

Terrorism

General

Terrorism is the unlawful use or threat of the use of force and violence against persons or property, to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives (28 CFR 0.85).

The major weapons and activities of terrorists include: chemical and biological agents; radiological dispersion devices (RDD commonly referred to as “dirty bombs”); nuclear weapons; conventional explosives; improvised explosive devices (IED which include incendiary devices); kidnappings; hijackings; arson; and shootings. Terrorist targets are usually high value, high profile, high-visibility targets. Such targets may include: international airports; large cities; major special events; critical infrastructure; resorts; important landmarks; and political and/or business leaders. It is important to keep in mind that these are specific people, places, and targets, not regions.

A nuclear detonation is potentially the most destructive of any terrorist attack. The amount of destruction caused by a nuclear attack is determined by the size of the weapon. The effects of the fallout are determined by other factors, such as wind speed and weather conditions. “Dirty bombs” are not considered nuclear weapons and do not result in a nuclear explosion, but are one of the many forms of explosives used by terrorists.

Anthrax, as an example of bioterrorism, is an infectious disease that can be spread by inhaling, ingesting, or touching the spore-forming bacteria. As seen in the past, terrorists (either international or domestic) can use the U.S. Postal Service to spread anthrax. With the massive size of the Postal Service, this form of terrorism is extremely difficult to stop.

Other types of terrorism include:

- Agriterrorism – The intentional contamination of food supplies or the introduction of pests and/or disease agents to crops and livestock.
- Cyberterrorism – This is terrorism that involves computers and networks along with the information they contain.

History

There have been no terrorist attacks in Juniata County, to date.

Vulnerability

Since 47 percent of its land is agricultural, Juniata County is susceptible to agriterrorism. However, the likelihood of an attack is low. It is important to note that the use and exposure to these biological agents can remain unknown for several days, until the infected person(s),

livestock, or crops begin to experience or demonstrate symptoms. Often, these agents are contagious and the infected person must be quarantined, livestock culled, and/or crops destroyed. The tables below show Juniata County's total number of farms and the total amount of cattle, chickens, and egg production.

Juniata County Farm Land, 1995-2006			
Year	Land in Farms	Acres Per Farm	Numbers of Farms
1995	92,000 acre	119 acre	770 Number
1996	91,000 acre	118 acre	770 Number
1997	93,000 acre	116 acre	805 Number
1998	92,500 acre	119 acre	780 Number
1999	91,000 acre	123 acre	740 Number
2000	89,000 acre	125 acre	710 Number
2001	87,500 acre	130 acre	675 Number
2002	85,500 acre	133 acre	645 Number
2003	85,500 acre	133 acre	645 Number
2004	85,500 acre	133 acre	645 Number
2005	85,500 acre	133 acre	645 Number
2006	84,500 acre	131 acre	645 Number

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

Juniata County Cattle Inventory, 1975-2007					
Year	All Cattle	Milk Cattle	Year	All Cattle	Milk Cattle
1975	20,200 head	-	1992	20,900 head	-
1976	20,700 head	-	1993	21,000 head	-
1977	21,000 head	-	1994	20,500 head	-
1978	20,000 head	-	1995	20,500 head	-
1979	20,000 head	-	1996	20,800 head	-
1980	21,400 head	-	1997	20,500 head	-
1981	21,500 head	-	1998	20,500 head	-
1982	23,100 head	-	1999	20,900 head	-
1983	22,200 head	-	2000	20,700 head	-
1984	23,200 head	-	2001	20,200 head	8,300 head
1985	21,700 head	-	2002	19,800 head	8,000 head
1986	22,300 head	-	2003	19,300 head	7,500 head
1987	21,600 head	-	2004	18,200 head	7,400 head
1988	21,700 head	-	2005	18,700 head	7,600 head
1989	20,800 head	-	2006	18,600 head	7,600 head
1990	19,200 head	-	2007	19,600 head	7,400 head
1991	19,100 head	-			

