



Claire Gregory

Supply Chain
Purchasing
Manager
- Hazeldene



DISCOVER
CAREERS
IN THE FOOD
AND DRINK
INDUSTRY



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“variety...
opportunities...
challenges...”



A FUTURE IN FOOD



We would like to introduce you to the Food and Drink Federation's new and exciting campaign, **'Taste Success - A Future in Food'**, which has been developed to tell you about the wide range of great long-term career opportunities that are available in the food and drink manufacturing industry.

As part of our campaign we have produced a range of careers materials which aim to give you the real low-down about working in the food industry. In our latest booklet 'A Future in Food', we hear directly from young people who have managed to secure good jobs within the sector. Each of them talks about their background and how they came into the industry, what their day-to-day jobs are like and their future career plans. These case studies are also available on our website: **www.fdf.org.uk**

We hope this information will give you a true taste of the variety of exciting opportunities available in the food and drink manufacturing industry.

We wish you the best of luck in your future career.

Melanie Leech
FDF Director General



Our sector has survived the recent economic problems better than many other sectors in the UK and we pay highly competitive salaries.

A typical salary for those in management level positions, which include roles such as a marketing manager, supply chain purchasing manager and a health, safety and environment manager, can be up to £45,000. Those in technical or professional positions, which include food scientists and technologists, can expect to earn up to £38,000.

(Office for National Statistics (2009) Labour Force Survey, 4 quarter average 2009)

There is no set rate of pay for apprentices. However the average wage per week for an apprentice is now around £170 and in some job roles around £210 a week.

(National Apprenticeship Service – March 2011)



case studies

'...through the use of real life case studies, we hear from young people who have secured good jobs within the food and drink sector'



Natalie



Calum



Sarah



Clare



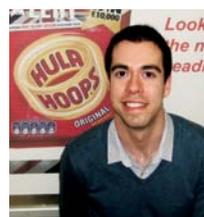
Paul



Lorraine



Claire



Ruben



Carole

Q&A



Natalie Parker

Job Title: Technical Account Manager

Employer: Délifrance (UK) Ltd

Qualification: BSc (Hons) Food & Nutrition -
Sheffield Hallam University

“It’s a great job
and I’m always
learning!”

Q: What does an average day involve?

A: Every day is different! As a Technical Account Manager my team deals with the day-to-day requirements of our customers throughout the UK & Europe. This involves travelling between the different sites and customers for visits, audits, quality panels and new product development work amongst other things.

Q: What was your career path to your job?

A: I started with Délifrance as a Technical Services Assistant within a week of finishing my degree. This role involved answering general technical enquiries and specification work. I was later promoted to Assistant Technical Services Manager which increased my direct contact with customers. Following a large group acquisition, I was made a Technical Account Manager responsible for several high profile accounts.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: The variety of customers and production sites that I am involved with. I enjoy the interaction with

customers and nothing makes me prouder than seeing a product I've worked on launched and on supermarket shelves.

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

A: There is more to the food industry than meets the eye. When I started my degree I didn't know which direction in the food industry I wanted to take. After studying for a few years, and a year working on an industrial placement, I decided that technical was 'my thing'. I would advise students not to specialise too early in your course - I chose a food general course which gave me options to specialise in the final years.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: Definitely still working within the food industry in a technical role. I love it! It's a great job and I am always learning every day.

Q: What is your favourite meal?

A: By far the hardest question...dinner at the only 3* Michelin restaurant in Rome, or any meal that contains peas.



“I believe an apprenticeship is the best way to start your career.”

Calum Marnock

Job Title: Confectionery Apprentice

Employer: Cadbury, Bournville

Qualification: NVQ Level 2 and 3 in Food Manufacturing

Q: What does an average day involve?

A: My day starts with a morning meeting along with all the other apprentices, in which we go through our daily action log. In our action log we list the tasks/jobs that need doing and look back at actions that need completing and try to find ways to resolve them. While training on a plant you will work alongside a trainer operator who will talk you through all the processes in that area. The remainder of the day is spent on-plant for training. One day a week we have a ‘course work day’ where we can sit in our apprentice room and work our way through our NVQ questions or spend time working on a project.

Q: What was your career path to your job?

