



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

In partnership with

Agricultural and  
Food Transporters  
Conference



Conference of  
American Trucking  
Associations



# Guide for Security Practices in Transporting Agricultural and Food Commodities



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# Guide for Security Practices in Transporting Agricultural and Food Commodities

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# Introduction

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This guide is the result of a voluntary cooperative effort of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference (AFTC) of the American Trucking Associations (ATA). It provides voluntary guidance for enhanced security practices within your industry.

Agriculture and food provide 13 percent of the United States' gross domestic product (GDP), 18 percent of employment, and \$140 billion in revenue.<sup>1</sup> America's trucking industry makes up 5 percent of GDP, and jobs related to the trucking industry employ 10.1 million people. The trucking industry's gross revenue in 2003 was \$610 billion.<sup>2</sup> Commercial agricultural transporters move the vast majority of all agricultural commodities shipped on a daily basis throughout the United States. When taken together, the agriculture, food, and transportation components of the American economy are vital to the Nation's economy and public health. Since September 11, 2001, we are more aware of the possibility of a terrorist attack on our domestic infrastructure -- including the food and agricultural sector. 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.

Guidance that assists commercial agricultural and food transporters is essential to addressing the security concerns of this portion of the farm-to-table continuum. Agricultural transportation is a component common throughout the continuum and, therefore, requires special attention from a security perspective. Contamination of the livestock population with a foreign animal disease could occur in a matter of seconds. Similarly, a tanker holding liquid products could also be contaminated in a matter of seconds. All that would be required in either case is for a terrorist to have the agent and access to the target. Products in transport provide significant opportunities for access. Therefore, planning for and implementing security management practices in the commercial transportation of agricultural and food products will enhance efforts to ensure the continued safety and security of those products.

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Government Accounting Office

<sup>2</sup> American Trucking Associations

A company policy should be established to designate authorized personnel for the development and maintenance of security plans. The policy document should be maintained in company files in accordance with company policy. In addition to these guidelines, a company may provide employees with additional information and forms for use in operation of transportation equipment. Consult your legal counsel for guidance on related legal requirements concerning the transportation of agricultural and food commodities.

The American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), as a part of the partnership between USDA and the AFTC, surveyed approximately 24,000 commercial agricultural and food transporters to identify potential security vulnerabilities during the transportation of agricultural and food products throughout the farm-to-table continuum, and to evaluate appropriate countermeasures to mitigate those potential vulnerabilities. The survey findings and analysis have been provided to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and utilized in these guidelines, as appropriate.

Information and recommendations contained in this document are intended as voluntary guidelines for the safe and secure transport and handling of products delivered by over-the-road food transporters. As such, the sponsoring organizations do not guarantee or warrant, expressly or by implication, that compliance with the guidelines will prevent damage, spoilage, accidents, or injuries to persons or property. Any inference of such a guarantee or warranty is expressly and specifically disclaimed.

It is the sole responsibility of any company or person using these voluntary guidelines and related information provided in this publication, and not the responsibility of the sponsoring organizations, to ensure that such company or person is proficient in the operations and procedures discussed in this publication. The use of statements, recommendations, or suggestions contained herein creates no responsibility on the part of the sponsoring organizations for damage, contamination, loss, accident, or injury resulting from such use, or irrespective of such use. Moreover, adoption of any of the guidelines or recommendations included in this publication does not ensure compliance with legal or regulatory requirements. Those involved with the transportation of agricultural commodities and foods are advised to become familiar with all relevant and applicable local, State, and Federal regulations and to ensure that they comply with such requirements, as appropriate.

## Resources

### **USDA/AFTC Guide for Security Practices in Transporting Agricultural and Food Commodities**

The purpose of this *USDA/AFTC Guide for Security Practices in Transporting Agricultural and Food Commodities* is to help the commercial agricultural transportation industry protect people, property, products, processes, information, and information systems by enhancing security, including security against a potential terrorist attack. The industry encompasses the transporters of agricultural and food commodities.

This guide provides voluntary security measures that commercial agricultural and food transporters may use to assist trucking companies and their drivers in protecting their facilities and vehicles.

