Dairy Legal Counsel

Finance, legal and corporate

Job title	Dairy Legal Counsel
Department	Finance, legal and corporate
Reports to	General Counsel
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

Provides practical legal advice across the commercial life of a dairy business. Drafts and negotiates customer, supplier and co-packing contracts, protects brands and intellectual property, and supports managers on employment, property and compliance matters.

Key responsibilities

Commercial contracts

- Draft, review and negotiate contracts with retail, food-service and ingredient customers
- Negotiate supplier contracts for packaging, ingredients, equipment, energy and services
- Prepare co-packing and toll manufacturing agreements covering quality, liability and recall
- Advise on liability, warranties, pricing mechanisms and termination rights
- Maintain contract templates and the contract register

Intellectual property and brands

- Manage trade mark filings, renewals and the brand portfolio
- Review packaging, labelling and marketing claims before launch
- Protect recipes, know-how and confidential information through agreements and controls
- Act against infringement and handle brand disputes with external counsel

Employment

- Advise on employment contracts, policies and restructuring
- Support HR on disciplinary, grievance and dismissal cases
- Handle employment claims with external counsel where needed

Property

- Advise on site and farm leases, purchases and disposals
- Manage rights of way, easements and utility agreements for sites
- Support planning and environmental matters linked to site property

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Compliance support

- Deliver training on competition law, anti-bribery and data protection
- Review privacy notices, data sharing agreements and data subject requests
- Support internal investigations, audits and regulatory enquiries
- Keep the business informed of relevant legal changes

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Qualified lawyer admitted to practise in a relevant jurisdiction
- Post-qualification experience in commercial law, in-house or in private practice
- Experience of drafting and negotiating supply and customer contracts
- Working knowledge of intellectual property, employment and property law
- Ability to give clear, practical advice to non-lawyers

Desirable

- In-house experience in food, dairy or consumer goods manufacturing
- Experience of co-packing or toll manufacturing agreements
- Knowledge of food labelling and marketing claims rules
- Experience of competition law compliance

Skills and attributes

- Drafting and negotiation
- Commercial awareness
- Clear communication
- Managing a busy caseload
- Attention to detail
- Building trust with internal clients

Measures of success

- Contract turnaround times against agreed service levels
- Contracts signed on approved terms, or with documented approval of departures
- Trade mark portfolio kept current with no lapsed rights
- Disputes resolved within budget
- Compliance training delivered to planned audiences

Working conditions and safety

Office-based, with some travel to sites and customers. Occasional urgent work outside normal hours, for example on recalls or time-critical deals.

- 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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