Milk Powder Dryer Operator

Dairy processing

Job title	Milk Powder Dryer Operator
Department	Dairy processing
Reports to	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 evaporator and spray dryer to make milk powder that meets moisture, bulk density and quality specifications. Controls the plant from the control room and on the floor, follows strict fire and explosion safety rules and keeps accurate logs. Carries out CIP and sampling to keep the dryer running safely and efficiently.

Key responsibilities

Evaporator operation

- Start up, run and shut down the evaporator from the control system
- Control concentrate solids, temperature and flow to the dryer
- Monitor vacuum, steam and condensate conditions and respond to alarms
- Change over safely between water and product at start-up and shutdown

Spray dryer operation

- Run the spray dryer to target outlet temperature, moisture and bulk density
- Adjust feed rate, atomiser settings and air temperatures to hold specification
- Control fines return and fluid bed settings to achieve the right particle size and flow
- Monitor cyclones, bag filters and powder conveying systems
- Record all process changes and the reasons for them

Fire, explosion and powder safety

- Follow fire and explosion prevention procedures for the dryer and powder handling
- Watch for burnt particles, deposits and temperature changes that may signal a fire risk
- Check that fire detection, suppression and explosion protection systems are ready before start-up
- Keep powder spills and dust to a minimum through good housekeeping
- Follow permit-to-work, lock-out and confined space procedures

CIP and hygiene

- Run CIP of the evaporator, dryer and powder lines to the set programme
- Check CIP records for times, temperatures, flows and chemical strengths

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- Inspect the drying chamber and remove deposits safely as required
- Follow hygiene zoning and clothing rules in dry powder areas

Logs and sampling

- Take powder samples at set intervals for moisture, bulk density and other tests
- Record process readings, test results and actions in the shift log
- Hold and report any powder that is out of specification
- Give a clear handover to the next shift

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Experience operating evaporators, spray dryers or similar continuous process plant, or a process apprenticeship or craft qualification
- Understanding of fire and explosion risks in powder handling
- Confidence using control room systems such as SCADA
- Good number skills for reading trends, data and test results
- Willingness to work rotating shifts, including nights and weekends
- Good attendance and timekeeping

Desirable

- Food hygiene certificate
- Experience in milk powder or infant formula production
- Knowledge of CIP systems and hygiene zoning
- Permit-to-work or confined space training

Skills and attributes

- Process control and monitoring
- Calm, quick response to alarms
- Attention to detail
- Accurate record keeping
- Problem solving
- Teamwork and clear handovers
- Strong safety awareness

Measures of success

- Powder meets moisture, bulk density and quality specification
- Plant runs at planned rate with few unplanned stops
- Energy use and product losses within target
- Complete and accurate shift logs and sample records
- CIP completed and verified to schedule
- No fires, accidents or injuries

Working conditions and safety

Rotating shift work, including nights and weekends, split between the control room and the plant floor. Dryer areas can be hot, dusty and noisy, and the work involves climbing stairs and working at height; PPE is provided.

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- 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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