

Russia to resume buying Spanish, Danish vegetables

July 1 2011

(AP) -- Russia has lifted a ban on vegetable imports from Spain and Denmark that was put in place amid an E. coli outbreak in Europe, the country's consumer rights watchdog said Friday.

The agency said it made the move after analyzing the situation in those countries. Earlier this week, Russia lifted its blanket ban on vegetable imports from the European Union put in place over E. coli fears, starting with the Netherlands and Belgium.

The EU called the ban disproportionate and the dispute has clouded Russia's [World Trade Organization](#) accession talks.

Russia and the EU have reached agreement on safety certification for vegetables to be supplied to Russia, and Gennady Onishchenko said EU producers must strictly comply. He said several other EU nations are on the waiting list to resume exports.

German authorities on Friday reported another death in the European E. coli outbreak - bringing the total to 50.

The national disease control center said 48 deaths have been reported in Germany, up from 47 a day earlier. One death in Sweden and another in the U.S. are linked to the outbreak, according to the [World Health Organization](#).

A total of 3,999 people have now been reported to be ill in Germany

from the outbreak, including 845 with a complication that can lead to [kidney failure](#). Another 122 cases have been reported in 16 other countries.

Onishchenko said Friday that a blanket ban on the EU vegetable imports was a rational move for Russia.

"Even Germany with its high standards of health care had trouble coping with it," Onishchenko told reporters Friday, according to RIA Novosti news agency. "Just imagine what will happen if it's brought to our territory, given the condition of our [health care facilities](#) and (scarce) supply of antibiotics."

Russia's [health care system](#) has been crippled by chronic funding shortages.

New infections have been declining for weeks, but the total tally is still rising largely because of delays in notification.

European health experts said Thursday that contaminated Egyptian fenugreek seeds were likely the source of the deadly outbreak.

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