When I left school I went straight into full time employment working alongside an MOT mechanic and learning from him. After this I moved into the construction industry where I worked as a self employed contractor for several pipe works and ducting companies. During the recession my work took a major hit and eventually jobs completely died out. I then joined a course with Bournville College and the job centre where I was

trained in basic manufacturing and given the opportunity to obtain a temporary contract within Cadbury. At the end of the course I was really happy to be offered a temporary contract at Cadbury. I enjoyed my time there very much and whilst I was there I saw the apprenticeship internally advertised and applied. Thankfully I got through and it has got me to where I am today.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: Personally I really enjoy the project side of my work. It gives me the opportunity to meet a lot of new people and make good contacts, as well as the chance to take charge of a project from start to finish. It is also a great learning curve as you have to use your own initiative to make decisions.

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

A: If you want an interesting career, to understand how manufacturing works and be hands on, this is definitely the career for you. It is also a great way to build up confidence and experience. I believe an apprenticeship is the best way to start your career.



Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I see myself as a highly trained wet end operator, specialising in tending machines that mix or blend liquid materials within a factory. Looking to the future, I would really like to move into management at a later date once I have all the skills I need.

Q: Who would be your ideal dinner guest?

A: It would have to be Jimmy Carr. I really admire him as a comic and I love the way he is quick witted and shows his intelligence through his dry sense of humour.

Sarah Woodhams

Job Title: Scientist

Employer: Kraft Foods

Qualification: MChem Chemistry
- University of Bath

“My passion is science and food - so this is the perfect job for me!”



Q: What does a food scientist do?

A: I work as a scientist in the roast coffee department at Kraft Foods' Banbury based Centre of Excellence in Coffee. I am involved in the product development and product quality of the roast coffee that you find on your supermarket shelves. My work is never the same, one day I could be in the laboratory focusing on developing a new range of coffee, the next I'm coffee tasting to see if the product being developed tastes as good as we want it to. I also help organise consumer testing of our coffees, to ensure that our customers are happy with what we produce.

Q: How did you end up in this job?

A: Coming from a chemistry background I always had a keen interest in science. During university I was lucky enough to get a placement at Kraft Foods, where I worked in the analytical department which looked at the different techniques to measure compounds in coffee. I really enjoyed it and after completing my studies I was offered a permanent position at Kraft Foods.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: All the different challenges it presents. It's so varied and interesting that you can't get bored. One of the best things is the opportunity to work in different countries. I travel to Sweden on a regular basis and have also visited cities such as Kiev and Bucharest. Getting the opportunity to work with coffee growers from different cultures is great. They are the technical experts and their knowledge is the basis for business decisions we make on the coffee we produce. I also work with so many different departments, from packaging to marketing, and it's also enjoyable to meet our consumers. My passion is science and food - so this is the perfect job for me!

Q: What particular skills are needed to work in the food industry?

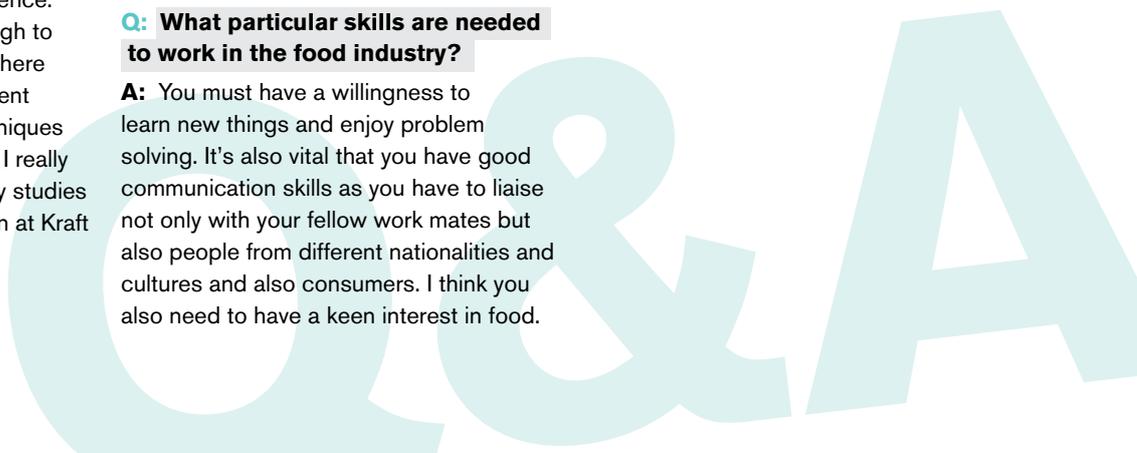
A: You must have a willingness to learn new things and enjoy problem solving. It's also vital that you have good communication skills as you have to liaise not only with your fellow work mates but also people from different nationalities and cultures and also consumers. I think you also need to have a keen interest in food.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I really do enjoy my current job but in the future I would like a similar role but with more responsibilities. I'd also like to get the chance to work on other food products such as cheese and confectionery and wouldn't mind working abroad.

