**Appendix D: Decision Making Guidance Worksheets**

We all make decisions that impact our lives. Some decisions may appear to be fairly straight forward to process and make a decision. Considerations for major changes in the business may cause one to pause and give the proposal careful thought and evaluation. This tool has been developed to guide key decision maker(s) to consider various factors that may help them have more confidence about the decision they make.

There are multiple sections to the guide. It may not be necessary to complete all the sections to assist you in making the decision you are planning. Choose the sections that you feel will be of most help in you making a decision about the proposed change in your business.

For each section, there will be several prepared statements for you to think about and evaluate. There is also room for you to write in other factors you wish to evaluate in that section. Each section is set up to help you prioritize how much time you wish to devote to evaluating that factor:

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|  | If you feel the statement favorably supports implementing the proposed change, then you have a “green light.” This means that you can move on to evaluate other statements in this and other sections. |
|  | If you feel that more information is needed to determine if what is stated supports (or not) the proposed change, use some “caution.” This may mean further analysis, gaining more information or talking to others before making a final determination about this statement. |
|  | If you have a “red light,” this is an indication that you should stop and give the factors in the statement closer scrutiny. After closer examination, this “red light” may change to a “green light” once additional information is attained.  |

Change in business I wish to evaluate: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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**Production:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. Can use either the Livestock or the Fruit and Vegetable Expense worksheet.*

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| Factor |  |  |  |  |  |
| The proposed change will not cause me to alter how I produce the agricultural products I grow/produce. I can continue to use the same production practices/systems. |  |  |  |  |  |
| The proposed change will not change productions expenses significantly |  |  |  |  |  |
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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal looking at production expenses is:

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**Market Potential:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. Can use Market Potential sheet to list current market channels and income received. Then list projected markets and estimated income. Can compare the two.*

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| Factor |  |  |  |  |  |
| Access to my current market outlets will change very little, if any. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I will be in a better financial position with the new mix of market outlets. (Increase in income potential) |  |  |  |  |  |
| The markets that I project to use are as stable (or more stable) than the markets I am currently using. |  |  |  |  |  |
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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal from looking at the impact on market potential is:

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**Machinery and Infrastructure Decision:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. To assess what, if any, changes to the infrastructure are necessary, use Building/Infrastructure and Machinery Worksheets.*

*This section can be used to not only evaluate production needs, but also processing and packaging too.*

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| Factor |  |  |  |  |  |
| I do not need to purchase any additional equipment to successfully achieve the results in this proposal.  |  |  |  |  |  |
| The equipment/infrastructure needed to implement this change can be financed through cash flow and do not need to borrow money. |  |  |  |  |  |
| I will have to borrow money to purchase the equipment/infrastructure needed to implement this proposal, but feel confident that will have enough income to cover an increase in debt payments. |  |  |  |  |  |
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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal looking at infrastructure/machinery needs is:

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**Transportation/Distribution:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. Several tools are available to help you with this section. University of Iowa has developed a Motor Vehicle Ownership Cost spreadsheet. The spreadsheet can be found at:* [*https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/xls/a3-40motorvehiclecost.xlsx*](https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/crops/xls/a3-40motorvehiclecost.xlsx)*. A distribution/transportation worksheet is also available in the Projected vs Actual Excel spreadsheet.*

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| Factor |  |  |  |  |  |
| Once proposal is completely implemented, my vehicle/Machinery costs will be the same or less than they are now. |  |  |  |  |  |
| Once proposal is completely implemented, my labor transportation/distribution costs will be the same or less than they are now. |  |  |  |  |  |
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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal from looking at the impact on transp./distribution is:

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**Processing and Packaging:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. Several tools are available to help you with this section. Can use Processing/Packaging sheet to list current market channels and income received. Then list projected markets and estimated income. Can compare the two.*

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| Factor |  |  |  |  |  |
| Once proposal is completely implemented, my processing/packaging operating costs will be the same or less than they are now. |  |  |  |  |  |
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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal from looking at the impact on processing/packaging is:

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**Evaluate Something You Wish:**

*Check green if you agree with the statement, yellow if unsure and red if you do not agree with the statement. Several tools are available to help you with this section.*

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What I have learned from evaluating this proposal from looking at the impact on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is:

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