

EU offers 2.1 mln euros to research new killer E.coli

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The EU is to invest 2.2 million euros in research on the new killer E.coli strain which infected almost 4,000 people and left 51 dead across Europe and caused massive losses to vegetable farmers.

The European Commission's decision Tuesday "to get as full a scientific picture as possible" of virulent [Escherichia coli](#) came as Russia lifted a costly ban slapped on EU vegetables over the row.

Russia, which imports a total 600 million euros (\$859 million) of European Union vegetables a year, introduced the ban June 2 after initial reports blamed European produce. The [culprit](#) was eventually found to be Egyptian fenugreek seeds.

Producers of cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, courgettes and sweet peppers, withdrawn from the market between late May and the end of June, have been promised 227 million euros in compensation.

Funds to put the new killer strain under the microscope are part of a 12-million-euro research programme to reinforce Europe's capacity for tackling pathogens.

"The research will focus on ways to prevent future epidemics and deal with new outbreaks," the commission said.

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