Dairy Pasteuriser Operator

Dairy processing (liquid milk and cream)

Job title	Dairy Pasteuriser Operator
Department	Dairy processing (liquid milk and cream)
Reports to	Production Shift Supervisor
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

Runs the HTST (high temperature short time) pasteuriser and the separator, standardiser and homogeniser that sit with it. Makes sure every litre of milk or cream is heat-treated correctly, standardised to specification and recorded, and that the plant is cleaned between runs.

Key responsibilities

Running the pasteuriser

- Start up, run and shut down the HTST plant to the SOP: balance tank, feed pump, plate heat exchanger, holding tube and flow diversion valve (FDV)
- Sterilise the plant with hot water before product and confirm the set temperature and time were reached
- Check at start-up that the FDV sends milk below the set point back to the balance tank
- Check the booster pump keeps pasteurised milk at higher pressure than raw milk in the regeneration section
- Hold the temperature at or above the minimum, and the flow at or below the rated maximum, so the milk gets the time at temperature required where the job is based; for cows' milk this is commonly 71.7 °C for 15 seconds, or an equivalent combination
- Watch the control screen and act on alarms straight away
- Run changeovers and water pushes so milk is not lost to drain and water stays out of product

Checks and records

- Watch the chart recorder or data logger and confirm temperature and hold time never drop below the limit
- Check the indicating and recording thermometers against a calibrated thermometer at the set frequency and record the result
- Take the alkaline phosphatase sample at the set frequency and, where the site requires it, hold product until the result confirms pasteurisation was effective
- Record start-up checks, temperatures, flows, batch codes and traceability details in the process log as they happen
- Hold any milk that went forward below the time or temperature limit, never release it as pasteurised, and tell the Production Shift Supervisor and quality straight away

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Separation, standardisation and homogenisation

- Run the separator and check fat in skim milk to confirm it is separating properly
- Set the standardiser to the target fat for each product and confirm it with a fat test
- Run the homogeniser at the set pressure and temperature so fat globules are broken down
- Send cream to the cream tanks at the right fat and temperature for the next process

Cleaning, food safety and teamwork

- Run the CIP after production and check the caustic and acid cycles reached their set times, temperatures and concentrations before signing the plant off
- Check the final rinse so no chemical is left in the plant
- Follow hand washing, clothing and hygiene zone rules, and keep the hall free of spills
- Lock out before opening the plate pack, homogeniser or any pump, and wear the PPE set for the task
- Report faults, leaks and worn gaskets to maintenance
- Give and receive a clear handover at each shift change

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Experience operating process plant in a dairy or food factory
- Ability to follow written procedures exactly
- Ability to read control screens and recorders and act on alarms
- Basic understanding of temperature, flow and pressure
- Good number skills
- Willingness to work rotating shifts, including nights and weekends

Desirable

- Experience on HTST plants, separators or homogenisers
- Basic food hygiene certificate or similar
- HACCP awareness
- Understanding of milk composition (fat, protein, total solids)
- CIP experience

Skills and attributes

- Attention to detail
- Discipline with records
- Calm under pressure
- Clear communication at handover
- Practical problem solving

Measures of success

- No product released below the legal time and temperature
- Phosphatase results pass
- Fat standardisation within specification
- Losses within target
- CIP verified
- Process records complete
- No accidents or injuries

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Working conditions and safety

Shift work including nights, weekends and early starts, in a wet, warm and noisy processing hall with hot surfaces, steam and CIP chemicals. Standing for long periods; PPE and training are provided.

- 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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