

**Food and Agriculture Security Committee
Chairman Patty Judge, Iowa**

**2005 Annual Meeting
Cooperstown, New York**

Committee Report

Summary of Committee Action:

Overview of Federal Infrastructure Protection Plans for Food & Agriculture

The Committee heard presentations from FDA and USDA officials on federal activities on homeland security for the agriculture and food sector.

- **Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Activities:** *David Acheson, Director, Office of Food Safety, Defense & Outreach*, described the Administration's general efforts to protect critical food and agriculture infrastructure. The National Assets Data Base (NADB) is being developed by DHS to identify critical assets. NASDA members were recently asked to provide the states' top ten assets for agriculture. The National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) is the overall federal "roadmap" for how government will protect key assets and prevent a domestic incident for all sectors. FDA and USDA are developing two Sector Specific Plans (SSPs) which are designed to protect key assets and reduce vulnerabilities related to food and agriculture. The SSPs are currently under review and NASDA is being asked for comments by November 1, 2005. A new version of the SSPs will be issued in February 2006.
- **Strategic Partnership Program Agroterrorism Initiative (SPPA).** Acheson explained the SPPA is a joint effort by the FBI, DHS, FDA and USDA to help secure the U.S. food supply. Under this initiative, federal teams will work with local, state, and industry partners to assess resource vulnerabilities in food and agriculture production facilities. Site visits will begin in late October 2005. During these visits, the CARVER+Shock (vulnerability assessment) tool will be used to identify vulnerabilities. Reports and "lessons learned" will then be generated to help states develop their individual templates to protect these resources. States and industry need to contact DHS to request participation in this initiative.
- **USDA Activities on Infrastructure Protection.** *Michelle Catlin, USDA, Office of Food Defense & Emergency Preparedness*, described USDA's role in the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP) and Sector Specific Plan (SSP) for food and agriculture. The USDA SSP reflects 18 agencies in the department which cover pre-harvest (crop, livestock), post-harvest (meat, poultry, eggs), forestry, and rural resources. This document will identify resources and provide an assessment of vulnerabilities. It will be used by USDA to develop protective programs/guidelines and a template to help

states develop their individual plans.

Update on DHS Initiative on State Top Ten Assets. NASDA staff reported on DHS' recent request to develop a list of the top ten food and agriculture assets in the states. The goal of this project is to identify those facilities and assets requiring special attention or protection in the event of terrorist threats. Thirty-six states have provided information, four states were unable to respond due to state confidentiality laws, and ten states did not respond. NASDA has requested that DHS provide written clarification on the confidentiality issue. NASDA has compiled the information and plans to provide it to DHS soon.

Overview of Homeland Security Legislation Related to Food & Agriculture. *Elizabeth Pyke, Iowa Office of State-Federal Relations*, described federal legislation to revamp the organizational structure of DHS and funding formulas for homeland security programs/activities. Currently, both the House and Senate are advancing bills that would generally change funding formulas to a more risk-based approach. The bills do not address several issues important to agriculture. For example, the definition of "first responders" in the legislation excludes agriculture, animal experts, and veterinarians. The legislation does not include USDA as a member of the federal task force which determines DHS grant funding. The bills also does not include agriculture experts in another federal task force which will oversee threat assessments.

Committee Discussion/Development of Recommendations. Committee members expressed concern that federal homeland security legislation and program funding do not adequately recognize the needs of agriculture. There was a suggestion for states to contact their congressional delegations to inform and educate them about this problem. Another suggestion is to seek support and more actively work with other agriculture organizations, such as the Farm Bureau and others, to take proposals to Congress. There was also a suggestion to propose and push for specific funding amounts for certain agriculture priorities. *The committee will hold a conference call soon to further discuss how to advance the agriculture "voice" on homeland security, draft specific recommendations, and develop a strategy for advancing these proposals. The committee will also consider holding a face-to-face meeting before the NASDA mid-year meeting next February.*

Policy Amendments::

Approved amendment (#3) offered by AAPFCO (American Association of Plant Food Control Officials) making technical clarifications on the need for uniform standards on the sale and control of fertilizer products which can be used in the creation of explosive devices.

Approved amendment (#17) offered by Charles Kuperus (NJ) recommending that DHS recognize the uniqueness of the agriculture sector, and adjust their approach for identifying critical assets to reflect a systems approach rather than specific facilities.

Action Items:

- Draft a letter asking Congress to address the funding needs of agriculture for homeland security activities, and to include agriculture in relevant task forces.
- Send a follow-up memo and information to NASDA members about commenting on the Infrastructure Protection Plans (SSPs) being developed by USDA and FDA for food and agriculture.

Six-Month Work Plan & Priority Issues:

- Develop recommendations and a strategy for advancing the needs of agriculture for homeland security activities, policies, and legislation.