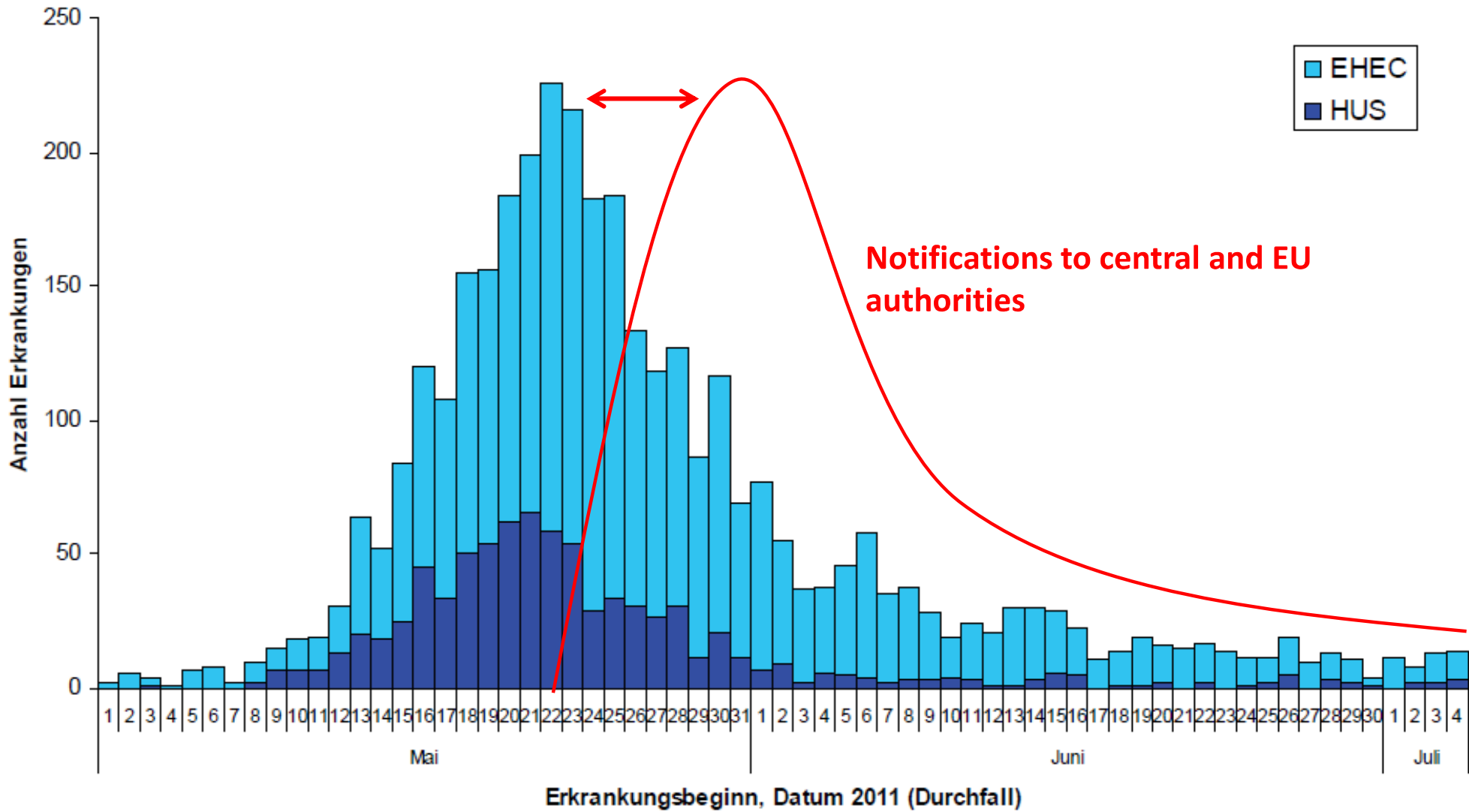


# Impact EHEC crisis

- Worst food crisis ever in Europe, mortality rate never encountered in previous food scares
  - 44 persons died
  - 3700 persons contaminated, +800 suffering HUS-complications
- Cause:
  - Egyptian seeds for sprouting not explicitly authorised for human consumption
  - Exceptionally virulent E. Coli strain O104 H4 which no one looked for, human reservoir (pathway still unknown)
- Importance Good Hygiene Practices all along the supply chain
- Complexity microbiological contamination vs popular claims against organic, certain origins...