For meat, poultry, and egg products, please refer to *Food Safety and Security for the Transportation and Distribution of Meat, Poultry, and Egg Products*, published by the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the USDA.

### **AFTC Resources Directory for Security Practices in the Transportation of Agricultural and Food Commodities**

The Agricultural and Food Transporters Conference publishes a *Resources Directory for Security Practices in the Transportation of Agricultural and Food Commodities*.

The Resources Directory provides methods and tools for companies to assess threat vulnerabilities and implement security plans to protect against intentional contamination or disruption, including terrorist attacks.

The AFTC Resources Directory is designed to help the commercial agricultural transportation industry achieve continuous security performance, using a risk-based approach to identify, evaluate, and address vulnerabilities; prevent or mitigate incidents; enhance training and response capabilities; and maintain and improve relationships with key State, local, and Federal Government partners. The guide is implemented with the understanding that

security is a shared responsibility requiring actions by all stakeholders, including transporters, customers, suppliers, service providers, government officials, and agencies. The commercial agricultural transportation industry's commitment to protecting its employees and the public is demonstrated by its participation in this Security Guide and use of other good management practices. The industry will regularly reassess these security-related practices in an effort to continually improve performance and identify potential vulnerabilities.

The USDA/AFTC Security Guide and AFTC Resources Directory are both available either printed or on a CD-Rom.

## Management Practices

A risk-based security management system for people, property, commodities, processes, information, and information systems throughout the commercial agricultural and food transportation industry is essential for the industry. A security management system contains the following management practices:

### 1. Leadership Commitment

Senior management commits to continuous improvement through accountability, published policies, and provisions for sufficient and qualified resources.

### 2. Threats, Vulnerabilities, and Exposures Assessment

Use approved Vulnerability and Threat Assessment Tool (VTA) methodologies, and prioritize and periodically analyze potential security threats, vulnerabilities, and consequences. The sponsors of this guide encourage commercial agricultural and food transportation companies to conduct vulnerability (risk) assessments using methods approved by recognized trade and professional associations and government agencies. (*See the AFTC Resources Directory for specific information on the VTA.*)

### **3. Security Plan**

Participating commercial agricultural commodity and food transporters are urged to develop and implement security plans based on identified exposures, utilizing the recommended practices in the AFTC Resources Directory or other approved methodologies.

### **4. Communications and Information Sharing**

The commercial agricultural and food transportation industry should share information on effective security practices within the industry and with external, qualified security professionals. The commercial agricultural and food transportation industry should continue to expand the awareness of and commitment to enhanced security practices throughout the industry. AFTC, working with USDA, will continue to provide guidance, including sharing examples of effective security practices, to assist the industry in implementing effective security practices. AFTC and USDA may periodically review and, as appropriate, revise the Security Guide and will continue to serve as the industry clearinghouse for the exchange of information on commercial agricultural and food transportation security.



# General Guidelines for Drivers

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This guide provides a list of security tips and checklists that may be voluntarily utilized to prevent contamination or disruption during the transportation of agricultural and food commodities. These voluntary guidelines also encourage controls for ensuring the safe condition of agricultural and food commodities shipped throughout the transportation process. Not all of these measures, or the degree to which they are implemented, will be appropriate or practical for every transporter or facility.

## Security Watchwords For Drivers

- **Awareness** – Learn how terrorists act and the types of behaviors and events that can precede an attack. Know your company's security procedures and emergency response plans as they apply to you. Look for behaviors or events that might be tip-offs to a terrorist operation in progress.
- **Recognition** – When you see behavior or events that match the profiles you have been taught, make the mental connections between what you see and what it may mean to you if indeed it is a terrorist activity.
- **Communication** – Know who to call no matter where you are. Use 911 in emergencies, and use your company dispatcher and local FBI or law enforcement numbers if not an emergency. If you are a Highway Watch® trained driver, use the national Call Center number.
- **Action** – Don't keep information to yourself. Report it to the people and agencies that have the expertise and training to react to information or to emergencies. If you are affected by an attack, take immediate action to protect yourself, your cargo, and your equipment.

