

BUSINESSSAFE

BusinessSafe is designed to aid businesses in protecting the safety and well-being of Florida's residents and visitors from threats. BusinessSafe provides private sector partners with open source information, analysis and resources to help protect their businesses and communities.

Florida Fusion Center 21-052

April 2021, Issue #49

BusinessSafe Sector Highlight: Food and Agriculture Sector

The U.S. food and agriculture sector includes an estimated 2.1 million privately owned farms. These farms supply an estimated 900,000 restaurants and over 200,000 food manufacturing, processing, and storage facilities, and feed millions of people worldwide. This sector is dependent on many other critical infrastructure sectors such as, fertilizers and pesticides produced by the chemical sector, the water and wastewater sector, and the transportation sector which is vital to moving food and livestock.

Criminal Activity

The food and agriculture sector is a complex and interdependent sector. While unlikely, this sector may be targeted by criminal activity impacting food safety, production, distribution, or the agricultural community.

1. **Cyberattacks** – Over the years, the food and agriculture sector has increasingly used technology and automated procedures in its operations to increase production and reduce economic and environmental impacts. Criminal actors may try to take advantage of these technologies through use of malware, phishing, network intrusions, and third-party attacks. [Cyberattack Disrupts Operations at Molson Coors](#)
[Cybersecurity Report: "Smart Farms" Are Hackable Farms](#)
2. **Fraudulent Activity** – U.S. global food imports are an integral part of the food and agriculture sector. Criminal actors may try to take advantage of this sector through adulteration schemes, smuggling of invasive, banned, and/or counterfeit food and goods. While the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA), and the U.S. Borders and Custom Patrol (CBP) implement strict and rigorous screening protocols there is the potential for some of these goods to enter the United States. This can create situations that harm domestic food and agriculture businesses, ecosystems and supply chains, and more. [Adulterated Flour Leads to Mass Food Poisoning In Delhi; Over 400 Fall Sick](#)



Florida Fusion Center
(800) 342-0820

FLBusinessSafe@FDLE.state.fl.us

Author: FL8642, Approval: FL8600, HSEC:1, 2, 4, 6 FSIN:1.1, 1.10, 2.6.1 FFC:1.1, 1.3, 2, 6.5

3. **Targeted Attacks** – While the food and agriculture sector is well protected and regulated, the vastness of this sector can open it up to targeted attacks. These attacks, while rare, can be in the form of intentional food contamination, and tampering, and can disrupt production, distribution and harm consumers.

[Strawberry Needle Scare: Woman Allegedly Spiked Punnets For Revenge](#)
[Prosecutors: Woman Used Dirt to Contaminate Chicken At Plant](#)

Other Threats and Hazards

1. **Unpredictable Events** - The food and agriculture sector is highly sensitive and directly dependent on environmental factors such as weather, disease, and ecological events. Agricultural producers and distributors are continually working on ways to mitigate the effects of these events.

[Florida Strawberries Attacked by Aggressive Fungus](#)
[Southeast Farmers Hurt from Hurricane Michael After-Effects](#)

Resources

The U.S. Department of Agriculture is the main federal agency responsible for overseeing the food and agriculture sector. Their [website](#) offers tips, guidance, news, and policy information.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services assists and oversees Florida agricultural and food producers and distributors throughout the state. Their [website](#) offers information about agricultural and food safety in Florida.

“If You See Something, Say Something®” – For potential indicators of suspicious activity and fact sheets with information on food and agriculture-specific indicators of use in identifying suspicious activity and potential indicators of pre-attack mobilization visit [BusinessSafe Fact Sheets: Agriculture and Food](#). Report suspicious activity to your local law enforcement agency, on the FDLE website using our tool kit or by calling 855-FLA-Safe. In an emergency, call 911. [Florida’s See Something, Say Something Tool Kit](#)

To sign up to receive BusinessSafe directly to your email, visit our [website](#).



Florida Fusion Center
 (800) 342-0820

FLBusinessSafe@FDLE.state.fl.us

Author: FL8642, Approval: FL8600, HSEC:1, 2, 4, 6 FSIN:1.1, 1.10, 2.6.1 FFC:1.1, 1.3, 2, 6.5