Q: What food could you not do without?

A: A bacon sandwich.



Clare Walker

Job Title:
Food Technologist

Employer:
Taylors of Harrogate

Qualification:
BSc (Hons) Food Studies and
Nutrition - University of Leeds



“It’s an ever-changing industry with lots of opportunity to develop.”



Q: What does an average day involve?

A: I'm part of the Quality Assurance team responsible for ensuring our Yorkshire Tea and Taylors Coffee are consistently produced to the highest quality for our customers. For me this might involve assessing our training and food safety systems and procedures, working with our suppliers to make sure they meet our high standards and liaising with other departments, such as our training and production teams, to implement new processes.

Q: What was your career path?

A: I started at Taylors of Harrogate as a Trainee Food Technologist after I graduated from university. I was immediately given lots of exciting responsibilities to help me learn and develop. I also completed several external courses such as food hygiene training. After two years in the business I became a food technologist.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: I love my job because every day is different and I enjoy the interaction with a range of departments. There's a huge sense of achievement when you've resolved an issue or received excellent feedback from your customers.

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

A: If you have a passion for food and enjoy science subjects then this may be the career for you. It's an advantage to get some work experience, whether that's during your school holidays or as an industrial placement as a part of your degree. I'd also recommend going to university open days to find out more about the courses they offer and speak to current students.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I expect that I'll be working in the food industry in a quality assurance based role. It's an ever-changing industry, with lots of opportunities to learn and develop.

Q: How should you make the perfect cup of tea? Do you put the milk in first or after?

A: If I'm using a teapot I always warm the pot with some hot water while the kettle's on, empty that water, put in my tea, add my freshly boiling water and leave to brew for 4-5 minutes.

Milk before or after is very much personal preference, but I tend to put milk in first if the tea's been brewed in a teapot. If I'm brewing it in a mug I put tea in first as adding milk first to a mug will lower the water temperature.



Paul McKnight

Job Title: Research and Development Manager

Employer: Macphie of Glenbervie Ltd

Qualification: BSc in Consumer Product Management - Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen

Q: What does an average day involve?

A: My role involves tackling a variety of technical challenges including new products, packaging and process development. I work alongside our pilot plant, bakers, chefs, marketing, quality and production colleagues. Macphie has a number of collaborative projects with academic and research institutes, allowing us to ensure our research and development is up to date with cutting edge science.

Q: What was your career path to your job?

A: My passion for food began at an early age. I worked as a chef to pay my way through university. After completing university I worked in product development for a number of food companies before joining Macphie as a food technologist.

Whilst working at Macphie I have been able to develop my career within the company gaining new skills and food science expertise. I now manage two research and development technologists.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: I love seeing products I have developed on shelf. My proudest achievement has been developing our new DevilShh range of desserts. It's great working in this fast-paced environment, creating the next generation of exciting food products, packaging and processes.

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

A: Having attention to detail and a good understanding of chemistry will enable you to have a good idea about how you can enhance the products you produce.

It helps if you have a passion for food and trying as many new foods as you can. This will open your mind to new ideas and food combinations which will drive you to think up new and innovative creations. I would thoroughly recommend the food industry to anyone considering their career options.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I see myself continuing to lead and direct the next generation of Macphie products and assisting with the growth and development of the company.

Q: Who is your ideal dinner date?

A: Heston Blumenthal, I imagine he is quite a character and would love to discuss some of the weird and wonderful combinations he has put together. I reckon it would be quite inspirational.

