

**Question for written answer E-015099/2015
to the Commission**

Rule 130

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Subject: Olive oil characteristics (heptadecanoic acid limit values)

Annex I ('Olive oil characteristics') of Regulation (EU) 2015/1830 lays down limit values for fatty acids in olive oil, with a view to ensuring that extra virgin oil is not adulterated with other plant oils.

However, the oil obtained from some olives produced by Italian growers does not comply with those limit values. Oil which does not meet the requirements laid down in Annex I cannot be classified as olive oil, and if it is blended with other oils it cannot be sold as 'traceable' oil.

Examples of such oils are those obtained from Carolea olives in Calabria and Coratina olives in Puglia, which cannot be bottled and sold as 'traceable' oils because they do not comply with the limit value of 0.30% laid down for heptadecanoic acid. It is difficult to see why a limit value has been set for heptadecanoic acid, as higher values for that acid cannot be viewed as evidence of adulteration because no plant oils that can be blended with extra virgin oils contain it.

Would the Commission agree that those limit values should be reviewed, as they are no guarantee of quality and are having an adverse impact on the already precarious livelihoods of growers who have voluntarily signed up to a product quality certification scheme?