Milk Supply Director

Dairy leadership and board

Job title	Milk Supply Director
Department	Dairy leadership and board
Reports to	Chief Executive Officer
Direct reports	Head of milk procurement, field team managers, the milk pricing and member services manager, and the milk collection manager
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 sourcing of raw milk for a dairy processor or co-operative, so that the business has the right volume and quality of milk at a fair and competitive price. Manages relationships with farmers or members, milk contracts and pricing, the field team and on-farm standards, and balances milk supply with demand.

Key responsibilities

Milk supply strategy

- Set the milk supply strategy in line with processing capacity and sales plans
- Forecast milk volumes by season, region and supplier
- Plan whether to grow, hold or reduce milk supply as markets and capacity change
- Advise the executive team and the Board on milk supply risks and opportunities

Farmer and member relations

- Build trusted relationships with farmers, members and their elected representatives
- Explain milk price, market conditions and business plans clearly and promptly
- Lead farmer and member meetings, councils and liaison groups
- Handle disputes and complaints fairly and in line with contracts and co-operative rules
- Recruit new suppliers and retain existing ones

Milk contracts and pricing

- Design milk contracts and pricing schemes, including base price, quality and seasonality payments
- Recommend the milk price with finance, based on market returns and the business's finances
- Make sure milk payments are accurate, on time and transparent
- Keep contracts in line with company and co-operative law, competition law and any codes of practice

Field team and on-farm standards

- Lead the field team that supports farmers on milk quality, animal welfare and sustainability
- Set on-farm standards and audits covering hygiene, welfare, medicines use and the environment

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- Support farmers to cut emissions, use water well and meet customer requirements
- Act quickly and firmly on milk quality failures, antibiotic residues and welfare concerns

Supply and demand balancing

- Balance daily and seasonal milk supply against plant capacity and sales
- Arrange sales or purchases of surplus or shortfall milk with other processors
- Work with logistics to plan efficient milk collection routes and tanker capacity
- Prepare contingency plans for peak milk flows, plant breakdowns and disease outbreaks

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree or equivalent qualification in agriculture, agricultural economics or a related field
- Extensive senior experience in milk procurement, dairy farming or agricultural supply chains
- Strong understanding of dairy farm economics and milk pricing
- Proven record of building relationships with farmers or co-operative members
- Experience of leading field-based teams
- Good knowledge of milk quality, animal welfare and on-farm sustainability standards

Desirable

- Experience in a farmer-owned co-operative
- Knowledge of dairy commodity markets and how they drive milk price
- Experience of milk collection and logistics
- Experience of farm assurance or sustainability programmes

Skills and attributes

- Building relationships and trust
- Negotiation
- Clear communication, including to large farmer audiences
- Commercial and financial acumen
- Planning and forecasting
- Leadership of field-based teams
- Calm and fair handling of conflict

Measures of success

- Milk volume against plan and plant needs
- Milk price competitiveness against market benchmarks
- Milk quality, including cell count, bacteria and residue failures
- Farmer or member retention and satisfaction
- On-farm audit compliance and sustainability targets met
- Milk collection cost per litre

Working conditions and safety

Combines office work with frequent travel to farms, member meetings and plants, following biosecurity rules on farm. Some evening meetings with farmers and members are expected.

- Lead by example on health, safety, food safety and animal welfare
- Uphold the code of conduct and all legal and compliance requirements

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- 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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