

OLAF JIT Uncovers Tomato Swindle



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European Law Forum: Prevention • Investigation • Prosecution

Thomas Wahl

News

On 19 January 2022, OLAF reported on the [results of a joint investigation team](#) (JIT) involving OLAF, the Romanian National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA) and the Prosecution Office of the Italian commune of Enna. The investigations revealed practices of a criminal group that defrauded EU agricultural funds worth €850,000. The group established shell companies in Romania and submitted false leases and invoices, thus receiving EU funds for farms allegedly producing tomatoes, even though farming never took place. After having received the funds, the money was transferred to Italy where it was quickly withdrawn in order to finance other criminal activities. 9 persons must now stand trial in Romania on charges of fraud. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development is recommended to recover the full funding amount of €850,000.

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