



*Protecting Consumers,  
Promoting Public Health*

U.S. Food and Drug Administration



# **ALERT:** The Basics

Food and Drug Administration  
Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition



# Food Defense and Terrorism



## What's Your Role in Protecting the Food Supply?

Are you a:

Regulator?

Grower?

Packer?

Processor?

Warehouser?

Transporter?

Retailer?

Food  
Service

Operator?

Defending food from intentional contamination depends on  
you!

# ALERT,

a food defense awareness program,  
now available in a web-based training module, will  
show you what food defense means and how to make  
it part of your operation.

Course Objectives:

- ❖ Increase food defense awareness
- ❖ Describe the five parts of the ALERT initiative
- ❖ List examples of preventive measures you can use

[ALERT flyer \(PDF for print\\*\)](#)

Also available:

**ALERT**  
The Basics

Wallet card,  
brochure, &  
poster  
in English,  
Spanish,  
Chinese,  
Korean,  
Vietnamese.

- [View online](#)
- [Order ALERT materials](#)





# CFSAN

## Food Defense Continuum

*Food Defense* is a term used to describe activities associated with protecting the nation's food supply from intentional contamination. The Food and Drug Administration has adopted 3 broad strategies that encompass its food defense activities:

*Prevention > Response > Recovery*



# CFSAN

## Food Defense Continuum

### Prevention

- Increase awareness among federal, state, local and tribal governments and the private sector to better understand where the greatest vulnerabilities lie; and
- Develop effective protection strategies to shield the food supply from intentional contamination



# CFSAN

## Food Defense Continuum

### Response

- Develop the capacity for a rapid coordinated response to a foodborne terrorist attack







# CFSAN

## Food Defense Continuum

### Recovery

- Develop the capacity for a rapid coordinated recovery from a foodborne terrorist attack





# CFSAN

## Integrating Food Safety and Food Defense

- Efforts to integrate food safety and food defense led to a need for the development of tools to assist regulatory stakeholders, such as federal, state and local inspectors, with the task of raising food defense awareness in industry.





# ALERT

In today's world it is important to be  
**ALERT** to protect your business.

- A** How do you **ASSURE** that the supplies and ingredients you use are from safe and secure sources?
- L** How do you **LOOK** after the security of the products and ingredients in your facility?
- E** What do you know about your **EMPLOYEES** and People coming in and out of your facility?
- R** Could you provide **REPORTS** about the security of your products while under your control?
- T** What do you do and whom do you notify if you have a **THREAT** or issue at your facility, including suspicious behavior?

Can you answer these questions?

This message brought to you by the  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration  
U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
U.S. Department of Agriculture.



For help in answering these questions,  
check [www.fda.gov/alert](http://www.fda.gov/alert)

An **ALERT** for owners and  
operators of food establishments  
about the security of your facilities ...



# CFSAN

## FDA's ALERT Initiative

- Intended to raise awareness of food defense
- Applies to all aspects of the farm-to-table continuum
- Identifies 5 key food defense points:
  - **A**ssure
  - **L**ook
  - **E**mployees
  - **R**eport
  - **T**hreat





## How do you *Assure* that the supplies and ingredients you use are from safe and secure sources?

- Know your suppliers
- Encourage your suppliers to practice food defense measures
- Request locked and/or sealed vehicles, containers, or railcars
- Supervise off-loading of incoming materials





A photograph of two workers in a facility. A man on the left wears a yellow hard hat and a light blue button-down shirt, holding a clipboard and pen. A woman on the right wears a blue hard hat and a dark blue polo shirt, holding a mobile device. They are standing outdoors in front of a white structure.

# CFSAN

## How do you *Look* after the security of the products and ingredients in your facility?

- Implement a system for handling products
- Track materials
- Store product labels in a secure location and destroy outdated or discarded product labels
- Limit access and inspect facilities
- Keep track of finished products
- Encourage your warehousing operations to practice food defense measures.



# CFSAN

## What do you know about your *Employees* and people coming in and out of your facility?

- Conduct background checks on staff
- Know who belongs in your facility
- Establish an identification system for employees
- Limit access by staff
- Prevent customer's access to critical areas of your facility





# CFSAN

Could you provide *Reports* about the security of your products while under your control?

- Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of your security management system
- Perform random food defense inspections
- Establish and maintain records
- Evaluate lessons learned







# CFSAN

What do you do and who do you notify if you have a ***Threat*** or issue at your facility, including suspicious behavior?

- Hold any product that you believe may have been affected
- **After reporting to local law enforcement officials:**
  - For FDA regulated products contact the Food and Drug Administration
  - For slaughterers or processors contact USDA/Food Safety and Inspection Service.



# ALERT

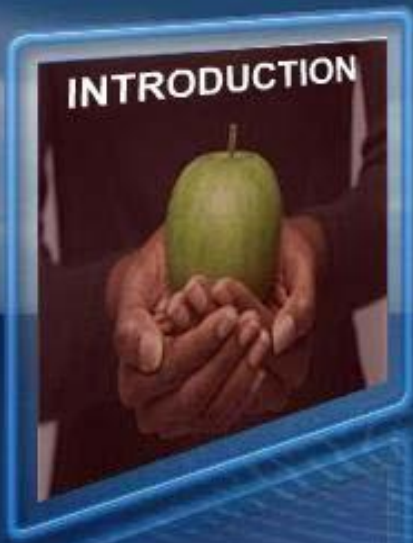
## FOOD DEFENSE AWARENESS

MENU

INTRODUCTION

ALERT

WHAT'S NEXT?



NEXT ►



# Product Recalls

## First Alert

- Company discovers the problem and contacts FDA
- FDA inspection
- FDA receives reports through CDC or various reporting systems

## Unintentional

## Voluntary





# Recall Classifications

## Class I

- Dangerous or defective products that could cause serious health problems or death.
  - Botulinum toxin, undeclared allergens, label mix up on lifesaving drug, or defective artificial heart

## Class II

- Temporary health problems or slight threat of a serious nature
  - Drug that is under-strength but not used to treat a life-threatening situation

## Class III

- Unlikely to cause any adverse health reactions
  - Minor container defects or lack of English labeling on a retail food product



# Alerting the Public

- Serious hazard and wide spread distribution
- Alert the media, press releases, news conferences, updates on the FDA website

**[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)**



# Effectiveness Checks

- FDA evaluates corrective actions taken by the firm

**Voluntary recalls-firm issues the press release and guidelines for the recall**

- If recall is complete, FDA monitors the destruction or reconditioning of the recalled product
- Investigates why the product was defective



# Reporting Problems

## Emergencies

- Contact local law enforcement
- FDA 24 hour emergency number

301-443-1240

## Non-Emergencies

- New Orleans District Consumer Complaint Coordinator 1-866-289-3399
- USDA Hotline (meat and poultry products)

1-800-535-4555





# CONCLUSION

- The nation's awareness of terrorism has been heightened and there is an increased focus on protecting the nation's food supply.
- It is everyone's responsibility to recognize food defense as an important issue and to get involved.
- Being aware of the threats, identifying the vulnerabilities and taking action to mitigate the risks are activities where federal, state, local and private industry stakeholders must continue to work.

