Dairy Engineering Director

Dairy leadership and board

Job title	Dairy Engineering Director
Department	Dairy leadership and board
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer
Direct reports	Site engineering managers, the head of capital projects, and energy and utilities managers
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Leads engineering across all of a dairy business's sites, so that plant is safe, reliable, efficient and ready for future growth. Sets the asset and capital investment strategy, manages utilities and energy, and builds the engineering capability the business needs.

Key responsibilities

Engineering strategy and leadership

- Set the engineering strategy and standards for all sites in line with the business plan
- Lead site engineering managers and hold them to account for safety, reliability and cost
- Standardise engineering practice, spare parts and maintenance systems across the group
- Advise the executive team and the Board on asset condition, risk and investment needs

Capital investment and projects

- Build and maintain a multi-year capital plan linked to milk supply forecasts and market demand
- Prepare investment cases for new capacity, replacement plant and efficiency projects
- Lead major projects from feasibility and design through to commissioning and handover
- Control project budgets, timelines and contractor performance
- Review completed projects to confirm the promised benefits were delivered

Asset management and reliability

- Set the asset management strategy, including asset registers, condition monitoring and lifecycle planning
- Drive planned and predictive maintenance to reduce breakdowns and lost production
- Make sure plant is designed and maintained to hygienic design and food safety standards
- Ensure statutory inspections of pressure systems, lifting equipment and refrigeration plant are completed on time

Utilities, energy and environment

- Manage steam, refrigeration, compressed air, water and effluent systems across all sites

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- Lead energy reduction and decarbonisation projects, including heat recovery and fuel switching
- Set targets and report progress on energy use, water use and emissions
- Work with procurement on energy contracts and long-term supply arrangements
- Make sure effluent treatment and emissions meet environmental permit conditions

Engineering safety and talent

- Lead safe systems of work for engineering activities, including permits, isolation and contractor control
- Build engineering capability through recruitment, apprenticeships and graduate programmes
- Plan succession for key engineering roles and develop future leaders
- Promote a culture of engineering excellence and continuous improvement

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in mechanical, electrical, chemical or process engineering
- Extensive senior engineering leadership experience in dairy, food, beverage or a similar process industry
- Track record of delivering large capital projects across more than one site
- Strong knowledge of asset management, reliability engineering and maintenance systems
- Experience of managing utilities, energy and environmental compliance
- Sound knowledge of engineering safety, including permits to work and process safety

Desirable

- Chartered or professionally registered engineer
- Experience of evaporators, spray dryers, UHT or cheese-making plant
- Experience of decarbonisation projects such as heat pumps, electrification or biomass boilers
- Formal project management qualification

Skills and attributes

- Strategic and long-term planning
- Investment appraisal and financial acumen
- Leadership of multi-site teams
- Project and contractor management
- Technical problem solving
- Clear communication with the Board and non-engineers
- Negotiation with suppliers and contractors

Measures of success

- Lost-time injuries and process safety incidents in engineering activities
- Plant availability and overall equipment effectiveness
- Capital projects delivered on time, on budget and with the agreed benefits
- Maintenance cost against budget
- Energy and water use per tonne of product, and emissions reduction against target
- Engineering staff retention and succession cover for key roles

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Working conditions and safety

Based at a head office or main site, with frequent travel to plants and project sites and PPE worn in production areas. Some out-of-hours availability is needed for major breakdowns or incidents.

- Lead by example on health, safety, food safety and animal welfare
- Uphold the code of conduct and all legal and compliance requirements
- Raise concerns and report incidents 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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