Dairy Managing Director

Leadership and board

Job title	Dairy Managing Director
Department	Leadership and board
Reports to	Board of Directors (through the Chair) or the group Chief Executive
Direct reports	Operations Director, Commercial or Sales Director, Finance Director, Technical Director, Supply Chain Director, HR Director
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 the whole dairy business day to day: strategy, the profit and loss account, milk supply, operations, sales, people and compliance. Accountable to the board for safe food, a safe workplace, the numbers and the long-term health of the business.

Key responsibilities

Strategy and results

- Set the business plan and budget with the board, then deliver them
- Own the profit and loss account, cash and capital spending
- Keep food safety, product quality and health and safety as the first priority, and make that standard visible to everyone
- Watch the dairy market, milk price and input costs, and adjust the plan before problems grow
- Report to the board accurately and in time, with no surprises
- Make the big decisions and take responsibility for them

Milk, operations and investment

- Keep milk supply, milk price and the product mix in balance with plant capacity and the market
- Put major capital projects to the board for approval, approve spending within delegated limits, and make sure projects are delivered on time, to budget and to specification
- Make sure every site runs to its food safety, quality, environmental and safety standards
- Lead the response to a product recall, a serious incident or a major customer problem
- Keep milk losses and waste low from farm collection to dispatch
- Keep plant, people and systems fit for the future, not just for this year

Customers, markets and growth

- Lead relationships with the largest customers and settle the big commercial questions
- Decide which markets, products and customers the business will serve, and which it will not
- Lead relationships with farmer suppliers or co-operative members on milk price and terms

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- Build a strong standing with regulators, trade bodies and the local community
- Find and judge growth options such as new products, new markets, new sites or acquisitions
- Protect the reputation of the business and its brands

People, governance and culture

- Hold the senior team to clear targets, review their performance and develop them
- Plan succession for every senior role, including the Managing Director role itself
- Ensure compliance with company law, competition law, employment law, environmental permits and food law as required where the business is based
- Set the culture: honest reporting, no shortcuts on safety or quality, and respect for every person on site and on farm
- Make sure the business has the people, skills and pay structures it needs to compete
- Keep the board informed of risks and work with the Chair to make board meetings effective

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Proven leadership of a dairy or food manufacturing business, or a large site, with full profit and loss responsibility
- Experience leading a senior team of directors or heads of department
- Sound understanding of dairy processing, milk supply and the dairy market
- Strong financial and commercial judgement
- Clear communication with boards, customers and staff at every level
- Experience of audits, regulators and corporate governance

Desirable

- Degree in food science, dairy technology, engineering or business
- Experience of capital projects and plant expansion
- Experience with co-operative or farmer-owned businesses
- Export market experience
- Experience of mergers, turnarounds or opening new sites

Skills and attributes

- Strategic thinking
- Decisiveness
- Integrity
- Commercial judgement
- Calm under pressure
- Coaching and building teams
- Clear communication

Measures of success

- Profit, cash and return on capital against plan
- Food safety and audit results
- Health and safety performance
- Customer retention and growth
- Milk supply secured on sustainable terms
- Staff engagement and retention of key people

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- Board confidence and accurate reporting

Working conditions and safety

Office and site based, with regular time on the factory floor and on farms. The role involves travel to customers, suppliers, the board and industry events, and the on-call responsibility that comes with leading a 24-hour food business.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow food safety, hygiene, HACCP and quality 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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