Dairy Management Accountant

Finance, legal and corporate

Job title	Dairy Management Accountant
Department	Finance, legal and corporate
Reports to	Financial Controller or Head of Financial Planning and Analysis
Direct reports	None, or an assistant accountant in larger businesses
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 the financial analysis that helps a dairy business decide what to make, who to sell to and how to price. Prepares budgets and forecasts, measures product and customer profitability, and explains how milk price and yields drive results.

Key responsibilities

Budgets and forecasts

- Build the annual budget with site, sales and milk supply managers
- Prepare rolling forecasts of volumes, margins, costs and cash
- Model the effect of seasonal milk supply on production, stock and working capital
- Test forecasts against market prices for butter, powders and cheese
- Explain changes between budget, forecast and actual results

Product and customer profitability

- Measure margin by product, pack format and customer
- Analyse cost to serve, including logistics, promotions and retailer trade terms
- Compare returns from retail, food-service, ingredient and export channels
- Identify loss-making products and customers and propose actions
- Support pricing decisions and customer negotiations with clear numbers

Milk price and yield analysis

- Calculate the milk value returned by each product stream
- Model how commodity prices and fat and protein content affect the milk price
- Track yields and milk solids recovery against standard with operations
- Analyse milk losses and their financial cost
- Prepare analysis that supports monthly milk price decisions

Management reporting

- Prepare monthly management accounts with clear commentary for each business unit

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- Produce dashboards on margin, cost per litre and working capital
- Report and explain variances against budget and prior year
- Work with operations to understand cost drivers such as energy, packaging and labour

Investment and business support

- Prepare financial appraisals for capital projects and plant investment
- Track project spend and benefits after investment
- Model scenarios for new products, contracts and capacity changes
- Track savings from cost reduction and continuous improvement projects

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Recognised professional accountancy qualification, or part qualified with strong relevant experience
- Experience in management accounting in manufacturing, food or consumer goods
- Experience of budgeting, forecasting and variance analysis
- Experience of product or customer profitability analysis
- Advanced spreadsheet and financial modelling skills

Desirable

- Experience in dairy processing or a dairy co-operative
- Understanding of milk pricing and dairy commodity markets
- Experience with business intelligence or reporting tools
- Experience of capital investment appraisal

Skills and attributes

- Analytical thinking
- Financial modelling
- Explaining numbers clearly to non-finance managers
- Commercial awareness
- Accuracy under deadlines
- Curiosity and constructive challenge
- Relationship building

Measures of success

- Budget and forecasts delivered on time
- Forecast accuracy for margin and milk cost
- Management accounts issued to the agreed timetable
- Profitability analysis used in pricing and range decisions
- Capital appraisals and post-investment reviews completed

Working conditions and safety

Office-based, with regular time on site with operations and sales teams. Peak workload at month-end and during budget season.

- 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

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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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