

## **Food emergency preparedness**

Safeguarding the sufficient provision of food to the population is a key component of public services. This applies especially if the usual rich choice of food is no longer available due to interruptions of supply.

The smooth interaction between agricultural production and the processing and marketing of foodstuffs – a central feature of today's food supply – requires more than ever a functional infrastructure. In case of the destruction or interruption of traffic ways, supply networks and communication facilities, a considerable impact on food supply has to be reckoned with. During the past years the danger of terrorist attacks on these important pieces of infrastructure has clearly increased. Likewise, extreme weather events, technological accidents and, too, animal diseases with their direct and indirect consequences for the supply of food have to be taken into account. Independently of their causes these events have one thing in common: they happen without any notice or with a short warning period only, requiring quick action. Thus, food supply precaution measures have to be continuously prepared and adjusted.

For such a case of major interruptions of food supply the German government has set up a legal framework that requires the Federal Government, Federal States and local authorities to take measures regarding organization, material and planning.

At federal level the BLE deals, also in the absence of crises, with central issues of food supply precaution and securing. This includes among other things the regular assessment of the supply situation and planning tasks as well as the organizational and technical support of the national food stock. In case of a crisis the BLE becomes provided with extended competences for ensuring the nation-wide supply with food and feedstuff.