturity and quality characteristics.

According to representatives of producers and exporters, Greek kiwi fruit have been found in European markets at a particularly low degree of maturity. Such practices not only harm consistent producers and exporters, but may also undermine the reputation of Greek kiwi fruit and the confidence of European consumers.

Despite the existing national and European framework for the marketing of fruit and vegetables, issues arise regarding the effectiveness of controls, traceability and cross-border cooperation between the competent authorities.

In view of the above:

1. How does the Commission assess the application of European marketing and control rules with regard to the trading of kiwi fruit that do not meet the required standards and what is the responsibility of the Member States?

2. Does the Commission intend to strengthen coordination and information exchange between the Member States' oversight authorities, so that illegal or non-compliant consignments are detected not only in the country of production but also at their final destination?

3. Is the Commission considering establishing or strengthening a European traceability and maturity control system, from field to market, in order to protect consistent producers, consumers and the international reputation of quality European agricultural products such as Greek kiwi?

Submitted: 19.8.2026

Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(13 October 2026)

The Common Market Organisation Regulation ([1]) and its related implementing provisions ([2]) provide for Member States to ensure that conformity checks are carried out selectively at all stages of marketing, based on a risk analysis, with appropriate frequency, so as to ensure compliance with the relevant marketing standards. Such conformity checks should also serve to identify possible fraudulent or deceptive practices.

The relevant legislation also states that when Member State competent authorities find a non-conforming, defective or deteriorated consignment from another Member State, they shall notify forthwith the Member States likely to be concerned, including those where the goods were packaged. This notification system helps Member States in evaluating non-compliance risks in real time and to react accordingly.

The Commission updates Member States regarding ongoing non-compliance events during regular Expert Group meetings of the subgroup horticultural products ([3]). This contributes to the Member States' analysis of risk and to the adjustment of the frequency and targets of their conformity checks, therefore improving their national inspection system.

([1]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2013/1308/oj/eng.
([2]) https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg_impl/2023/2430/oj/eng.
([3]) https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/meetings?lang=en — Group name: E02730/1.