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University Office of Security Preparedness Bulletin

March 2004

Featured Article

Agroterrorism

By: Dr. Corrie Brown, Professor
and Coordinator of International Activities
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Dr. Brown (left), Co-chair of the Secretary of Agriculture’s Advisory Committee on Foreign Animal and Poultry Diseases, appears with U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, Ann Veneman.

“Asymmetric warfare” is defined as the induction of adverse effects that will undermine economic, social, or political confidence. This is the form of warfare currently being waged by terrorists. To protect our societies, huge efforts have been made to “harden” many of the more traditional targets, and anyone who has traveled by air, entered a federal building, or attended a major sporting event can appreciate the monumental changes that our society has undergone to improve public protection against terrorist activities. As these more conventional targets become less vulnerable to attack, it is a certainty that terrorists will begin to focus, and perhaps already are focusing, on other areas of interest and impact. Our national herds and flocks are very difficult to protect and so animal agriculture presents a “soft white underbelly” for terrorists. Attacks against animal or plant agriculture are referred to as “agroterrorism.”

Agriculture forms the cornerstone of the American economy. Responsible for 13% of the gross national

product and 17% of all employment, the value of agriculture is predicated on our ability to export, as approximately 20% of all agricultural commodities are exported. Not only would the introduction of a disease that made our agricultural products unpalatable to our trading partners devastate exports, but the additional, non-exportable products spilling over to the domestic sector would create a glut that would cause the agricultural economy to implode. Basically, a terrorist event involving agriculture could destroy the American economy.

Compared to bioterror, agroterrorism is appallingly easy. Animal diseases of greatest concern are those that, by nature, are very infectious and spread rapidly through herds and flocks. Many of the other animal diseases that are of greatest concern in terms of their ability to enter a new area and destroy trade—foot-and-mouth disease, classical swine fever, rinderpest, highly pathogenic avian influenza, and exotic Newcastle disease—are also extremely contagious. These agents could be acquired in many less-developed countries where they are endemic. Stated simply, agroterrorism is appallingly low-tech.

Cow infected with foot-and-mouth disease, the most feared disease of agroterrorism.



The College of Veterinary Medicine participates in several activities to help protect against agroterrorism. The Diagnostic Laboratories are part of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network developing and implementing rapid diagnostic testing for foreign animal diseases. Several training initiatives to spread information about foreign animal diseases have been

developed and are disseminated from the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Our faculty serves in advisory capacities to the Governor's Homeland Security Task Force and to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture. We are fortunate to have such a proactive veterinary community here at UGA and are working hard to keep our nation's flocks and herds healthy and productive.

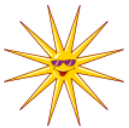
Matters of Interest

Homeland Security Presidential Directive/HSPD-9



This directive establishes a national policy to defend the agriculture and food system against terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies.

Bulletins are available bimonthly. The issues assist in disseminating current security preparedness information from this office and other University units. Sign up to receive issues of *Readiness Rules* by e-mail. Click on "bulletin by e-mail" located on the [home / contact us](#) bar on the UOSP web site.



UGA Spring Break March 8-12, 2004 Safety Tips

Now is the time to start thinking about safety and security measures while planning your Spring Break. A few simple precautions will make for a safe and fun break. Whether you stay in town or plan to travel, keep these safety tips in mind:

- **Keep doors closed and locked.**
 - **At your residence:** neighbors may be gone, leaving the area vulnerable for break-ins.
 - **Motels/hotels:** Check peephole before opening doors, don't open doors to strangers, call the front desk to verify someone claiming to be staff before opening the door.

Campus View

Do you know this location on campus?



Answer: See below.

- **Let someone know where you are and when you are expected to return.**
- **Report any suspicious activities/persons to the Police.**
- **Consider using traveler's checks and a limited amount of cash in place of credit cards – which can be stolen or lost.**
- **Remember to lock valuables in the trunk of your vehicle and don't leave your keys in or around your vehicle (safety pin them into a pocket or zipper pouch and keep them with you.)**
- **Do not take a ride from a stranger, even if it would be easier than walking (never walk alone at night in an unfamiliar place.)**
- **Remember that alcohol and other drugs can interfere with your ability to communicate effectively and deal with potentially dangerous situations.**

*For more Travel Safety Tips:
Check out the UOSP website:
www.uosp.uga.edu*

HAVE A FUN and SAFE BREAK!



Upcoming Issue: Landscape design as a deterrent to terrorism.

Answer: The United States flag is flown in front of the U.S. Forestry Service building on campus. Aderhold Hall can be seen in the background.