Dairy Financial Controller

Finance, legal and corporate

Job title	Dairy Financial Controller
Department	Finance, legal and corporate
Reports to	Finance Director or Chief Financial Officer
Direct reports	Financial accountants, and the payables, receivables, payroll and milk payments teams
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Runs financial accounting, reporting and controls for a dairy processor, co-operative or farming group. Delivers accurate month-end results and statutory accounts, gets milk cost and commodity stock valuation right, and keeps a strong control environment that protects the business and its owners.

Key responsibilities

Month-end and reporting

- Run the month-end close to a set timetable and deliver accurate results on time
- Review balance sheet reconciliations, journals and accruals before sign-off
- Prepare monthly financial statements and commentary for the leadership team and Board
- Consolidate results across sites, subsidiaries and currencies
- Improve the speed and quality of the close through better processes and systems

Milk cost and payments

- Accrue milk cost each month using collected volumes, milk constituents and the expected milk price
- Reconcile milk payments to collection records, quality results and agreed pricing terms
- Account for retrospective price adjustments, bonuses, deductions and seasonal payments
- Work with milk supply to make sure pricing changes are set up correctly in the payment system
- Account for member share capital, retentions and distributions where the business is a co-operative

Stock valuation

- Value butter, powders, cheese and other commodity stocks at the lower of cost and net realisable value
- Review net realisable value against market prices and forward sales contracts
- Account correctly for maturing cheese, including holding costs and ageing
- Oversee stock counts and investigate differences between book and physical stock
- Report stock levels, ageing and provisions to senior management

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Statutory accounts, audit and tax

- Prepare statutory accounts for all group entities under the relevant accounting standards
- Lead the external audit and resolve audit findings promptly
- Manage tax compliance with internal staff and external advisers
- Maintain accounting policies and update them when standards change
- Prepare papers for the audit committee on key accounting judgements and estimates

Financial controls

- Maintain the financial control framework, including delegated authorities and segregation of duties
- Control cash, banking and payment approvals to prevent fraud and error
- Account correctly for foreign exchange and commodity hedging positions
- Test key controls regularly and close internal audit actions on time
- Keep financial systems secure and financial data reliable

Team leadership

- Recruit, develop and appraise the financial accounting team
- Set clear deadlines, standards and responsibilities for each team member
- Coach staff through professional study and plan succession for key roles
- Promote close working between finance, operations, milk supply and sales

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Recognised professional accountancy qualification
- Substantial post-qualification experience in financial accounting and reporting
- Experience of preparing statutory and consolidated accounts and leading external audits
- Strong knowledge of international or local accounting standards
- Experience of inventory valuation in manufacturing, food or commodity businesses
- Experience of designing and running financial controls
- Experience managing a finance team

Desirable

- Experience in dairy processing, a dairy co-operative or agribusiness
- Knowledge of milk payment systems and milk pricing models
- Experience of hedge accounting for currency or commodity contracts
- Experience of implementing or upgrading an ERP system

Skills and attributes

- Accuracy and attention to detail
- Sound technical accounting judgement
- Planning and deadline management
- Clear written and verbal reporting
- Team leadership and coaching
- Process improvement
- Strong systems and spreadsheet skills

Measures of success

- Month-end close completed within the agreed timetable

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- Statutory accounts filed on time with a clean audit opinion
- Accuracy of milk cost accruals against final payments
- Stock valuation issues and write-downs identified early
- Internal and external audit actions closed on time
- Balance sheet accounts reconciled and reviewed every month

Working conditions and safety

Office-based, with peak workload at month-end and year-end. Some travel to sites and occasional attendance at audit committee or Board meetings.

- 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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