Source: USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service

Juniata County Chicken Population and Egg Production, 1978-1999					
Year	Chicken Population	Egg Production	Year	Chicken Population	Egg Production
1978	194,000	39.867 M	1988	299,000	48.707 M
1979	235,000	44.120 M	1989	535,000	91.168 M
1980	215,000	43.769 M	1990	500,000	130.266 M
1981	205,000	40.688 M	1991	528,500	131.083 M
1982	200,000	38.926 M	1992	493,000	127.720 M
1983	290,000	60.242 M	1996	255,000	75.517 M
1984	260,000	54.150 M	1997	358,700	78.000 M
1985	230,000	53.835 M	1998	362,800	79.000 M
1986	240,000	54.368 M	1999	380,100	81.000 M
1987	300,000	54.216 M			

Source: USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service

Possible attacks on livestock are a concern, but approximately 64 percent of the farmland in Juniata County is utilized as cropland. Cropland makes up more than 55,000 acres of the total 86,203 acres of farmland in Juniata County. The top crops and uses include corn, soybeans, and forage land.¹

It is not likely Juniata County will experience a direct attack by a terrorist organization. Juniata County is more likely to experience the secondary effects of a nearby area being attacked; this would include the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station, located in Luzerne County, and Three Mile Island, located in Dauphin County. However, the threat of a terrorist attack with chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive (CBRNE) weapons is increasing. One method to assess the potential for a terrorist attack is by looking at the amount of critical infrastructure in the area. Facilities such as power plants and water facilities could disrupt a much larger area are more prone to terrorist attacks. Another way to gauge the threat of a terrorist attack is by reviewing law enforcement threat warnings and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Threat Advisory System. This color-coded chart is an assessment of the current threat of a terrorist attack.



¹ USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service , 2002 Census of Agriculture County Profile, Juniata, Pennsylvania.

Probability

Terrorist events are unpredictable by nature. While significant improvements have been made in their detection and prevention, terrorist events remain challenging to predict in size, scope, intent, and frequency. Although the likelihood of an occurrence in Juniata County or the surrounding area is extremely low, it is possible the County could experience the effects of a terrorist event. However, this is not likely within a period of 30 years or more.

Maximum Threat

The impact resulting from a terrorist event can vary from nominal to catastrophic, depending on the type, location, and severity of the event. The greatest impact would be to the health and safety of the citizens, the continuation of government operations, facilities, and critical infrastructure, and local economic stability.

While Juniata County may not seem to be a conventional terrorism target, its rural areas are susceptible to agriterrorism. The impact could be severe to the traditional family-operated farm, low-density residential areas, commercial agriculture operations, resource production facilities, and small-scale operations.

Similarly, the areas along the major transportation routes, including U.S. Route 22/322 and U.S. Route 11/15 in Susquehanna Township could be susceptible to some form of public transit terrorist attack. The more populated areas of the County would be susceptible to chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological, or explosive events, due to the concentration and density of residential communities.

There is also the chance that Juniata County could be indirectly affected by an act of terrorism. Somerset County witnessed this first-hand, as United Flight 93 crashed into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001.

Secondary Effects

The resulting secondary effects from an act of terrorism are contingent on the type, location, and severity of an event. Nominal effects, similar to what Somerset County experienced in the wake of the Flight 93 tragedy, may be relatively minor compared to the impact on the populace, property, and surrounding environment. Emotional trauma, subsequent property damage, and the introduction of small amounts of hazardous materials into the environment are the likely secondary effects of a similar incident occurring in Juniata County.

Secondary effects can also range to the catastrophic in impact and may be more damaging and have a greater lasting impact than the initial event. This may occur as the result of a chemical, biological, nuclear, radiological, or explosive event that directly or indirectly affects the County. Critical protective actions may be required of first responders or the entire population. Resulting mass evacuations could lead to traffic congestion and a breakdown in civil order, further exacerbating the situation. Government operations may be disrupted, due to the need to displace or operate under reduced capacity.

The environment may experience damaging long-term effects from radiation fallout, chemical introduction into the ground water, or biologic/germ introduction into the ecosystem. Critical infrastructure may be irreparably damaged, and a loss in agriculture productivity could permanently affect the County's economy.