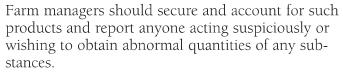**Agriculture Security Series**

Security for Animal Agriculture: Prevention

Adapted by Dean Ross, Michigan State University Extension Dairy Educator, from Virginia Cooperative Extension Publication 445-001, July 2002, by *C. C. Stallings, F. C. Gwazdauskas, and G. M. Jones*

Threats to farm security can come from many sources. Intentional injury, destruction or contamination of livestock is a possibility that producers must guard against. Substances usually considered safe – such as chemicals, fertilizers, pesticides and animal drugs – may be used incorrectly or indiscriminately in unsafe or harmful ways.

Farm managers should secure and account for such products and report anyone acting suspiciously or wishing to obtain abnormal quantities of any substances.

The *American Feed IndustryAssociation's Guide to Biosecurity Awareness* says animals and feed ingredients may become adulterated by the following means:

- Biological (bacteria, toxins, viruses, parasites, etc.).
- Chemical (classical chemical warfare agents and toxic industrial chemicals such as pesticides — including rodenticides, and heavy metals).
- Radiological (agents that can be delivered in liquid or solid form).
- Physical (metals, glass and plastic).

Practice Farm Security

- Ensuring the physical security of buildings and grounds is an important step in overall farm security.
- A conscious effort should be made to assess and control security risks by recognizing and anticipating security issues before they surface.
- Have only one entry/exit from the farm that is clearly defined with signage.
- Consider using security lighting, perimeter fencing and controlled gate access.

Be Aware... Be Prepared

Protecting Food from Farm to Table

- Use electronic security devices, such as motion detectors, door alarms, video cameras and alarms linked to an off-site security system.
- Padlock and limit entry into vital storage areas such as milkrooms, feed storage and chemical storage areas.
- Install entry prevention devices on exterior ladders to protect them from unauthorized use and prevent access to the tops of bulk storage tanks.
- Padlock entry and discharge points of exterior liquid tanks (above- and belowground) when not in use.
- Lock all vehicles parked outside at night or during times of owner and employee absence.
- Secure or park containers inside, whether they are empty or loaded with product.
- Request local law enforcement to patrol the farm perimeter at irregular times if threats are perceived.
- Encourage employees to report suspicious behavior.
- Restrict access to computer data systems, secure online communications, and safeguard them with virus protection. Store backup files off-site.
- Consider security in design and construction of new or expanding facilities

Develop and Enforce a Visitor Policy

- All visitors should check in with a designated farm representative. This procedure protects against unwanted visitors and helps account for all persons. Post signs informing visitors where to report.
- Limit access to other areas of the property by designating a specific area for visitor parking.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

- Maintain a record of individuals' names and companies, arrival and departure times, and purposes of the visits. 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 persons, to have unlimited access to the premises.
- Restrict access to key areas such as milk, gasoline and pesticide storage.

Prevent Animal Infection or Contamination

- Animal infection or contamination can be either accidental or deliberate.
- Know the health history of purchased animals and segregate them for 3 to 4 weeks after arrival on the farm with strict health monitoring before introducing them to the herd.
- Maintain a vaccination program for all animals.
- Know the signs of reportable and foreign animal diseases and deal with unusual signs immediately.
- Provide disposable boots or disinfectant footbaths for any visitors.
- Prohibit any visitors to the operation who have been outside the continental United States during the past 2 weeks, unless they can assure you that they have not been in close proximity to hoofed animals within the past 5 days.
- Restrict access to feed storage areas and areas where animals are housed.

- Secure perimeter fencing to prevent contact with livestock from neighboring farms.
- Limit direct contact between livestock and wildlife, including deer and birds.
- Prevent organic matter entry onto the animal facilities from sources such as vehicles, equipment and runoff from other farms.
- Know the source and quality of purchased feeds and ensure that no protein supplement derived from ruminant tissues is fed to cattle, sheep or goats.

Develop Employee Awareness

- Security awareness should be a job for all employees.
- Everyone must vigilantly monitor the activities of visitors, service providers and fellow employees.
- Ask applicants for a resume of qualifications and have them complete a job application.
- Conduct background checks to establish a prospective employee's qualifications and behavior. Institute an employment probationary period to evaluate a new employee's work habits.
- Train employees to recognize and report suspicious individuals or abnormal activities, security breaches, suspicious materials or devices, and misplaced equipment.
- Implement policies on appropriate personal protective equipment as dictated by management and required by law.