Dairy Supply Chain Director

Dairy leadership and board

Job title	Dairy Supply Chain Director
Department	Dairy leadership and board
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer or Chief Operating Officer
Direct reports	Heads of milk logistics, planning, procurement, warehousing and distribution, and customer service
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 the end-to-end dairy supply chain, from milk collection and intake through planning, procurement, warehousing and delivery to customers. Balances seasonal milk supply with customer demand and plant capacity, protects the cold chain, and runs sales and operations planning (S&OP) so the business serves customers reliably at the right cost.

Key responsibilities

Supply chain strategy and leadership

- Set the supply chain strategy and network plan in line with business and plant investment plans
- Lead, develop and hold to account the heads of logistics, planning, procurement and customer service
- Build supply chain capability, succession and a strong safety culture across sites and depots
- Present supply chain performance, risks and investment cases to the executive team and the Board

Milk intake and logistics

- Direct milk collection, haulage and intake so milk reaches plants safely, quickly and at agreed quality
- Plan collection routes, the tanker fleet and contracted haulage to match seasonal and daily milk volumes
- Agree milk allocation between plants, products and third-party sales with milk supply and operations teams
- Manage surplus and shortfall milk through flexible processing, toll manufacturing or milk trading
- Work with milk supply and farmer relations teams on collection standards, timings and farm access

Planning and S&OP

- Run a monthly S&OP process that aligns milk forecasts, demand, plant capacity, stock and financial plans
- Translate commodity markets and customer forecasts into product mix decisions for butter, powders and cheese
- Set stock policies for finished goods, ingredients and packaging that balance service, working capital and shelf life
- Model scenarios for milk peaks, plant outages and market swings and agree responses in advance
- Provide plant capacity and constraint data to inform long-term investment decisions

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Cold chain, warehousing and distribution

- Maintain temperature control and traceability from farm collection to customer delivery
- Oversee owned and third-party warehouses, cold stores and fleets for chilled, frozen and ambient products
- Manage export logistics, including containers, shipping, documentation and lead times
- Lead product withdrawal and recall logistics with quality teams and test them regularly
- Deliver on-time, in-full service to retail, food-service, industrial and export customers

Procurement and supplier management

- Lead procurement of packaging, ingredients, energy, logistics, engineering spares and services
- Negotiate supply contracts that secure continuity, quality and value, and manage key supplier relationships
- Approve suppliers against food safety, ethical and sustainability standards with quality and sustainability teams
- Manage price risk on major inputs such as packaging, energy and fuel with the finance team

Cost, risk and sustainability

- Own the supply chain budget and drive savings in haulage, storage, waste and working capital
- Maintain business continuity plans for disruption to milk collection, transport, utilities and suppliers
- Reduce transport emissions, food waste and packaging through route design, load fill and supplier programmes
- Ensure supply chain operations comply with transport, food safety, trade and health and safety law

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in supply chain, logistics, engineering, business or a related subject, or equivalent experience
- Substantial senior supply chain leadership experience in dairy, food or another fast-moving consumer goods sector
- Track record of running an effective S&OP process across several plants or markets
- Experience of managing chilled and temperature-controlled logistics at scale
- Strong record of procurement and contract negotiation with major suppliers and logistics providers
- Experience of leading large, multi-site teams through change

Desirable

- Direct experience of milk collection and intake, or of a co-operative milk supply model
- Professional qualification in supply chain, procurement or logistics
- Experience of export logistics to several regions
- Experience of implementing planning systems or other supply chain technology

Skills and attributes

- End-to-end supply chain and network planning
- Commercial and financial judgement, including working capital management
- Data analysis, forecasting and scenario modelling
- Negotiation and supplier relationship management
- Risk management and decision-making under pressure
- Leadership and change management
- Clear communication with farmers, hauliers, customers and the Board

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Measures of success

- On-time, in-full delivery to customers
- Milk collected and processed within agreed time and quality limits
- Forecast accuracy and adherence to the S&OP plan
- Supply chain cost per litre of milk and per tonne of product
- Stock days, working capital and write-offs of short-dated or aged stock
- Cold chain breaches, product losses and recall test results

Working conditions and safety

Based at head office with regular travel to plants, depots, warehouses and key suppliers, and some international travel. Out-of-hours availability is needed during milk peaks, disruption and incidents.

- 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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