

Production Management

Tips and Training

Production Management

Production management refers to the practices that affect how crops and animals grow, develop and perform.

From a crop perspective, production considerations include physical and biological factors such as soil management, tillage, crop rotation, plant breeding, diseases, weed control, pest management, weather and climate.

If producing animals, then consider factors such as breed selection, housing and handling spaces, feed rations, diet supplementation, reproductive management and animal health.

Why Production Management Is Key

Understanding how to manage production factors is important to farmers because implementing the appropriate practices leads to maximizing crop or animal productivity, environmental quality and economic viability of the farm business.

Steps To Improving Production Management

You can upskill your production management competencies by working through steps such as the following.

- Talk with experts such as other farmers, university researchers, extension specialists and industry professionals (e.g., crop advisers, veterinarians) who have practical experience or knowledge related to your type of enterprise.
- Educate yourself by reading university or extension guide sheets or other resources that discuss production-related aspects of your enterprise.
- Understand the opportunities and constraints that your land and climate present for a type of crop or animal.
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of your farm and the goods you produce to understand your competitive advantage.
- Develop a production plan. For crops, outline the production steps, timing and practices involved in offering a crop mix that achieves a suitable profit margin over production costs. For animal products, detail the process throughout an animal's lifecycle, and document the care and management required at each step to maintain healthy, productive animals.
- Consider adopting technology such as improved genetics, crop protection products, fertilizer, feedstuffs and mechanization to enhance productivity.
- Obtain price quotes from more than one source when evaluating capital investments to make in your farm.

- Negotiate when buying inputs such as seed, fertilizer, fuel and feed.
- Identify key production risks, and use various tools or strategies (e.g., crop or revenue protection insurance, contracts, diversification) to mitigate them.

Additional Resources

To collect more ideas about upskilling your production management competencies, refer to these resources.

- [AgPlan](#) (University of Minnesota)
- [Evaluating a Farming Enterprise](#) (ATTRA)
- [Farmland Assessment Checklist](#) (Penn State Extension)
- [Small Acreage Business Planning in Missouri](#) (University of Missouri Extension)
- [Solutions for Small-Scale Farms](#) (USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service)
- [What Can I Do with My Small Farm? Selecting an Enterprise for Small Acreages](#) (Oregon State University Extension Service)