THE FOOD AND DRINK INDUSTRY. A SERIES OF FACTS THAT TELL IT HOW IT IS...

BUSTING THE MYTHS

Watch our videos on YouTube: www.youtube.com/tastesuccess

“exciting... rewarding... diverse...”

Clare Dodd - Senior Development Technologist, Müller Dairy

Environmental Technician  Sales Director  Quality Technician
Brand Manager  Quality Manager  Food Scientist

Click label to visit our website
The food and drink manufacturing industry is definitely full of flavour! It’s one of the most innovative, diverse, exciting and tasty careers to work in.

People make all kinds of false assumptions about working in the food and drink manufacturing industry. For example, people often think jobs in the industry have no prospects and are poorly paid.

In this booklet we’ll be busting the myths to reveal the true facts about working in the sector and giving you the real low down on what the UK food and drink manufacturing industry is like.

What images do you think of when you hear about the food and drink manufacturing sector?

Workers in hairnets and overalls, on production lines and in factories?

Well, if this is what you’re thinking you couldn’t be more wrong!

The industry employs people in careers such as food science, product development, marketing and communications, nutrition and well-being, human resources, packaging, research and design. Many of the careers that you will find in other manufacturing sectors are also on offer in the food and drink industry.
DID YOU KNOW?

• the food and drink sector is the UK’s largest manufacturing sector
• it accounts for 15% of the UK’s total manufacturing sector by value
• it’s the fourth largest food and drink manufacturing industry in the world
• it employs 440,000 people directly in the UK, and as many as 1.2 million in related food services

“There are loads of career opportunities”
BUSTING THE MYTHS

Now let’s start busting those myths!

The Myth: The sector is out of date and old fashioned

The Reality: That’s a load of waffle!

The UK food and drink manufacturing sector is exciting and innovative. We invest more than £1.1 billion a year on research and development, a similar amount to the car industry and over 8,000 new products are launched each year.*

Technology is used to cater for consumers’ growing desires to eat a wide variety of high quality foods. We have invested in state-of-the-art equipment to ensure that the food we like to eat tastes good, is produced safely and appears on our supermarket shelves on time. For us to continue to be such a success it’s really important that we attract trained and skilled people who can ensure that the equipment used to produce our food operates effectively and efficiently, and is properly maintained.

* Mintel Global New Products Database
**Hot on health issues**
We have our finger on the pulse when it comes to addressing current health issues in the UK. We take part in debates about the health of our nation by developing new food products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt, for example.

**Leading the way in saving the environment**
We have done a lot to protect the environment. We are tackling climate change by reducing CO\textsubscript{2} emissions, reducing the use of water in food production and sending 90% of food and packaging waste generated to recycling or recovery. After all, going green makes good business sense. There are a whole host of jobs available in this area, and if you want to do your bit for the environment - this could be just the sector for you!

“**I can see myself in the industry for a long time as it is always changing and there are loads of opportunities.**”

---

**CASE STUDY**

**Tom Ellis** Seasonal Customer Category Manager, Nestlé UK

According to Tom it’s great to have the opportunity to work for one of the world’s most famous and innovative food manufacturing companies.

He says: “What’s great about working in the food industry is working for a global organisation with brands and products that everyone knows, eats and enjoys. Nestlé produces such a wide range of products and the ability to work in one company with so much variety was a big draw. There is a great deal of innovation in the food industry and with the sector being very competitive companies must keep up-to-date.

“I work in the seasonal category team so day-to-day I track sales through the season, detect and analyse market trends, and in turn help build our strategy for next year.

“At Nestlé we develop modern and unique products and we promote our products in a variety of ways, such as on Facebook and Twitter.

“Every day is a new challenge whether it’s taking a new product through development to the market, building a new advertising campaign or pushing to hit your sales targets.

“I can see myself in the industry for a long time as it is always changing and there are loads of opportunities.”

---

Tom Ellis - Seasonal Customer Category Manager, Nestlé UK
The Myth: There aren’t any career opportunities in the food and drink manufacturing sector

The Reality: Use your loaf!

There are good long term career prospects in our industry. In fact even more people are needed to work in the sector. By 2017 the sector will need 137,000 new recruits, with 45,000 of these being required for managerial roles and professional jobs.

There are so many different tasty careers to choose from. You could become a food scientist or technologist, involved in food safety and developing new food products, or how about working in quality assurance where you would have the responsibility of making sure that the food we eat is of the highest quality? What about working as an engineer, a technician, in marketing or in corporate affairs? The list of job opportunities is endless!

There are also a wide range of sectors within the food and drink manufacturing industry that you could work in. These include the bakery and confectionery industry (cakes, bread, pies and sweets), butchers and fishmongers (fish, meat and poultry) or in the dairy sector (milk, cheese and yoghurt).

“I can tell you it’s definitely not boring. It really is fast paced, exciting and the salaries and benefits are good. So if you want a challenging and varied job, I’d recommend working in the food sector.”

Shaun Smith - Business Manager, Aunt Bessies
Shaun Smith
Business Manager, Aunt Bessie’s

Shaun admits he fell into the food manufacturing industry by chance. After leaving Lancaster University with a degree in Organisational Studies, Shaun was keen to get onto a graduate scheme but not sure what sector he wanted to work in. After applying for a number of schemes he joined the food sector after being accepted onto Warburton’s two year graduate programme. This experience gave Shaun a true taste of what the sector was like as the graduate programme gave him the opportunity to experience a variety of roles from working on a bread van to helping to shape his company’s future business plans when he worked in a business development role.

After leaving Warburtons Shaun worked for a number of food companies before moving onto his current role as a Business Manager at Aunt Bessie’s.

