

## HOMELAND SECURITY AND THE AG-CHEM FACILITY

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Why are we concerned about agroterrorism? Intelligence reports indicate that those wishing to do us harm are already aware that attacking the agriculture sector would result in economic, psychological and infrastructure disaster for this country.

So how can we protect ourselves from such an attack? We need to work together to establish public and private partnerships that include prevention, planning and response activities.

Secure your facilities so that they do not make convenient targets. Your facilities contain products that would be of interest to potential terrorists (domestic as well as foreign). There are several tools available to help you identify where there may be weaknesses in your system. Carver + Shock is one such tool that the FBI is using in assessing various agriculture vulnerabilities in their Strategic Partnership Program for Agroterrorism (SPPA) initiative. This partnership is hoping to have a “turbo-carver” available soon for individual use.

Make sure your facility has plans in place for responding to a security breach. Know your local emergency management director, your agriculture inspectors, and other government contacts who may be able to assist and/or respond to an emergency situation. Keep accurate inventories of your products and if you see unusual activities, report them to law enforcement officials.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection is involved in many planning activities as they relate to homeland security, ensuring that agency responses will be effective and efficient. To that end, we have written the agriculture chapter of the state emergency response plan (called ESF-11). We have also worked with the Office of Justice Assistance in identifying Wisconsin’s food and agriculture system as one of the top four critical infrastructure needing protection in the state. We have also participated in and conducted numerous county and state exercises testing the effectiveness of our plans and our communications. These exercises are highly valuable in enhancing our response capabilities.

Understanding how agencies will respond to a terrorist event will help you recover your business should you ever be the target of such an incident. That is why it is important to understand the role of your local emergency managers as they work with state and federal officials. While agriculture officials may take the lead managing the technical aspect of a response, the FBI is the lead agency in investigating any terrorism-related event.

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