Dairy Quality Assurance Manager

Dairy quality and laboratory

Job title	Dairy Quality Assurance Manager
Department	Dairy quality and laboratory
Reports to	Senior Quality Manager or Managing Director
Direct reports	QA and QC staff, laboratory manager or supervisor, and product development technologists
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Leads quality assurance, quality control and the laboratory at a dairy processing site, making sure products are safe, legal and to specification. Owns the food safety and quality management systems, manages regulatory approvals and customer audits, and drives down complaints and non-conformances.

Key responsibilities

Food safety and quality systems

- Develop, maintain and review the HACCP plan and food safety management system
- Act as management representative for ISO 9001 and ISO 22000 and lead certification audits
- Approve quality system documents and keep them current and controlled
- Run the internal audit programme and follow up corrective actions
- Present quality performance at management review meetings

Regulatory and customer compliance

- Act as main contact with the food safety regulator on product and process matters
- Obtain and maintain product registrations and manufacturing approvals
- Prepare the site for regulatory inspections and customer audits
- Make sure products and labels meet legal standards and customer codes of practice
- Review customer specifications and write quality plans as part of contract review

Process and product control

- Ensure in-process checks, sampling and critical control point monitoring follow the agreed schedule
- Verify cleaning and hygiene standards in production areas and lead hygiene training for all staff
- Control positive release of raw milk, cream, whey and finished products
- Decide how non-conforming product is reworked, diverted or disposed of
- Sit on the recipe team and control approved recipes and formulation records
- Give quality input to new product development and trials

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Complaints, suppliers and improvement

- Investigate customer complaints, reply in writing and track corrective and preventive actions
- Approve suppliers through audits and agree raw material and packaging specifications
- Share milk quality results with procurement and farmers and support quality improvement on farm
- Work with engineering to fix equipment and hygiene problems that affect product safety
- Use complaint, non-conformance and test data to target improvement

Team and budget

- Recruit, train and appraise quality and laboratory staff
- Plan staffing and overtime to cover production
- Control the quality budget, including consumables and external testing
- Order laboratory materials in good time so testing is not delayed
- Report quality performance weekly and monthly to senior management

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in food science, dairy science, microbiology, chemistry or a related subject
- Substantial experience in quality assurance in dairy or food manufacturing
- Strong working knowledge of HACCP, ISO 9001 and ISO 22000
- Experience of leading external audits and working with food regulators
- Knowledge of chemical and microbiological testing of dairy products
- Experience managing a quality or laboratory team

Desirable

- Advanced HACCP certificate
- ISO 22000 or FSSC 22000 lead auditor qualification
- Experience in infant formula or milk powder production
- Experience in sensory assessment of dairy products
- Knowledge of statistical process control

Skills and attributes

- Leadership and staff development
- Sound judgement on product safety and release
- Audit and investigation skills
- Clear report writing
- Negotiation with customers, suppliers and regulators
- Data analysis and statistical thinking
- Organisation and prioritisation

Measures of success

- Certification, regulatory and customer audit outcomes
- Customer complaints per tonne or per million units
- Non-conformances and corrective actions closed on time
- Product approvals obtained and kept current
- Quality spend against budget
- Rework and waste caused by quality failures

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Working conditions and safety

Site-based role across offices, laboratory and production areas, with PPE and hygiene rules in force. Occasional travel to regulators, suppliers and customers, and some out-of-hours cover.

- 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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