Organic Dairy Farm Specialist

Dairy farming

Job title	Organic Dairy Farm Specialist
Department	Dairy farming
Reports to	Farm Owner or Farm Manager
Direct reports	Farm workers and livestock staff
Location	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*
Contract type	*[Permanent / fixed-term / other]*
Salary and benefits	*[To be confirmed by the employer]*

Job purpose

Sets up and runs the organic livestock and forage programme on a mixed farm that is developing a dairy unit. Makes sure cattle, poultry and forage are managed to recognised organic standards, and advises the owner on soil, grazing, feed and herd health to improve output and quality.

Key responsibilities

Organic system and certification

- Write and maintain the farm's organic system plan in line with recognised international standards
- Prepare the farm for organic conversion, inspection and certification
- Keep records of inputs, treatments, livestock movements and feed sources for traceability
- Make sure all feeds, fertilisers and veterinary products are permitted under organic rules

Livestock and dairy

- Plan and oversee the set-up of a dairy unit, including housing, milking and milk handling
- Manage cattle and poultry health and welfare using preventive, organic-compliant methods
- Develop feeding plans based on home-grown organic forage
- Monitor milk yield, quality and hygiene, and act on problems
- Work with the vet on herd health plans, breeding and treatment records

Forage, soil and grazing

- Plan forage cropping, grazing and conservation to meet the herd's year-round needs
- Test soils and build fertility using manure, compost, rotations and legumes
- Design efficient irrigation and water use for forage in a hot climate
- Control weeds, pests and diseases through rotation, cultivation and biological methods
- Trial new forage varieties and techniques that could raise yield or quality

Operations and budgeting

- Prepare and manage farm budgets and control running costs
- Supervise and train farm staff in organic practices and safe working

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- Operate and oversee farm machinery and make sure it is maintained
- Ensure the farm complies with health and safety and environmental rules
- Report regularly to the owner on progress, costs and recommendations

Qualifications and experience

Essential

- Degree or diploma in agriculture, animal science or a related subject
- At least five years' experience in organic farming, including livestock and forage
- Experience of dairy cattle management
- Practical knowledge of international organic standards and certification
- Experience setting up or developing an organic farm programme
- Experience of farm budgeting and cost control

Desirable

- Experience farming in a hot, dry climate
- Experience with poultry
- Experience designing irrigation systems
- Experience of protected cropping or greenhouse set-up

Skills and attributes

- Sound commercial judgement
- Practical problem-solving
- Competent use of farm machinery
- Good IT skills, including standard office software
- Good written and spoken English
- Ability to lead and train staff

Measures of success

- Organic certification gained and maintained
- Forage yield and quality targets met
- Herd health, welfare and milk quality standards met
- Farm costs kept within budget
- Records complete and ready for inspection

Working conditions and safety

Farm-based, with outdoor work in a hot climate and some early, late or weekend duties. The role may suit a full-time or consultancy arrangement.

- Follow health and safety rules and safe systems of work, and wear the correct PPE
- Follow animal welfare, biosecurity and medicine-use 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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