Buttermaker

Dairy processing

Job title	Buttermaker
Department	Dairy processing
Reports to	Production Supervisor
Direct reports	None
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Makes butter to specification on a continuous or batch churn. Prepares and tempers the cream, runs the churn, works and salts the butter, and keeps moisture and salt on target. Keeps accurate records and high hygiene standards so every batch is safe and consistent.

Key responsibilities

Cream preparation

- Check incoming pasteurised cream for fat content, temperature and acidity against specification
- Run cream ripening and tempering programmes to the set temperatures and holding times
- Add cultures for cultured or lactic butter where the recipe requires
- Plan cream tank use to keep the churn supplied without long holding times

Churning, working and salting

- Set up and start the continuous or batch churn at the correct speed and cream temperature
- Drain buttermilk and send it to the correct storage tank
- Wash butter grains where the process requires
- Work the butter to an even, close texture with fine water droplets
- Dose salt or brine accurately for salted products

Moisture, salt and texture control

- Check moisture, salt and fat by in-line measurement or rapid test at set intervals
- Adjust water dosing, salt dosing and working speed to hold moisture and salt on target
- Take samples for the laboratory and act on the results
- Identify and correct texture faults such as crumbly, greasy, leaky or mottled butter
- Hold and report any product that is out of specification

Packing and records

- Feed butter to block formers and pat or roll packers and check pack weights
- Check date codes, labels and batch numbers on every run

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- Record cream batches, temperatures, test results and output in the production log
- Give a clear handover to the next shift

Hygiene and safety

- Follow hygiene, clothing and hand washing rules at all times
- Run or check CIP of churns, butter silos and pipework and keep cleaning records
- Strip, clean and rebuild packing equipment using lock-out procedures
- Report accidents, near misses and hazards straight away

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Experience making butter or operating dairy process plant, or a dairy or food apprenticeship or craft qualification
- Understanding of how cream temperature affects churning and butter texture
- Good number skills for weighing, dosing and recording test results
- Ability to follow recipes and procedures exactly
- Willingness to work shifts, including nights and weekends
- Good attendance and timekeeping

Desirable

- Food hygiene certificate
- Experience with continuous churns and in-line moisture control
- Experience with CIP systems and butter packing machines
- Basic knowledge of HACCP

Skills and attributes

- Attention to detail
- Accurate record keeping
- Problem solving on texture and moisture faults
- Careful process control
- Mechanical awareness
- Teamwork and clear handovers
- Commitment to food safety

Measures of success

- Butter within moisture, salt and fat specification
- Fat losses to buttermilk within target
- Pack weights and labelling right first time
- Complete and accurate production records
- Hygiene audits and swab results passed
- No accidents or injuries

Working conditions and safety

Shift work, which may include nights and weekends. Cream rooms and butter halls are cool and wet; the work involves standing, repeated movements and handling cartons, and PPE is provided.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow food safety, hygiene, HACCP and quality procedures at all times

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- Report hazards, accidents, near misses and concerns promptly

This job description outlines the main duties of the role. It is not a complete list, and the employer may update it as the business changes, in consultation with the jobholder.

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