Speaking about his day to day duties in this job Shaun says: “I look after the Tesco account for Aunt Bessie’s which means I meet with their buyers to agree on what Aunt Bessie’s products are going to be in their stores over the next few months. I explain to them how we’ll promote our new products in-store, and also work out how much money we will spend to do so.”

Commenting on what skills he needs to carry out his job Shaun says: “You do need good communication skills, both written and verbal as you have to be able to clearly explain your ideas to your customer. It’s also important to be self motivated as you often have to think on your feet.”

Shaun gives his low down on what working in the food industry is like: “I can tell you it’s definitely not boring. It really is fast paced, exciting and the salaries and benefits are good. So if you want a challenging and varied job I’d recommend working in the food sector.”

DID YOU KNOW?

• Food manufacturers say that the average length of time their employees stay with them is 9 years.* This shows that there is stable employment in the sector

• 94% of employees in the UK food and drink sector are full-time

• UK food and drink employees are paid well above the national average

• 20% of employees are graduates

* Value of Food and Drink Manufacturing to the UK – Report to the FDF by the University of Cambridge Institute for Manufacturing - July 2010
The Myth: Those working in the food and drink manufacturing sector have no qualifications

The Reality: That’s bananas!

Many people working in our sector are graduates or have good academic qualifications. Some food scientists/technologists have a Higher National Diploma (HND) or equivalent qualification or a first degree in subjects such as food science. Others in the industry have science degrees or postgraduate qualifications in subjects such as biology, microbiology, biochemistry and chemistry.

It is essential that our sector attracts more qualified and skilled staff to address the current lack of scientific experts, such as food scientists and technologists, in the industry.

However, it is crucial that we manage to attract people with a wide range of skills and experience which will enable the sector to continue to develop and expand.

CASE STUDY

Clare Dodd - Senior Development Technologist, Müller Dairy

Clare Dodd, Senior Development Technologist at Müller Dairy knew from a very early stage that she wanted to work within the food sector so this shaped her choice of subjects both at school and university.

Having gained a GCSE in Home Economics, Clare opted to include Food Technology as one of her three A level subjects before going on to take a BSc Honours degree in Home Economics (Food Design and Technology) at Liverpool John Moores University.

In her role at Müller Dairy, the UK’s biggest branded yogurt producer, Clare focuses entirely on brands.

“The job is so varied there isn’t a typical day,” says Clare. “Roughly 40% of my time is spent in the lab responding to marketing briefs, developing recipes and trying out different ideas.

“About 20% is spent in the factory carrying out full scale trials, collecting samples or offering the production team support."

“Desk work such as gathering nutritional information, working out product costs, meeting with suppliers and ordering ingredients probably accounts for a third of the job, with the remaining 10% of the time being divided between attending project meetings, supplier presentations and taste panels.”
The Myth: Food and drink manufacturers are just big companies churning out processed food

The Reality: That’s crackers!

Our industry consists of a variety of companies of all different sizes. Many small innovative companies have managed to develop into large successful companies producing high quality products.

Large companies produce food and drink of the highest standards that are available on our supermarket shelves. Well made food and drink products shouldn’t be dismissed purely because they are produced on a large industrial scale – it is those products which offer households and families of all incomes a choice of foods to enjoy at home.

CASE STUDY

Rob Ward - Communications Assistant, Dorset Cereals

“I graduated in 2008 with a degree in Law and Sociology, not at all sure what direction I wanted to take, so I started looking at all sectors. One of the last that came to mind was the food manufacturing sector, but having joined Dorset Cereals I now realise the opportunities available within food manufacturing with a small company.

“My role in Dorset Cereals is in the marketing team and largely based online, in particular handling social media and trying to grow our presence online and with Twitter and Facebook. Dorset Cereals is an incredibly forward thinking, fun and friendly company, that is relatively small, and as such, open to any new ideas which is an incredibly exciting position to be in. Our team consists of only a handful of people, which means we are all involved in every aspect of getting the brand known.

“Food manufacturing can be very forward-thinking as a sector, it is incredibly competitive and so you have to be continually pushing the boundaries to be noticed.”

Rob Ward - Communications Assistant, Dorset Cereals
Myth: The food and drink manufacturing sector pays peanuts

Reality: That’s nuts!

For example, starting salaries for food scientists and technologists can be between £20,000 and £25,000 a year. With experience and increased responsibilities, this can rise to between £30,000 and £45,000.

According to Angela Coleshill, Human Resources Director at the Food and Drink Federation (FDF):

“Our sector has survived the recent economic problems better than any other sector in the UK and we pay more than most other industries, especially in higher job roles.

“We have good promotional prospects, which means that you could start your career as an apprentice and in a few years, after appropriate training and experience, you could become a manager and earn a higher salary. We also offer excellent benefits packages and working conditions.

“There is a wide range of career opportunities in our sector and over the next few years we will continue to grow. That’s why it’s so important that we recruit the right young, talented and enthusiastic people into our industry who will play a vital role in helping our sector to develop, not just in the UK but also around the world.

“So if you are looking for an exciting, rewarding, diverse career with good pay and long term prospects you should seriously consider a career in our sector.”

Angela Coleshill - Human Resources Director, Food and Drink Federation (FDF)
The Food and Drink Federation (FDF) represents the interests of the food and drink manufacturing industry across the UK, which between them directly employs a staggering 440,000 people in a huge variety of roles from scientists and food technologists to engineers and technicians to marketers and salesman. As part of our skills pledge, FDF is committed to improving the image of our sector as a career destination of choice.
“I can see myself working in the food and drink industry for a long time as it is always changing and there are loads of opportunities.”

Tom Ellis - Seasonal Customer Category Manager, Nestlé UK