Dairy Sustainability Director

Dairy leadership and board

Job title	Dairy Sustainability Director
Department	Dairy leadership and board
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer
Direct reports	Sustainability managers and specialists covering climate, farm programmes, packaging and reporting
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 sustainability strategy for a dairy business, from on-farm emissions and animal welfare through processing, packaging and distribution. Sets credible targets, works with farmers and suppliers to deliver them, and makes sure sustainability performance is measured and reported accurately to the Board, customers, investors and other stakeholders.

Key responsibilities

Strategy and targets

- Develop and lead the sustainability strategy in line with business strategy and customer expectations
- Set evidence-based targets for emissions, water, waste, packaging and animal welfare for Board approval
- Build sustainability into investment decisions, product development and procurement
- Track emerging science, regulation and customer requirements, and advise the executive team on their impact

Climate and emissions

- Measure scope 1, 2 and 3 greenhouse gas emissions using recognised accounting methods
- Lead plans to reduce on-farm emissions, including methane from cattle digestion and manure
- Work with operations to cut energy use and move processing sites to lower-carbon energy
- Assess climate-related risks to milk supply, plants and markets and build them into risk management
- Test carbon removal and on-farm sequestration options for credibility before the business relies on them

Farm programmes and animal welfare

- Design farmer sustainability programmes covering emissions, soil, biodiversity, water and animal welfare
- Give farmers practical tools, advice and incentives, working with milk supply and field teams
- Set animal welfare standards for supplying farms with veterinary and milk supply teams, and monitor them
- Collect reliable farm-level data while respecting farmers' time and their rights over their data
- Share results and good practice with farmers and, in co-operatives, with farmer members

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Water, packaging and waste

- Reduce water use and improve wastewater quality at processing sites, especially in water-stressed areas
- Lead packaging strategy to reduce material use and increase recyclable and recycled content
- Cut food waste across manufacturing, logistics and customer channels
- Work with procurement to build environmental and social standards into supplier selection

Reporting and assurance

- Produce accurate, consistent sustainability data and reports for the Board, customers, lenders and investors
- Make sure public sustainability claims are backed by evidence and reviewed by legal and compliance teams
- Prepare the business for external assurance of sustainability data
- Respond to customer, investor and rating agency requests for sustainability information
- Report progress against targets regularly to the Board or its sustainability committee

Stakeholders and team leadership

- Engage customers, farmers, industry bodies, researchers and communities on shared sustainability goals
- Secure funding and partnerships for research and pilot projects
- Lead and develop the sustainability team and build sustainability skills across other functions

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in environmental science, agriculture, engineering or a related subject, or equivalent experience
- Substantial experience leading sustainability programmes in dairy, agriculture, food or a related sector
- Sound knowledge of greenhouse gas accounting across scopes 1, 2 and 3, including agricultural emissions
- Experience of designing and delivering programmes with farmers or agricultural suppliers
- Track record of producing robust sustainability data and reports for boards, customers or investors
- Experience of influencing senior leaders and building support across functions

Desirable

- Postgraduate qualification in sustainability, climate or agricultural science
- Practical knowledge of dairy farming systems, animal welfare and nutrition
- Experience of preparing sustainability data for external assurance
- Experience of life cycle assessment or product carbon footprints

Skills and attributes

- Strategic thinking and target setting
- Data analysis and carbon accounting
- Stakeholder engagement and influencing
- Clear, accurate written and spoken communication
- Programme and change management
- Commercial awareness, including the cost and value of sustainability actions
- Credibility and rapport with farmers

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Measures of success

- Progress against emissions reduction targets across scopes 1, 2 and 3
- Share of milk supply covered by farm sustainability programmes and reliable farm data
- Water and energy use per tonne of product
- Recyclable and recycled content of packaging
- Animal welfare standards met on supplying farms
- Timeliness, accuracy and assurance outcomes of sustainability reporting

Working conditions and safety

Based at head office with regular travel to farms, processing sites, customers and industry events, including some international travel. Attends executive meetings and Board or committee meetings to report progress.

- 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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