What information is relevant to the decision about whether to purchase a machine to laser tattoo fruits and vegetables instead of marking the produce with small stickers?

Every piece of fruit and vegetables sold in U.S. grocery stores has a small sticker on it. These stickers include food type, origin, and whether it was grown organically. Laser Food is a company based in Spain that makes laser marking machines. These Laser Mark machines tattoo every piece of fruit and vegetable with identifying information. The laser tattoos replace traditional produce stickers. In addition to the required information, laser tattoos on produce can also include individualized information such as harvest date, spoil date, and other custom data.

Produce packing plants currently have machines that put the stickers on each piece of fruit and vegetables. The Laser Mark machines are more expensive than traditional sticker-labeling machines, but can process more pieces of produce per hour than traditional machines.

Fun fact: The paper stickers on fruit are edible, as is the glue backing them.

Questions

1. Why do you think that individual pieces of fruit and vegetables are required to have stickers on them if they are sold in U.S. grocery stores?
2. If a produce packing plant is considering the purchase of a Laser Mark machine, what information would be relevant to the purchase decision?
3. List at least three advantages to laser tattoos over traditional stickers for individual pieces of fruit and vegetables.
4. What managerial accounting tools could you use to analyze the decision about whether to purchase a Laser Mark machine or to continue to use a traditional sticker machine? Explain.
5. Can you think of any reason that using a laser tattoo instead of a sticker would be a more “green” option? Explain.