



**Brussels**, 10 June 2011  
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## Summary Note

### AUDIO CONFERENCE ON THE SHIGA TOXIN-PRODUCING *E. COLI* (STEC) OUTBREAK AND NECESSARY FOLLOW-UP

**10 JUNE 2011, 17:00 – 18:15**

### Audio Conference

**CHAIR:** Koen VAN DYCK, Head of Unit SANCO G/4, Food, Alert System and Training

**PARTICIPANTS:** RASFF and EWRS contact points, SANCO G4, ECDC, WHO

#### Objective of the meeting:

DG SANCO organised this special audio conference on the Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) outbreak in Germany with a special focus on food safety aspects and the investigations on the source.

#### 1. Update on the identification of the source by Germany

##### DE

- EHEC – 2,229 cases (9 deaths) reported.
- HUS – 759 cases (21 deaths) reported.

The slowing downtrend in the epidemiological situation is still ongoing.

The results of a the "recipe-based restaurant cohort study" are presented where evidence was collected based on recipes, chosen menus, ingredients, photographs of dishes etc. The study gives enough evidence to support sprouts as the source.

Therefore a joint press-release from the RKI, BfR and BVL was issued today with four main recommendations:

- existing general recommendation not to consume cucumbers, tomatoes and leaf lettuce in northern Germany is no longer valid
- sprouts should not be consumed raw, households and catering businesses are advised to destroy any sprouts they may still have in stock along with any other foods with which they may have come in contact.
- all food originating from the affected farm business in Lower Saxony be taken out of circulation.
- customary rules of hygiene be adhered to strictly when handling foods and dealing with patients.

A taskforce was introduced in the BVL and a lot of samples have been taken from the suspected sprout producer. Half of the outbreak clusters can be linked through the distribution chain with the producer in Bienenbüttel.

No confirmation can be given on the status of the sample referred to in today's news, however STEC was found, serotype 0104 needs to be confirmed by the NRL first.

One of the workers in the production site was suffering from HUS and also STEC 0104 has been isolated. As the date of onset of illness is 12/05, it is not likely to be the index case with a expected incubation period of 2-15 days. Also 2 other workers reported diarrhoea from 05/05 onwards, stool samples have been taken just now and are being analysed.

The products were only distributed to 5 federal states in the north of Germany, where also disease clusters were detected. No sprouts were delivered outside of Germany. Detailed information will be forwarded via RASFF.

The sprouts were mostly distributed as mixtures containing different kinds of sprouts. Information on seeds of all sprout producers will be collected (often to Third Countries like China, Canada) and the connections between the producer in Bienenbüttel and the disease clusters will be refined.

ECDC reports on the various findings of STEC 0104 in recent history.

RKI informs that no outbreak of STEC 0104 has had the same molecular-genetic pattern.

DK informs about a case without travel history to Germany, however radish sprouts from a different German company were reported in the diet.

The Commission suggests forwarding this information via RASFF.

BVL also gives the e-mail address of the taskforce ([lagezentrum@bvl.bund.de](mailto:lagezentrum@bvl.bund.de) indicating "taskforce" in the subject)

The Commission thanks the German authorities for their work and closes the meeting at 6.15pm.