## Driver Security Checklists\*

### I. Driver Pre-Departure Checklist

1. Observe the loading of your vehicle.
2. Note suspicious onlookers during the cargo loading and contact law enforcement immediately.
3. Using established communications, ensure that route and immediate staging area appear clear.
4. Clean your cargo area – foreign animal disease and food contaminants can spread on contact.
5. Conduct a safety inspection; inspect tires, brakes, and radiator for damage.
6. Check to ensure that all tractor/trailer access panels/doors are locked and “seals” remain intact/uncompromised.
7. If equipped, check your vehicle electronic tracking system regularly, and notify dispatch when it is not working.
8. Establish an overdue time at your destination and have someone follow up if you are overdue.

### II. Driver on-the-Road Checklist

1. When leaving your facility, be aware of any possible surveillance of your facility or your truck. Criminal surveillance often begins at, or within a mile of, your origin.
2. Follow company stopping and parking procedures. Do not leave animals in open trucks unattended.
3. Do not make any unscheduled stops.
4. Be aware of possible “Ruses.” If you are unsure if a police officer is real, call 911 and ask.
5. Report any suspicious activities or emergencies to local police by calling 911, then follow up with a call to Highway Watch® at 1-877-USA-SAFE.
6. Also report any suspicious activities to dispatch.
7. Remain particularly observant for suspicious activities in and around refueling locations, railroad facilities, bridges, and tunnels.

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\* Drivers are encouraged to retain this portion of the USDA/AFTC Security Guide in their vehicles.

8. Keep all tractor/trailer doors and access panels locked and windows rolled up or in a position to be raised rapidly.
9. Maintain regular communications with your dispatcher as required.
10. Vary your route when possible. If relevant, this should be a part of your pre-trip planning.
11. Do not discuss your cargo, destination, or trip specifics with people you don't know or on open channels -- even with other drivers.
12. Do not discuss your route with any shipper personnel unless instructed to by your company.
13. When stopped at a traffic light or in traffic, be aware of anyone approaching your vehicle.
14. Go directly to your delivery point without making any stops.
15. Avoid being boxed in. Leave room in front and behind your truck to permit escape.
16. Do not pick up hitchhikers.
17. Be aware of vehicles that are following your truck and of strangers asking questions about your cargo, route, or destination.

### **III. Driver Stopping Checklist**

1. Leave your truck in a secure parking lot or truckstop. Park units in a reputable truckstop or secure yard at all times. Facilities with video surveillance are recommended. Be especially vigilant when operating in "hot spots" -- unsafe or high-crime areas.
2. When you stop or leave your vehicle, ensure that the rig is turned "OFF" and that all doors and access panels remain secure.
3. Before leaving/exiting your vehicle, look around and become familiar with your surroundings. Have a trusted person watch your vehicle.
4. If team driving, always leave one person with the truck.
5. Watch for individuals with spraying equipment or other possible contaminants (even a rag can spread a foreign animal disease and a small capsule can contaminate food).
6. Never leave your vehicle running with the keys in it; shut off the engine and lock the doors.
7. Do not stop in "hot spots" -- unsafe or high-crime areas.

8. Park in areas where other truckers are present.
9. Do not stop on dark roadways or in deserted areas while waiting to make deliveries.
10. Don't take your load home or park in an unsecured area such as a parking lot or mall.
11. Drivers should check and use seals, padlocks, and other locks where appropriate.
12. Perform a quick walk-around to check your vehicle for foreign objects after all stops.
13. Drivers should never leave extra keys in the vehicle.
14. Drivers should utilize a "no-stop" policy while making local deliveries.
15. Drivers should have a 24-hour phone number for dispatch or management personnel who can be called in case of an emergency.
16. Keep your doors locked and windows up at all stops, until the very instant you exit the vehicle. Then relock immediately. Upon returning to the vehicle, lock your doors immediately behind you.

