

# UNDERSTANDING RESEARCH PRIORITIES AND CRITERIA AFFECTING DECISIONS FOR COTTON PRODUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES: A CONTENT ANALYSIS

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## INTRODUCTION

Cotton producers are faced with a multitude of decisions that impact their bottom line (Drysdale et al., 2010). Due to challenges faced outside of the operation, like climate and market variability, producers seek information and support about "diverse and complex" decisions about their operation (Drysdale et al., 2010, p. 115).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Drysdale et al.'s (2010) Levels of Decision Making Framework

1. Product Choice Decisions
2. Farm System Components
3. Sub-System Decisions
4. Whole Farm System Decisions
5. Beyond Farm Decisions

## METHOD

We used 652 conference proceedings from the Beltwide Cotton Conferences from 2018 - 2020. We analyzed the conference proceedings by reading the title and abstract to interpret its research focus. Exclusions were made ( $n = 127$ ) while analyzing the data. We used open and axial coding (Wilson, 2017; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) to determine relationships and connections between units.

## FINDINGS

All levels of Drysdale et al.'s (2010) framework were addressed, with special attention to levels 1, 2 and 3.



**DISEASE & PEST  
MANAGEMENT**  
( $n = 289$ )



**SOIL**  
( $n = 84$ )



**SEED**  
( $n = 56$ )



**EQUIPMENT &  
TECHNOLOGY**  
( $n = 49$ )



**WATER**  
( $n = 25$ )



**HARVEST**  
( $n = 13$ )

## CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

By better understanding areas of decisions that cotton producers are making during production, Extension personnel and other educators can tailor tools, messages and information to producers' decision-making needs. Future research should identify what areas of interest producers prioritize when making decisions.



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