

Introduction

Agriculture and food account for 13 percent of the United States' gross domestic product, 18 percent of its employment, and \$140 billion in revenue. Since September 11, 2001, there has been an increased awareness of the vulnerability of our domestic infrastructure, including the food and agricultural sector, to acts of terrorism.

The protection and integrity of America's agricultural production and food supply are essential to the health and welfare of both the domestic population and the global community. While farm security presents unique challenges for producers, there are some basic and practical security measures that can be instituted at the farm level.

The voluntary guidelines and checklist presented here provide a pre-harvest security resource and are designed to help the agricultural producer reduce security risks at the farm level. Each producer should review the guidelines and checklist to determine the recommendations most appropriate for his or her operations. Due to the unique nature of the industry, not all recommendations may be appropriate for all operations. Additional helpful information, including examples of referenced security plans, are available via the Internet links listed in the Farm Security Resources and References section at the end of this guide.





General Security

Threats to farm security are varied and numerous. The prevention of intentional or unintentional injury to crops or livestock is of primary concern in pre-harvest agricultural production. Risk assessments have great utility in the realm of prevention in that they help to identify hazards that need to be addressed and rank their importance. Information obtained from a facility-specific risk assessment can be a powerful tool. In addition to prevention, early identification to minimize damage should an event occur is also very important.

As a producer, there are some things that you can do to protect your facility.

Awareness

- Periodically conduct random security checks along the perimeter of all fields and pastures for signs of suspicious activity or unauthorized entry.
- Encourage employees to report any suspicious activity or any unauthorized personnel on or near the facility.
- Educate employees and customers to be alert for signs of possible tampering with crops, livestock, supplies, equipment, and facilities.
- Alert all employees and family members to watch for sick animals, including wildlife, especially birds, or unusual changes in the appearance of crops.

Planning

- Develop or update a risk management plan and share it with employees, family, and local law enforcement.
- Identify areas or activities where threats might occur and increase security in those areas.
- Consult with experts when you are developing your plan. Include your veterinarian, crop consultant, Extension agent, university scientist, and State department of agriculture experts.
- Plan how to respond to threats or tampering with your animals, crops, equipment, chemicals, supplies, and energy and water sources.
- Update your plan regularly. Make sure you have contact names and telephone numbers. Include in your plan how you will notify appropriate local law enforcement officials, as well as Federal and State agriculture officials.
- Develop a biosecurity plan that includes requirements for quarantining new stock, cleaning and disinfection procedures, and disposal of fallen stock.

Barriers

- Minimize the number of places where people can easily hide around the farm. Trim trees and shrubs that could provide concealment to criminals or block visibility of security patrols.
- Maintain fences in good repair.
- Secure hazardous materials, energy sources, and production inputs like feed and nutrients.
- Secure water wells or other water supplies, and identify alternative water sources as backups.

Community

- Get to know your neighbors.
- Initiate or join a community crime watch program.
- Don't advertise when you'll be away from your facility.

Inventory Control

- Maintain an up-to-date inventory of anhydrous ammonia, ammonium nitrate, bulk urea, pesticides, herbicides, and other hazardous materials and immediately investigate any discrepancies.
- Make sure that all storage areas for hazardous chemicals and drugs are secured, reasonably isolated, and that they are built and vented according to national and State codes. Supervise employees with access to these materials.
- Secure chemical containers inside buildings, whether they are empty or not.
- Inventory critical farm assets (e.g., trucks and tractors) and review your inventory regularly. Frequently inspect trucks, tractors, and other farm equipment for signs of tampering.
- Restrict access to computer data systems, secure on-line communications, and safeguard them with virus protection. Back-up all files at least weekly and store back-up files off-site.

Law Enforcement

- Talk with your local or county sheriff or State police office to find out if your farm or facility is subject to any specific risks based on its locality.
- Arrange to have a security survey of your facility by local law enforcement or your insurance agent.
- Request local law enforcement to routinely conduct patrols along your facility's perimeter.
- Immediately report any unusual or suspicious persons, vehicles, or activity to local law enforcement.

Lighting

- Make sure that the areas surrounding and within farm buildings are well lit.
- Install back-up lighting for emergencies.
- Install alarms, motion detection lights, cameras, and/or other appropriate security equipment as needed. Use electronic sensors around sensitive areas during times when no one should be working at these sites.

Locks

- Be sure your water supply system is secured with locks on wellheads and pump houses, water storage tanks, etc.
- Install entry prevention devices on exterior ladders, protecting the ladders from unauthorized use and preventing access to the top of bulk storage bins.
- Install locks on all doors and seal or lock all windows and vents on buildings that contain critical inventories and equipment.
- Lock all vehicles parked outside at night or during times of owner and employee absence.
- Use deadbolt locks on doors with a minimum of 1.5-inch throw.
- Padlock entry and discharge points of exterior liquid tanks (above and below ground) and all other storage areas when not in use.
- Keep padlocks locked on hasps while not in use.
- Distribute keys to employees on an as-needed basis and verify when they are returned.

Signage

- Post signs on fields that direct visitors to a central sign-in area, away from fields, animal pens, and other restricted areas.
- Post alarm monitoring service signs in highly visible locations.
- Post “No Trespassing” signs along the perimeter of the property and “Do Not Enter” signs outside of all buildings.
- Periodically check the signs, and replace or repair them, as necessary.

Training

- Make an emergency preparation and response plan that includes all emergency phone numbers and information that may be needed by first responders (such as the type and location of all chemicals at the facility) .
- Hold frequent safety and security meetings with all employees and family members who work or live on the farm/ranch.
- Make sure employees know how and where to report concerns or suspicious activities.

Visitors and Personnel

- Have only one (clearly marked) entry way for visitor use.
- Require all visitors to check in with a designated farm representative.
- Designate a specific area for visitor parking.
- Maintain a record of visitor names/companies, arrival/departure times, and purposes of the visit.
- Use visitor badges or identification cards if needed and explain disease prevention to visitors.
- Do not allow visitors, including delivery personnel, contract providers, and service support, to have unlimited access to the premises.
- Restrict visitor access to key areas such as gasoline, fertilizer, and pesticide storage.
- Require proof of identity for non-service visitors.
- Screen prospective employees, check with references, and consider regular background checks on all employees.
- Develop a system to identify employees and visitors.