

# Deadly Germany E. coli strain found mainly in humans: report

June 7 2011

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Germany's deadly E. coli strain is found mainly in humans rather than animals, the Tagesspiegel newspaper reported Tuesday citing scientific research.

The bacteria, responsible for 23 deaths and over 2,000 contaminations, does not belong to typical strains of enterohaemorrhagic E. coli (EHEC), but rather to an enteroaggregative E. coli, known as EAEC, characterised by heavy diarrhea.

EAEC strains are not found in the digestive track of cattle, but rather in that of humans, according to Lothar Beutin, an expert at Germany's Federal Institute for [Risk Assessment](#).

"Such [pathogens](#) are well adapted to man," said Beutin, who believes it very unlikely the bacteria could have been passed on by liquid manure from animals.

The bacteria is especially dangerous to man because it sticks to the [human gut](#) and produces poison known as Shiga toxins.

Germany has so far been unable to pinpoint the origin of the contamination, but has warned consumers not to eat sprouts, raw tomatoes, lettuce and cucumbers, particularly in the north of the country, where the outbreak is concentrated.

Meanwhile, European Union agriculture ministers were to hold

emergency talks in Luxembourg on Tuesday to discuss aid for farmers who are unable to sell their vegetables due to growing consumer fears.

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