#### **IV. Driver Destination Checklist**

1. Check to make sure the location of loading/unloading docks/warehouse looks safe.
2. Report your arrival time and location.
3. Note any "suspicious" onlookers observed during off-loading.
4. Confirm that recipient of the cargo is the intended recipient. Ask for identification.
5. If you exit your vehicle, ensure that all doors and access panels are locked and secured. Turn your tractor motor "OFF."
6. Keep your doors locked and windows up at all stops until the very instant you exit the vehicle. Then relock immediately. Upon returning to the vehicle, lock your doors immediately behind you.
7. Observe the off-loading of your trailer and keep your tractor under observation at all times.
8. Have a communications device with you at all times.

## V. Hijacking Prevention Tips for Drivers

1. Be watchful immediately after picking up a load. Most hijackings occur within a few miles of a pickup location. Interstate on-ramps and off-ramps are locations most often used by hijackers.
2. Look for vehicles following you, especially if there are 3 or more people in the car. If you believe you are being followed, call 911 and your dispatcher immediately.
3. Be suspicious of individuals asking you to stop as a result of an alleged traffic accident. If unsure whether an accident has occurred, call the police or drive to a police station before stopping.
4. If you believe you are being hijacked, try to keep your truck moving.
5. If you think you are being followed, call 911. Keep moving and try to get to a public area.
6. When appropriate, keep windows secure and doors locked while in transit.
7. Avoid being boxed in. Where possible, leave room in front of and behind your truck.
8. Be aware of possible "Ruses." If you are unsure if an individual is a real police officer, call in and report it.
9. When stopped at a traffic light or in traffic, be aware of anyone approaching your vehicle.
10. If you are hijacked, watch and listen to the hijackers. You are law enforcement's best witness.
11. Drivers should carry information concerning the identification of the equipment they are driving. You will need license numbers, container and/or trailer numbers, and descriptions if equipment is stolen. (Law enforcement cannot make a stolen-vehicle report or cargo-theft report without this information.)



## General Guidelines for Companies

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### Security Watchwords For Companies

- **Awareness** – Accumulate and organize a knowledge base regarding the exposure of the trucking industry to terrorist acts and the types of behaviors and events that can warn of an event, and teach the workforce to be alert and observant.
- **Recognition** – Train employees and managers to make the logical connections between observed indicators and a specific company's operations that may signal an imminent act or increase a company's exposure to consequences.
- **Communication** – Build a network of time-sensitive systems through which information is routed to and among the internal and external decision-makers who need critical information in order to prevent or respond to terrorist actions.
- **Action** – Proactively deploy the correct measure of activity relating to the nature of the threat, the overall Homeland Security Advisory System (HSAS) threat condition level, and the trucking operation's potential exposure.

## Security Tips For Commercial Agricultural and Food Transporters

In the transportation of agricultural commodities and food products, consider the following steps to help prevent problems before they occur.

- Security measures should make it as difficult as possible for a troublemaker to tamper with agricultural commodities and food products or ingredients your company transports.
- If you hire someone from an outside vendor to work in the plant (e.g., plumber, pesticide applicator, maintenance), verify that he or she works for the company you hired.
- Establish contact with the local law enforcement offices so you know a specific contact in case of emergencies or disasters.
- Be sure your water supply system is secure, with locks on wellheads and pump houses, water storage tanks, etc.
- Assess your facility for potential sabotage of bulk ingredients. Be sure connections for bulk systems are locked and secure. For example, outer connections for liquid sugar, corn syrup, flour, etc., should be enclosed and locked at all times.
- Keep entry doors and other entrances secure and locked where fire codes permit.
- Restrict movement of non-employees (deliveries, outside repair, and maintenance personnel) to areas where they cannot contaminate food products or agricultural commodities.
- Have visitors sign in and show identification and wear visitor passes. Maintain the visitor roster for 6-12 months.
- Personnel who move freely throughout the facility should watch for signs of sabotage. Make sure protective equipment such as screens, sifters, magnets, or metal detectors are in place and functioning.
- Remind employees to report anything unusual to their supervisors.

