The 5-Minute Strategic Plan Stress Test

Would your plan help your team make the call?

Built for poultry leaders. A customer tightens its welfare commitments. An HPAI detection rewrites the season. Feed and labor costs change the math on expansion. In moments like these, a strong strategic plan tells your team how to decide. These ten questions show whether yours does.

A strategic plan earns its keep when a hard call lands on a Tuesday afternoon and the people closest to the work know how to make it. This test takes about five minutes. It looks at four things every working plan needs.

How to Use It

1. **Answer on your own.** Mark YES only if you could point to evidence.
2. **Count your YES answers.** Treat NOT SURE as a no. It often means the answer lives in one person's head.
3. **Look for clusters.** Where your gaps gather tells you where to start.

What It Measures

REALITY
Is the plan built on what's happening on your farms, in your plants and with your customers?

FOCUS
Do leaders agree on what matters most, and on what can wait?

GUIDANCE
Does the plan help people make hard calls without escalating every one?

CADENCE
Does the plan get revisited as conditions change?

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Put Your Plan to the Test

Mark one answer for each question. Go with your first honest read. If you would need to check, mark NOT SURE.

Name _____

Date _____

		YES	NO	NOT SURE
	REALITY *Is the plan grounded in what's happening now?*			
1	Were the people who carry out the plan, from live production to processing to sales, involved in building it?	☐	☐	☐
2	In the past year, has new information from customers, markets or events such as HPAI caused you to revisit the plan?	☐	☐	☐
	FOCUS *Do leaders know what matters most?*			
3	Could your senior leadership team name your three most important priorities without looking them up?	☐	☐	☐
4	Does every major priority have a clear owner and a measurable outcome?	☐	☐	☐
5	Can your team explain what you have deliberately chosen **not** to prioritize?	☐	☐	☐
	GUIDANCE *Does the plan help people make the call?*			
6	If a complex manager or plant leader faced a difficult decision tomorrow, would your plan help them make it?	☐	☐	☐
7	If a major retail or foodservice customer changed its welfare or sustainability expectations, would your team know how to evaluate the request?	☐	☐	☐
8	When welfare, sustainability and cost priorities compete, is it clear how the tradeoff gets decided, and by whom?	☐	☐	☐
	CADENCE *Does the plan keep pace with the business?*			
9	Does leadership formally review the plan against actual results at least twice a year?	☐	☐	☐
10	Has your strategic plan shaped a real decision in the past 90 days?	☐	☐	☐

Count your YES answers	REALITY	FOCUS	GUIDANCE	CADENCE	TOTAL
	/ 2	/ 3	/ 3	/ 2	/ 10

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What Your Score Is Telling You

8–10 YES

Your plan is doing its job.

Keep the review rhythm going, and test the plan against your next hard call.

5–7 YES

Your foundation is there.

Pressure-testing your weakest dimension could make the plan considerably more useful.

0–4 YES

You may have a strategic plan.

You probably don't have a decision system yet. The table below shows where to begin.

Where Your Gaps Cluster

Find the dimension with the most NO and NOT SURE answers. Start there.

DIMENSION	WHAT IT MAY MEAN	A FIRST MOVE
REALITY	The plan may reflect the business as it looked when it was written.	Hold a 60-minute review with leaders from live production, processing and sales. Ask one question: what has changed since we wrote this?
FOCUS	Priorities may be too many, too vague or missing a clear owner.	Ask each senior leader to write down the top three priorities on their own. Compare the lists before you discuss them.
GUIDANCE	Hard calls may be moving up the chain, or getting made differently from one complex to the next.	Choose one recent tradeoff. Write down the principle that should have guided it, and share it with the people who make similar calls.
CADENCE	The plan may be standing still while the business moves.	Put two plan reviews on the leadership calendar for the next 12 months. Bring actual results to each one.

Do you mean principle as in the thing or component of the plan, or principal as in the lead person?

Should this be shared - past tense, as in did the principle share it, or if it is part of this test, the person working on this exercise needs to share it, …

Make it a team exercise. Ask five leaders to take the test on their own, then compare answers. Where they differ, you've found the conversation your team needs to have.

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Would your plan survive a real decision?

Start with one honest conversation.

Let’s Talk Through Your Results

Look East helps food and agriculture leaders turn strategic plans into decision systems their teams use. Bring your score and your NOT SURE answers. We’ll talk through what they mean for your company and where to start.

Start the conversation →

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