



U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation Weapons of Mass Destruction Directorate Chemical-Biological Countermeasures Unit

ANIMAL-PLANT HEALTH JOINT CRIMINAL-EPIDEMIOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS COURSE

- **Course Format:** The two-day course presents the concepts of joint law enforcement and animal-plant health epidemiological investigations of threats, suspicious disease incidents, and suspected acts of agricultural terrorism, economic espionage, and chemical-biological warfare against the U.S. agricultural sector.

The course was developed by the FBI WMD Directorate (WMDD), Chemical-Biological Countermeasures Unit (CBCU), USDA APHIS Veterinary Services, and Oklahoma State University and is based on the Public Health Joint Criminal-Epidemiologic Investigations Course developed by the FBI and CDC.

This training is the primary tool to implement the FBI-WMDD, USDA APHIS, and USDA OIG Memorandum of Understanding for joint information sharing and investigations. It is hosted by FBI Field Office WMD Coordinators in collaboration with partners from USDA, local, state, tribal law enforcement, state departments of agriculture, and the critical agriculture sector in the Field Offices' areas of responsibility. The WMDD CBCU along with USDA, and Oklahoma State University Subject Matter Experts (SME) developed the Program of Instruction (POI), training materials, and serve as the course facilitators.

- **Mission:**
 - Develop the ability to perform joint Animal-Plant Health (APH) and Law Enforcement (LE) investigations of threats, suspicious activities or disease incidents, economic espionage, intentional efforts to disrupt the agricultural infrastructure and state and federal disease response operations, and suspected intentional introductions of high consequence exotic animal and plant diseases;
 - Enhance awareness of threats, threat actors, and mitigation tools;
 - Train interagency partners to recognize the triggers or signals of suspicious incidents;
 - Establish information sharing and tripwire programs to communicate threats and incidents at the earliest opportunity;
 - Emphasize the benefits of joint operations and how to maximize the resources and skills of State, Federal, and private sector partners.

A key line of effort (LOE) is to develop effective interagency relationships and the tripwire and information sharing protocols to recognize, report, and assess suspicious, unexplained incidents as early as possible.

- **Why Needed:**

The U.S. Congress, the interagency Intelligence Community, and the agricultural sector recognize that the agriculture sector is a potential target of criminal, espionage, chemical-biological warfare, or terrorist activities by domestic, international, state, and non-state



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sponsored actors. These threats have severe consequences to the U.S. economy, international export markets, the gross domestic product, the international balance of trade, domestic food security, as well as the National Security of the United States.

An intentional disease introduction or an attack against the agricultural commodity production sector could be difficult to differentiate from accidental or naturally occurring incidents. In these situations, concurrent disease investigation and control operations as well as criminal, counterterrorism, or counterintelligence investigations will occur at the same time, same locations, and involve the same witnesses, victims, and responders.

The course defines “Triggers” as the first signs or indicators of unusual behavior, activities, threats, or disease incidents that we recognize as abnormal or suspicious. “Tripwires” are the joint relationships and programs used to report and evaluate suspicious incidents and, if necessary, begin joint investigations.

Evidence of an intentional incident may be fragile and not readily apparent so there is a limited window of opportunity to identify and report incidents, initiate investigations, preserve forensic evidence, and prevent or disrupt an on-going attack.

The rapid notification of partners is critical; if the early indicators are missed or delayed, the timely attribution of suspicious incidents necessary to rule in or rule out the possibility of an intentional act may not be possible.

These critical tasks are best accomplished by performing coordinated, concurrent “Crim-Epi” investigations by Animal-Plant Health (APH) and Law Enforcement (LE) personnel trained to use interagency protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP’s).

Joint operations require the ability to rapidly:

- Recognize and report interagency triggers and tripwires; regardless of the threat, the target, the perpetrator(s), or the motivations;
- Perform threat credibility evaluations to determine if the incident was accidental, naturally occurring, or intentional and if the threat of an intentional act is feasible, credible, and operationally practical;
- Identify and characterize the chemical-biological agent(s), the source, and geographic origin;
- Determine how a potential threat agent was acquired, if it has been manipulated or weaponized, and how it was disseminated;
- Identify the likely perpetrators, determine the motivations and the attack planning process, and disrupt on-going or imminent attacks.



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- **Program of Instruction (POI) and course agenda:**
 - 1- Agricultural threat and intelligence briefings;
 - 2- Joint threat credibility evaluations;
 - 3- Biosecurity for law enforcement, animal health, and plant health;
 - 4- Biosurveillance;
 - 5- Agricultural economic espionage;
 - 6- Operational case studies;
 - 7- Triggers and tripwires, incident notification, information sharing;
 - 8- Concepts of joint investigations and joint interviews;
 - 9- Agricultural crime scene investigations; and
 - 10- Two interactive exercises (“Information Sharing” and “Red Cell” exercises).

- **Audience:**
 - State and local law enforcement personnel;
 - FBI Field Office personnel (Special Agents / WMD Coordinators / Intelligence Analysts);
 - State Department of Agriculture and USDA APHIS personnel (veterinarians, animal health technicians, epidemiologists, emergency coordinators, plant disease investigators, and wildlife-forestry investigators);
 - State Health Department epidemiologists and zoonotic-infectious disease specialists;
 - State and federal agricultural law enforcement investigators (rural crimes investigators, brand inspectors, USDA APHIS IES / SITC personnel, USDA OIG / FDA OCI Special Agents);
 - University and Cooperative Extension Service personnel;
 - Customs and Border Protection / APHIS PPQ Agricultural Specialists;
 - State and local HAZMAT and first responders / Emergency Management Agency-FEMA personnel / Army National Guard Civil Support Teams;
 - State Intelligence Fusion Centers analysts;
 - Animal, plant, and public health diagnostic laboratory personnel; and
 - Private sector livestock and crop commodity producers and market personnel.

- The domestic APH Crim-Epi course has also been adapted for international training programs with partnered national agricultural and law enforcement agencies.

For more information and assistance, contact:

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Washington, DC