



## Section 8: Involvement of Others

After each topic in this section there is a set of questions designed to help you examine and evaluate how you involve others in your business decision-making.

Life isn't simple anymore, and neither is operating a farm business. Whether you are deciding on new planting systems, selecting varieties, modifying production methods, or considering new marketing channels, the rate of change is accelerating. This makes decision-making complicated and, at times, overwhelming. Given these complexities, how does a grower manage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? The answer is to reach out to and involve others who can provide information, offer an objective opinion, and might see things differently than you do. No longer is it possible for one individual to have the diversity of skills and information needed to manage a fruit farm business.

Many growers involve others who can assist them in solving a particular problem, discussing an idea or brainstorming solutions, these

resources can be utilized on an as needed basis. In the stories that follow this chapter you will notice that growers called upon a variety of resources to assist them in making changes to both their businesses and in their personal lives. In many cases the resources were of no cost to the grower.

Some growers also have a management team assembled for on-going problem solving and decision making. Management teams might include family members, key employees, investors, lenders, marketers, accountants, etc. Some direct marketers also involve their customers to help them solve problems. It's your choice in what manner you involve others, but the important point is to get others involved when problem solving and making decisions.

Answer the following questions:

- a. Do you involve others when considering changes or making business decisions (other than a management team, if you have one, which will be assessed below)? Yes No**

**If yes – How do you involve others?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Who do you currently involve? Think about family, non-family, neighbors, various professionals and what expertise they bring to your business.** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Identify others that you could involve.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**If no – What are the reasons you do not involve others?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How could your farm benefit from involving others? \_\_\_\_\_

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How can you get others involved? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Management Team Assessment:

**a. Have you identified a management team that works with your farm?**      **Yes**      **No**

**If yes** – Does your team meet on a regular basis (scheduled meetings weekly, monthly) or

Does your team meet as needed? \_\_\_\_\_

Which individuals are members of your team? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Are you currently using your team effectively when making decisions?**      **Yes**      **No**

**Are there gaps on your management team that need to be filled?**      **Yes**      **No**

**Are you using your team effectively to meet your needs?**      **Yes**      **No**

**b. If you do not have a management team, would you find a team helpful for your farm?**

**Yes**      **No**

**If yes** – How could a team be helpful? \_\_\_\_\_

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Who could you ask to be on your team? \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Involving Others Planning Summary**

Refer back to your responses to the questions in this section and complete this summary. List below the areas of improvement for involving others you have identified.

<b>Involving Others Areas for Improvement</b>
1.
2.
3.
4.

