

Will this be a Year of Mission, Goals, and Tactics?

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The Pro-Dairy program created by Cornell University identified three key elements of the planning function of management –Mission, Goals and Tactics. Ironically, the first letters of these words – M G T might be used as a three letter abbreviation for management. While not covering all the functions of management, could thinking about the “mission, goals and tactics” parts of management be of benefit in managing a dairy farm business this year?

Mission answers the question why.

Why does your dairy farm business exist?

What is its purpose?

In what direction is your business headed?

What are the values ingrained in the business?

What are you trying to accomplish?

If your dairy farm business is not all that you hoped it would be, do you have a vision of what you would like for it to look like in the future?

The answers to these questions can provide the basis for a mission statement for your dairy farm business. After a draft mission statement is written, it could be valuable to share it with the members of your family involved in the business. Sharing your ideas will be beneficial to help them understand what your perspective is on your dairy farm business. Their input and perspective could be equally beneficial to you. Once written, a mission statement can be a means of focus for the business.

If mission provides focus and direction, then goals can be thought of as benchmarks for travelling in the direction the business is headed. They can be thought of as a way to track whether you are headed in the direction in which you want to be headed. Usually goals can be written to cover three different time periods – short term (in the next year), intermediate (more than a year and up to 5 years) and long term (5 years and more). They need to be written down. This can increase commitment to them. Goals can encompass all aspects of the business – production, financial and personnel. Goals should be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timed. Having goals can help you fulfill your mission.

Finally, we have tactics which are the action activities associated with our goals and mission. They answer the questions Who? What? How? Where? and When? Tactics are the details of what we can undertake to accomplish our goals and fulfill our mission. Tactics are what take up most of our time. They are not only the tasks and chores we do but they are the intentional activities we do because we know they must be done if we are to accomplish our goals.

This M G T package of Mission, Goals and Tactics could help your dairy farm business be all that it can be.