



# National Infrastructure Protection Plan

## Food and Agriculture Sector

The Food and Agriculture Sector is one of 18 critical infrastructure sectors established under the authority of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 7 (HSPD-7). Each sector is managed by a Sector-Specific Agency (SSA). In accordance with the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), each SSA is responsible for developing and implementing a Sector-Specific Plan (SSP), in collaboration with public and private sector partners, and for encouraging the development of appropriate information-sharing and analysis mechanisms.

### Sector Overview

The Food and Agriculture (FA) Sector has the capacity to feed and clothe people well beyond the boundaries of the Nation. The sector is almost entirely under private ownership and is composed of an estimated 2.2 million farms, 900,000 restaurants, and more than 400,000 registered food manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities. This sector accounts for roughly one-fifth of the Nation's economic activity. It is coordinated at the Federal level by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The USDA is a diverse and complex organization with programs that touch the lives of all Americans every day. More than 100,000 employees deliver more than \$75 billion in public services through USDA's more than 300 programs worldwide, leveraging an extensive network of Federal, State, and local cooperators. One of USDA's key roles is to ensure that the Nation's food and fiber needs are met. USDA is also responsible for ensuring that the Nation's commercial supply of meat, poultry, and egg products is safe, as well as protecting and promoting U.S. agricultural health.

The FDA is responsible for the safety of 80 percent of the food consumed in the United States. FDA's mission is to

protect and promote public health. That responsibility is shared with Federal, State, and local agencies; regulated industry; academia; health providers; and consumers. FDA regulates \$240 billion of domestic food and \$15 billion of imported food. In addition, roughly 600,000 restaurants and institutional food service providers, an estimated 235,000 grocery stores, and other food outlets are regulated by State and local authorities that receive guidance and other technical assistance from FDA.

The FA Sector depends on: the Water Sector for clean irrigation and processed water; the Transportation Systems Sector for movement of commodities, products, and livestock; the Energy Sector to power the equipment needed for agriculture production and food processing; and the Banking and Finance, Chemical, Dams, and other sectors.

### Sector Partnerships

The Food and Agriculture Government Coordinating Council (FAGCC) and Sector Coordinating Council (FASCC) were formed in 2004. The joint councils host quarterly meetings that provide a public-private forum for effective coordination of agriculture and food defense strategies and activities, policy, and communications across the sector to support the Nation's homeland security mission. The councils provide a venue to mutually plan, implement, and execute sector-wide

security programs and procedures, as well as to exchange information and assess progress in defending the Nation's food and agriculture critical infrastructure. The FA Sector has created two information-sharing platforms, Homeland Security Information Network-FA and FoodSHIELD, to support the public and private sector. These two Web-based portals enable sector partners to share vital information needed to manage their critical infrastructure security and risk, respond to events, and enhance sector resilience.

## Priority Programs

### Food and Agriculture Sector Criticality Assessment

**Tool.** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Homeland Infrastructure Threat and Risk Analysis Center (HITRAC) conducts an annual data call (the National Critical Infrastructure Prioritization Program or NCIPP) to the sectors and States requesting information on critical infrastructure assets and systems. The 2011 NCIPP data call represented the first year that FA Sector assets were included in the national prioritization process. In a sector effort that is integral to the NCIPP data call, the FAGCC has partnered with one of the DHS Centers of Excellence, the National Center for Food Protection and Defense (NCFPD), to develop an assessment tool to determine and document the most critical food and agriculture infrastructure at the State level. This tool is known as the FA Sector Criticality Assessment Tool (FASCAT). FASCAT provides:

- A means to identify sector elements and systems that are critical to key State commodity chains or food distribution systems;
- A method of prioritization for further State or private sector vulnerability assessments and possible protective measure(s) or mitigation strategy development;
- Documentation and improved characterization of a State's FA Sector risk profile; and
- An effective response to future DHS national data calls for information on critical food and agriculture infrastructure components.

FASCAT is the only tool available to address the critical components of food and agriculture as a system. It provides a common terminology and approach to identifying the critical systems and assets that compose the sector. This, in turn, provides a foundation for assessing common vulnerabilities and ultimately is coupled with threat and consequence data to inform risk. The complete FASCAT module, instructions, and an online video tutorial are available at the University of Minnesota's NCFPD Web site: [www.ncfpd.umn.edu](http://www.ncfpd.umn.edu). The results of the 2010 and 2011 data calls reflect a significant accomplishment for the FA Sector. However, much work remains to be done in this area. For example, FASCAT needs to be standardized and adopted by all States for identification of critical assets and systems. In addition, the next step after achieving improved

identification of sector assets and systems is to work with facilities to identify and implement countermeasures to reduce risk at critical systems and assets in the sector.

**Exercises.** As part of the sector's goal to improve preparedness, sector partners are committed to conducting exercises to demonstrate how government and industry can work together more effectively during a food contamination incident or a foreign animal or plant pest or disease outbreak. For example, in July 2011, FDA and Federal partners released the Food-Related Emergency Exercise Boxed (FREE-B) set, a collection of five scenarios designed to test food emergency response plans, protocols, and procedures. FREE-B is available online at [www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense/Training/ucm216741.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense/Training/ucm216741.htm). FDA developed FREE-B in cooperation with the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service and Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. FREE-B will help food and agriculture stakeholders and emergency preparedness planners better coordinate, collaborate, and communicate with neighboring jurisdictions, the food industry, and the Federal Government during foodborne outbreaks.

**Suspicious Activity Awareness.** To improve awareness and reporting of suspicious activities within the FA Sector, sector leadership worked with Federal partners to develop a one-page document highlighting indicators of suspicious activities and recommended protective measures. This document is posted in work areas of food service and retail establishments (e.g., restaurants and grocery stores) to make employees aware of what they should be looking for each day and what actions to take if they observe something suspicious.

**Training.** FDA launched the ALERT initiative to raise awareness of State and local government and industry representatives regarding food defense issues and preparedness. It is generic enough to apply to all aspects of the farm-to-table supply chain and is designed to spark thought and discussion with a variety of stakeholders identifies five key points that industry can use to decrease the risk of intentional food contamination at their facilities. More than three million copies of ALERT outreach materials were distributed from 2008 through 2011. More information on ALERT is available online at [www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense/Training/ALERT/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/FoodDefense/Training/ALERT/default.htm).

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