Dairy Technologist

Dairy quality and laboratory

Job title	Dairy Technologist
Department	Dairy quality and laboratory
Reports to	Technical Manager or Product Development Manager
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

Develops and improves dairy products and processes, from first trials to full-scale production. Owns product specifications and recipes, runs shelf-life studies and gives technical support to production, customers and the wider business.

Key responsibilities

New product development and trials

- Develop new and improved dairy products, such as cheese, yoghurt, cream or powders, from brief to launch
- Plan and run bench, pilot and factory trials, and record results clearly
- Assess raw materials, ingredients and cultures, and work with suppliers on samples
- Hand over new products to production with recipes, process settings and training

Specifications and recipes

- Write and maintain product, raw material and packaging specifications
- Keep recipes, process parameters and label information accurate and controlled
- Check nutrition, allergen and ingredient declarations against recipes
- Manage recipe and specification changes through formal change control

Shelf life

- Design and run shelf-life studies covering microbiological, chemical and sensory change
- Organise sensory panels and interpret the results
- Set and validate shelf life and storage conditions using evidence
- Investigate shelf-life failures and recommend corrective actions

Process optimisation

- Analyse process data to improve yield, consistency and composition
- Reduce milk solids losses, rework and waste with production and engineering
- Support validation of process changes and new equipment
- Investigate product defects such as texture, flavour or stability problems and find root causes

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Customer and technical support

- Answer customer technical questions, specification requests and questionnaires
- Investigate complaints with a technical cause and write clear reports
- Support customer visits and audits, and present trial results
- Keep up to date with dairy science, ingredients and food safety requirements

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree in dairy science, food science, food technology, microbiology or a related subject
- Experience in a technical, product development or process role in dairy or food manufacturing
- Good understanding of milk composition and dairy processes
- Working knowledge of HACCP, food safety and labelling requirements
- Experience planning, running and reporting trials
- Strong data analysis skills

Desirable

- Experience developing products for retail or food-service customers
- Experience running shelf-life and sensory studies
- Knowledge of statistical methods or design of experiments
- Advanced HACCP training
- Experience scaling up products from pilot plant to factory

Skills and attributes

- Scientific and analytical thinking
- Attention to detail
- Clear technical writing
- Project and time management
- Creative problem solving
- Teamwork across functions
- Confident communication with customers

Measures of success

- Development projects delivered to time and brief
- Trials completed and reported on schedule
- Specifications accurate and up to date
- Shelf-life studies completed and validated
- Yield and waste improvements delivered
- Customer technical queries answered on time

Working conditions and safety

Splits time between the laboratory, pilot plant, production areas and office, wearing hygiene clothing and PPE on site. Occasional early starts or late finishes for factory trials, and some travel to customers and suppliers.

- 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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