# EHEC-crisis



# EHEC-crisis

- Damages to supply chain in excess of 1 billion EURO (lost sales, low prices, overcapacity, ...)
- Sales starting to recover, but price remains under pressure, full recovery will take years
- Image fresh produce
  - Brutal wake-up call for consumers which did not associate healthy products with food poisoning
  - Reputational damage cucumbers and Spain
  - Restoring confidence takes much longer than the few seconds it took to destroy it, even if mistakenly

# EHEC-crisis

Member State	Withdrawals						Non harvesting/Green harvesting						Total per country (a) +(b)
	Cucumber	Tomato	Lettuce & chicory	Sweet pepper	Courgette	TOTAL (a)	Cucumber	Tomato	Lettuce & chicory	Sweet pepper	Courgette	TOTAL (b)	
AT	436.111	22.760	55.766	12.681	27.607	554.925	85.419	0	1.593.239	0	520	1.679.178	2.234.103
BE	955.311	2.040.751	366.635	16.779	43.150	3.422.626	35.748	0	147.289	0	0	183.037	3.605.663
BG	1.187.033	1.272.556	71.195	22.977	2.510	2.556.271	0	0	5.691	0	786	6.477	2.562.748
CY						0						0	0
CZ	0	0	23.507	0	0	23.507	104.220	0	134.207	0	0	238.427	261.935
DE	1.152.190	641.295	282.264	3.298	62.681	2.141.728	119.481	1.845	13.360.490	0	380.177	13.861.993	16.003.721
DK	0	7.182	16.314	0	0	23.496	0	0	834.927	0	0	834.927	858.423
EE	0	1.321	0	0	0	1.321	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.321
EL	380.118	1.356.862	1.089	133.188	4.258	1.875.515	1.519.797	3.638.694	962	684.585	68.867	5.912.905	7.788.420
ES	1.207.685	7.504.536	560.282	3.955.709	283.753	13.511.966	4.293.498	45.987.392	1.160.903	1.907.355	4.110.201	57.459.348	70.971.314
FI						0						0	0
FR	972.705	143.082	14.204	2.848	3.618	1.136.457	0	0	518.958	0	0	518.958	1.655.415
HU	460.556	63.947	353.641	563.695	73.747	1.515.586	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.515.586
IE	13.159	0	0	0	0	13.159	0	0	0	0	0	0	13.159
IT	429.204	1.348.642	492.908	77.156	446.405	2.794.315	537.542	25.457.738	2.927.010	833.776	2.074.257	31.830.324	34.624.639
LT						0						0	0
LU						0						0	0
LV	14.629	0	3.548	0	0	18.177	39.204	0	0	0	0	39.204	57.381
MT						0						0	0
NL	5.282.781	12.581.231	93.628	1.137.308	10.436	19.105.383	4.628.583	110.219	3.336.447	0	0	8.075.249	27.180.632
PL	0	0	0	0	0	0	19.531.649	22.237.200	3.738.799	608.355	279.478	46.395.480	46.395.480
PT	363.256	4.081.878	332.345	12.290	453.983	5.243.752	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.243.752
RO	2.076.676	1.647.292	0	0	0	3.723.968	21.067	0	0	0	0	21.067	3.745.035
SE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	112.872	0	0	112.872	112.872
SI	2.076	0	0	0	0	2.076	10.325	538	176.740	2.997	0	190.599	192.675
SK	282.781	149.506	10.386	48.773	0	491.447	2.059	12.899	4.493	25.209	0	44.660	536.107
UK	33.757	17.572	12.789	0	0	64.118	0	0	585.057	0	0	585.057	649.175
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15.250.029</b>	<b>32.880.414</b>	<b>2.690.501</b>	<b>5.986.704</b>	<b>1.412.147</b>	<b>58.219.794</b>	<b>30.928.592</b>	<b>97.446.525</b>	<b>28.638.083</b>	<b>4.062.276</b>	<b>6.914.285</b>	<b>167.989.762</b>	<b>226.209.556</b>

## Freshfel Communications

### ➤ Internal:

- Risk Communication Network – 30 updates with timely and reliable information
- Information for all members via Newsletter
- Individual contact with members for specific questions

### ➤ External:

- Media (specialised media but to a great extent also general media):
  - Press statements – Reuters & Factiva ,EFE, DPA, AFP, FT... Specialised press
  - Interviews (e.g. BBC, Deutsche Welle...)
  - Regularly updated FAQ on website
  - Information via Facebook, Headlines, etc
- Public authorities

