Dairy Farm Technician

Dairy farming

Job title	Dairy Farm Technician
Department	Dairy farming
Reports to	Herd Manager or Farm Manager
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

Works as the skilled all-rounder on a larger dairy farm, covering milking, feeding, breeding, calving and routine maintenance on a rota. Follows the farm routine and health plan, records herd events in the farm software the same day and reports faults, sick cows and anything unusual to the Herd Manager.

Key responsibilities

Milking and milk hygiene

- Milk the herd to the farm routine on a rota, including pre-milking checks, teat preparation and post-milking teat dipping
- Milk cows under treatment or within a withdrawal period separately and keep their milk out of the bulk tank
- Milk high cell-count cows last and follow the farm mastitis detection routine
- Run the plant wash after every milking and wash the bulk tank after each collection
- Check the parlour, cooler and bulk tank are working and record milk temperatures as the farm requires
- Keep the parlour, collecting yard and dairy clean and tidy at the end of each milking

Feeding and cow care

- Load the mixer wagon in the order and weights on the ration sheet and feed out to each group
- Push up feed through the day and keep feed fences and troughs clean
- Check water troughs are clean and working every day
- Run the foot bath to the farm routine and help with foot trimming
- Walk the groups every day to spot lame, sick or off-colour cows and report them to the Herd Manager
- Handle, store and give medicines under the farm health plan, and record every treatment with its withdrawal period

Breeding, calving and records

- Watch for cows on heat using observation, collars or sensors, and record each heat the same day
- Carry out artificial insemination where trained and certified as required where the job is based
- Help with pregnancy diagnosis and other routine vet visits

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- Watch calving cows and help with calvings when needed, calling the Herd Manager or vet if a calving is not progressing
- Make sure newborn calves get colostrum quickly, are navel dipped and tagged, and are moved to clean pens
- Record calvings, heats, services, treatments and movements in the herd management software the same day
- Check collar, sensor and robot reports where fitted and follow up on alerts

Machinery, maintenance and yards

- Drive tractors, telehandlers and quads for scraping, bedding and feeding, with the licences or certificates as required where the job is based
- Scrape yards and passages and bed cubicles to the farm routine
- Do routine checks and basic maintenance on the parlour, robots where fitted, scrapers, water troughs and fences
- Check oil, fuel, tyres and guards on machines before use and report any defects
- Report faults, breakdowns and anything unusual to the Herd Manager straight away
- Help with seasonal jobs such as fencing, silage making and carting straw as the farm needs

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Experience working on a dairy farm, including milking and feeding
- Confident, calm cattle handling
- Ability to follow the farm routine, ration sheet and health plan accurately
- Basic computer or phone skills to record events in herd management software
- Willing to work early starts, weekends and on-call rotas, including busy calving periods
- Driving licence as required where the job is based

Desirable

- Agricultural or dairy qualification, apprenticeship or similar training
- Artificial insemination certificate as required where the job is based
- Telehandler, tractor and quad certificates as required where the job is based
- Safe use of veterinary medicines training as required where the job is based
- Experience with robotic milking or activity collars and sensors
- Foot trimming experience
- Experience of calving cows and caring for newborn calves
- Basic maintenance skills, such as changing liners or fixing a water trough

Skills and attributes

- Good stockmanship and an eye for a cow that is not right
- Attention to detail with records, rations and milk hygiene
- Reliability and good timekeeping on early starts
- Practical, hands-on approach to machinery and repairs
- Clear communication with the Herd Manager and the team
- Comfortable with physical, outdoor work in all weathers
- Willingness to learn new skills and take on more responsibility

Measures of success

- Milking completed to the farm routine and milk quality within the milk buyer limits

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- No milk from treated cows or cows within a withdrawal period in the bulk tank
- Cows fed to the ration sheet, with feed fences clean and feed pushed up
- Heats, services, calvings and treatments recorded the same day
- Lame and sick cows spotted early and reported
- Routine checks and basic maintenance done on time, with faults reported promptly
- No accidents or injuries

Working conditions and safety

Early starts, weekends and on-call duties on a rota, with longer hours at busy times such as calving and silage making. The work is physical and outdoors in all weathers, around large animals, slurry, machinery and parlour chemicals; PPE and training are provided.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow animal welfare, biosecurity and medicine-use procedures at all times
- 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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