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## Cruciferous veggie might put cross against bird flu Rumor says kimchi, or Korean kraut, helps cure chickens

MILWAUKEE - While President Bush scrambles to ward off an avian **flu** pandemic, the world's largest **sauerkraut** producer is sitting atop a bumper crop of one possible preventative.

That's right: **sauerkraut**.

An international buzz is surrounding the unassuming, fermented cruciferous vegetable that costs 89 cents per 14.5-ounce can. Scientists at Seoul National University in South Korea fed an extract of kimchi, a spicy Korean variant of **sauerkraut**, to 13 chickens infected with avian **flu**, and a week later, 11 of the birds started to recover, according to a report by the BBC Network.

"Unlike the government, we've got the preventative, and 115,000 tons of it in Wisconsin alone," said Ryan Downs, owner and general manager of Great Lakes Kraut Co., which has **sauerkraut** factories in Bear Creek and Shiocton, near Appleton, Wis., and in Shortsville, N.Y.

Downs said more extensive scientific research was needed to prove any curative link to avian **flu**, but he was happy to tout kraut as a healthy part of any diet.

Several television and radio stations throughout the United States have picked up the BBC story, said Steve Lundin, spokesman for **Frank's Sauerkraut**, based in Fremont, Ohio.

South Koreans reportedly are eating more kimchi since news of the study came out. But Korean researchers acknowledged that if kimchi did have the effects they observed, it was unclear why.

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