

Costs And Returns From Sugarcane In South Florida

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INTRODUCTION

In sugarcane production, as in any other business, a manager needs a set of decision-making tools. These decision-making tools can be just as useful in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of a business operation as can the tools (wrenches, screwdrivers, etc.) of a machine repairman.

What Are Decision-Making Tools?

Decision-making tools are inputs to a rational decision-making process. They may take many different forms.

For example, placing a hand on a red-hot poker may be an irrational (not well reasoned) decision. Rapidly drawing it away from the red-hot poker may be an example of a rational (well-reasoned) decision. But what is the problem here? It seems the rational decision making was too late. The damage was already done as a result of the irrational decision. The hand should have been drawn away at the sight of the red-hot poker.

Moreover, the preceding statement leads directly to the answer of the question being asked — what are decision-making tools? **A decision-making tool is a tool that tells one a red-hot poker is hot.** It tells whether a person should or should not take a specific action. That is, one needs a signal, or an instruction, or a something-or-other to help decide when and when not to place his hand on a poker.

Along the same lines, an exit sign in a large building is an example of a decision-making tool. It helps a person get out of the building successfully. Traffic signs along a highway are decision-making tools. They can be used in deciding upon alternative, or the best, courses of action.

Why Are Decision-Making Tools Needed?

The answer to this question can be inferred from the preceding discussion. Sugarcane producers, like other businessmen, want to operate successfully (profitably). They want to make the best possible decisions — decisions that will enable them to operate profitably. They want the best solutions to complex operating problems. In short, they want to reduce the risk inherent in a business operation. Reducing such risks can be complemented through the use of well thought out, systematically derived decision-making tools.

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