



Online Tool Leads to Critical Asset Protection Breakthrough

The **Food & Agriculture Sector Criticality Assessment Tool (FASCAT)** cuts through the maze of food and agriculture pipe-lines, making it possible to identify and prioritize critical assets that need protection. FASCAT outputs enabled private sector owners/operators, states and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to identify food and agriculture assets for placement on the Nation's critical infrastructure and key resources (CIKR) lists for the first time.

How It Works

FASCAT is a web-based software tool developed by the National Center for Food Protection and Defense (NCFPD), a DHS Science and Technology Center of Excellence, to help state officials work with the private sector to examine and compare the food systems within states. FASCAT assesses the threats and vulnerabilities of these food systems and evaluates the potential consequences of these threats to the food systems

Through FASCAT, food and agriculture private sector owners and operators work with state officials to enter data into FASCAT, which then scores the food or agriculture asset automatically. Users receive data summary worksheets that help with decision making, asset prioritization, and identification of weaknesses and gaps of the food system or asset evaluated.

States use FASCAT evaluations to identify and prioritize which food and agriculture assets they submit for consideration for DHS's Level 1 and Level 2 CIKR designation.

Benefits of Using FASCAT

- FASCAT provides a common method and language for states and industry to identify privately owned critical food and agriculture system components and prioritize the allocation of scarce security resources.
- FASCAT streamlines critical asset reporting to DHS and is DHS's tool of choice for submissions to its data call for state critical infrastructure prioritization.
- FASCAT helps states identify what food and agriculture assets and components/subsystems they have and where they are located to help with preparedness and response.

Food and Agriculture Sector Makes the CIKR List for the First Time

DHS prioritizes CIKR into Level 1 and Level 2 categories. The Level 1 and Level 2 CIKR lists guide and inform DHS policy, programs, plans, and funding related to infrastructure protection.

Before 2010, the food and agriculture sector was the only sector of the Nation's 18 critical infrastructure sectors that did not make DHS's CIKR lists. Since 2010, FASCAT has identified more than 700 food and agriculture sub-systems in 39 states for DHS CIKR list consideration. Of those, 172 sub-systems and components were placed on the DHS's Level 2 list.

FASCAT Helps the State of Louisiana

Before 2011, Louisiana was unable to get any of its food and agriculture infrastructure accepted into the Level 1 or Level 2 DHS CIKR lists. But after the state used FASCAT to submit their data, DHS accepted four agriculture systems in Louisiana as Level 2 CIKR.

"FASCAT has allowed us to proceed with development of local and state mitigation plans to protect critical infrastructure vital to Louisiana's agricultural systems."

~ John S. Walther

Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Director of Veterinary Health Division
Director of Emergency Programs
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