- If a telephone threat is received about a specific product or commodity, record or write down as nearly as possible every word said. Then segregate that product completely until the threat has been reported to the authorities, investigated, and confirmed or eliminated.
- Inventory any potential hazardous chemicals and the security for the same. Are they stored in a non-secure, non-supervised area? Are they stored outside? Are bulk delivery systems secure? Do you make it easy for a disgruntled employee, copycat tamperer, or terrorist to obtain chemicals and potentially add them to the commodities you transport?
- Restrict all personal items such as carry bags, extra clothing, purses, etc., from the loading and docking areas.
- Invite the local law enforcement agency to review your security measures.
- Routinely review, update, and exercise your emergency response plan and procedures.
- Remind drivers to frequently inspect their trucks for signs of tampering.
- Establish security policies and procedures if you haven't already done so.
- Fence facilities where appropriate.
- Close and secure entrance and exit gates when not in use.
- Maintain well-lit facilities.
- Consider using surveillance and recording equipment at locations deemed necessary.
- Lock and seal all equipment parked in your facility.
- Provide a secured employee parking lot.
- Limit visitors and escort them to their destinations -- know who you're letting in.
- Minimize who has access to computers. Use passwords and install firewalls.
- Where security patrols are used, vary patterns and schedules.
- Security should be present for weekends, evenings, and holidays as appropriate.

- Be diligent regarding your hiring practices. Beware of who you hire -- verify all information such as employment history, education history, driving records, criminal records check, and social security numbers on all potential employees (including permanent, temporary, seasonal or contract workers, and cleaning crews).

## Advance Planning For Emergency Management

- Establish a Crisis Management Team and identify a Crisis Coordinator or Team Leader with backup.
- Develop an action plan in case of a terrorist threat or tampering. Include an evacuation plan for facility employees and have a copy available in a secure compartment outside the facility for reference.
- List 24/7 contact information for internal and external communication in case of an emergency, identifying who should be notified, what triggers the notification, and in what order they are notified. Include who/when to contact law enforcement officials, regulatory inspectors, etc.
- Identify a list of resources you may need in a crisis situation: testing labs, medical experts, packaging consultants, legal counsel, public relations firm, insurance company, alternate ingredient suppliers, inspection agency, police, fire and emergency medical personnel, etc.
- Check that your recordkeeping system will allow you to trace commodities back and trace finished product forward.
- Practice using the action plan.
- Build security into your company's operations plan so it is routinely monitored.

## Security Measures for Truck Cleaning

Vehicle cleanliness is an important security factor in the transportation of agricultural and food commodities. Vehicles, accessories, and connections must be kept clean from any substances that may contaminate the commodities or food being transported. Cleaning and sanitation procedures should be maintained in writing and used as required. Proper cleaning and sanitation can mitigate the effects of intentional contamination by terrorists by reducing an agent's transmission across animals or products.

The following factors are important for vehicle cleanliness and sanitation:

- Use appropriate cleaning procedures for vehicles, based on the type of commodity being transported.
- Devices for loading vehicles, cargo pallets, and securing devices should be cleaned and sanitized, as necessary.
- Transfer equipment, such as lifts and hand trucks, should be regularly maintained, cleaned, and sanitized, as necessary.

## Reporting Information

Call 911 with critical emergency information. Report non-emergency, suspicious activity to the appropriate local law enforcement agency and/or the FBI. For FBI offices use the list of field offices provided in the *AFTC Resources Directory for Security Practices in the Transportation of Agricultural and Food Commodities*. Also notify your dispatch and Highway Watch® of any suspicious activity.

## Highway ISAC - Highway Watch® Program



All security-related information, including that which does not require any active law enforcement intervention, should be reported to the Highway Information Sharing and Analysis Center (Highway ISAC). The Highway ISAC utilizes transportation

industry expertise and networks to perform analysis and additional research; it places information in the context of the Highway Sector, generating bulletins and analytical products for the benefit of motor carriers and related operating entities. All reports to the Highway ISAC are transmitted to major Homeland Security watch centers. The Highway ISAC maintains a duty watch officer 24/7/365.

**Toll Free Number:** 866-821-3468  
**Direct Dial Number:** 703-838-1999  
**Watch Officer email:** [hwisac@trucking.org](mailto:hwisac@trucking.org)

See the *AFTC Resources Directory for Security Practices in the Transportation of Agricultural and Food Commodities* for complete details on the Highway Watch® Program.



