

Variety of EHEC bacteria found in Dutch sugar-beets

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Dutch health authorities said Thursday they found EHEC bacteria in sugar-beets exported to Germany and Belgium, but it was a different variety to the deadly strain that has killed 25 people.

"This variety was picked up in the shoots of cultivated sugar-beets by a Dutch producer," food and consumer safety authority spokeswoman Marian Bestelink told AFP.

"What we are sure of is that this is not the variety that's been the source of the epidemic in Germany. This is another variety of the EHEC bacteria," she said, referring to the acronym for enterohaemorrhagic E. coli.

Dutch authorities have recalled the unnamed Dutch producer's exported [sugar beets](#) from Germany and Belgium and stopped its sales, she said.

Bestelink stressed however: "It is not the lethal variant of the microbe such as the one in Germany, but it could cause disease, one never knows."

Germany said Wednesday was hopeful the "worst" of the killer bacteria outbreak was over as European officials discussed how to help hard-hit farmers.

The outbreak of the deadly [strain of bacteria](#) has killed 25 people -- 24 of them in Germany and another woman in Sweden who had just

returned from Germany -- and and left more than 2,600 ill.

The outbreak's source had not yet been found.

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