## EU Communication

➤ Media package launched by EC DG AGRI on the occasion of the EU Agricultural Council on 19 July:

- Press advert: limited outreach (one, mainly free distribution newspaper per country); consultation of Freshfel by EC, but none of the suggestions have been realised; no prior coordination with national associations or other EC DGs
- short movie: rather ‘boring’ and too focused on crisis itself than spreading positive message
- Press conference: less than 5 minutes – without any scientist or health representatives; mainly used to profile Commissioner Ciolos

➤ information and promotion programmes

- additional budget of €15 million over 3 years



- Official communication

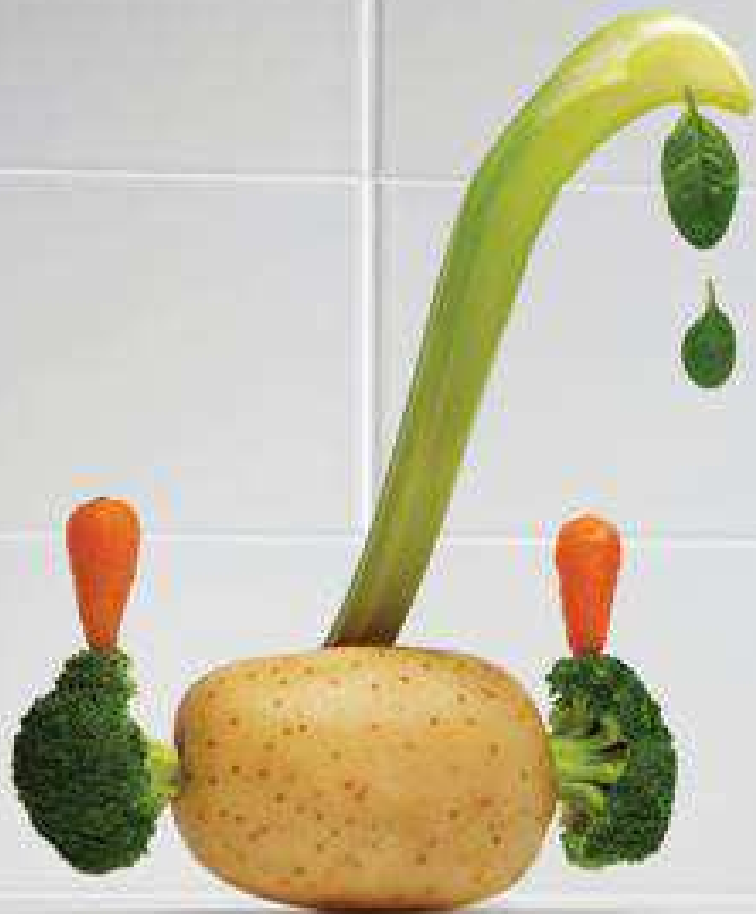
- Preventive: need to increase awareness of preventing food borne outbreaks with consumers

- fresh F&V also need attention

- Crisis: precautionary principle is key, but investigations take time => EHEC-communication potentially undermined public confidence

- Standard Operating Procedure for risk assessment (RASFF)





# VEGETABLES. BEST SERVED WASHED.

Vegetables can pick up harmful germs. So, you should always:

- wash, peel or cook them before eating
- store and prepare vegetables separately from food that is ready to eat
- use different chopping boards and utensils for raw and ready-to-eat foods or wash thoroughly between use
- finally, remember to wash your hands after handling raw vegetables

**That way, you won't serve up any unpleasant surprises.**



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- Sector communication
  - Caution with ‘our products are safe’ messages Acknowledge complexity of microbiological contamination,
  - Caution with fast compensation claims, at times human tragedy was barely considered
- Collaboration public authorities & sector
  - Foresee structural collaboration in case of crisis
  - Sector has knowledge of supply chain / additional monitoring

- Sector considerations
  - Review and improve food safety schemes
  - **Promote Good Hygiene Practices**
  - Improve surveillance
- Retailers & certification schemes
  - Usefulness additional tests? (e.g. bananas, potatoes)
  - Signal accreditation suspensions during crisis?
  - Review requirements / establishment toolbox (GlobalGAP)

- Policy implications

- EFSA-opinion on microbiological risks associated with plant products, particularly fresh produce
- Basis for possible new legal requirements (e.g. additional microbiological criteria)
- Legal proposals for sprouts already presented, entry into force end 2012
- Plant products vs animal products