“I love seeing products I've developed on shelf”



Lorraine Crowe

Job Title: Marketing Manager

Employer: Aunt Bessie's

Qualification: BSc Science - University of Manchester

“This is an ideal industry to stay in - it has good future career opportunities.”



Q: What does a marketing manager do?

A: Well it's definitely not a 9-5 job! One day I could be developing an advertising campaign to promote our products and the next day I could be spending time with retail customers, such as Tesco and Waitrose. My job also involves conducting consumer research, where I talk to consumers about what they think of our products, and also make them aware of the new and exciting products we have on offer.

Q: What was your career route to this job?

A: Getting the chance to hear what career opportunities were being offered to graduates by a range of food manufacturing companies whilst I was completing a science degree at Manchester University. This inspired me to take up a career in the food sector.

After university, I entered the sector on a graduate scheme, which was offered by Rank, Hovis, McDougall (now RHM Plc), where I was recruited as a commercial graduate. In this role I was involved in marketing and purchasing and also got the opportunity to work on the factory floor.

The experience I gained by entering the sector on a graduate programme was invaluable, as I managed to get an all-round perspective of working in the food manufacturing industry.

Q: What do you do like about your job?

A: It's great that you can see a product that you might have helped develop, say for twelve months, eventually appear on a supermarket shelf. This means even more if you receive good feedback from customers on the quality of the product

and also the positive impact of the advertising campaign you've worked on.

Q: What advice would you give to anyone considering a career in the food and drink sector?

A: I would tell them to go for it! Working in the food sector is exciting and challenging. I would advise anyone who is thinking of working in this area to get some experience in a number of different areas within the sector such as in marketing, distribution, on the factory floor and also talking to consumers. This will give you a complete picture of what it's like to work in our industry.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I know I want to stay in the food sector and would like to take the next step up and become a marketing director. The good thing is I work in a sector that will always be needed by everyone, everyone has to eat! Hopefully the number of food companies will continue to increase, so I feel this is an ideal industry to stay in as it has good future career opportunities.

Q: What food can't you do without?

A: Chocolate.

Claire Gregory

Job Title:

Supply Chain Purchasing Manager

Employer:

Hazeldene, Wigan

Qualifications:

BA (Hons) History - University of Leeds

Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) - Edge Hill University



Q: What does a supply chain and purchasing manager do?

A: Primarily my team tell growers what products we need each week and monitor the stock levels and orders. It's interesting as we use a very wide range of raw materials, from Iceberg lettuce and tomatoes, to more unusual lines such as watercress and pea-tops. We also liaise with our suppliers and customers about deliveries. I have a number of responsibilities which also include buying the protective clothing used by the factory.

I also negotiate the prices we pay for our produce and set seasonal programmes. This means that I have to estimate to our suppliers, months in advance, the amount of produce we will require them to grow for us throughout the year.

Q: How did you end up in this job?

A: After completing a history degree at Leeds University, I wanted to be a teacher and to achieve this decided to take a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at Edge Hill University, where I trained as a primary school teacher. After working as a supply teacher for 8 months I decided I wanted a career change and took an administrative post, first at Solfresh

(fresh produce) and then Flavourfresh (tomatoes) before moving to Hazeldene where I worked, again in an administrative role, initially as a sales support to the sales director.

I was then promoted to office manager at the company, where I was responsible for overseeing the processing of the customer orders before becoming a sales account manager in the commercial team.

In my current role as supply chain and purchasing manager at Hazeldene I'm responsible for a team that organise the raw material products used by the company.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: My work is really varied. I get to talk to a lot of people in the UK, across Europe and also the United States. There are a lot of opportunities to travel, view the crops in the field, attend trade-shows and meet our suppliers overseas which is brilliant. I have even been learning Spanish.

As I deal with a product which has a short shelf life (salad produce), you have to be able to react really quickly. My job is certainly fast moving and more interesting than people might think.

Q: What particular skills are needed to work in the food industry?

A: You need to be able to think on your feet and show a high level of commitment. Also you must be prepared to work hard and get your hands dirty when necessary.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I'd like to be a Director at Hazeldene.

Q: What is your favourite meal?

A: Curry

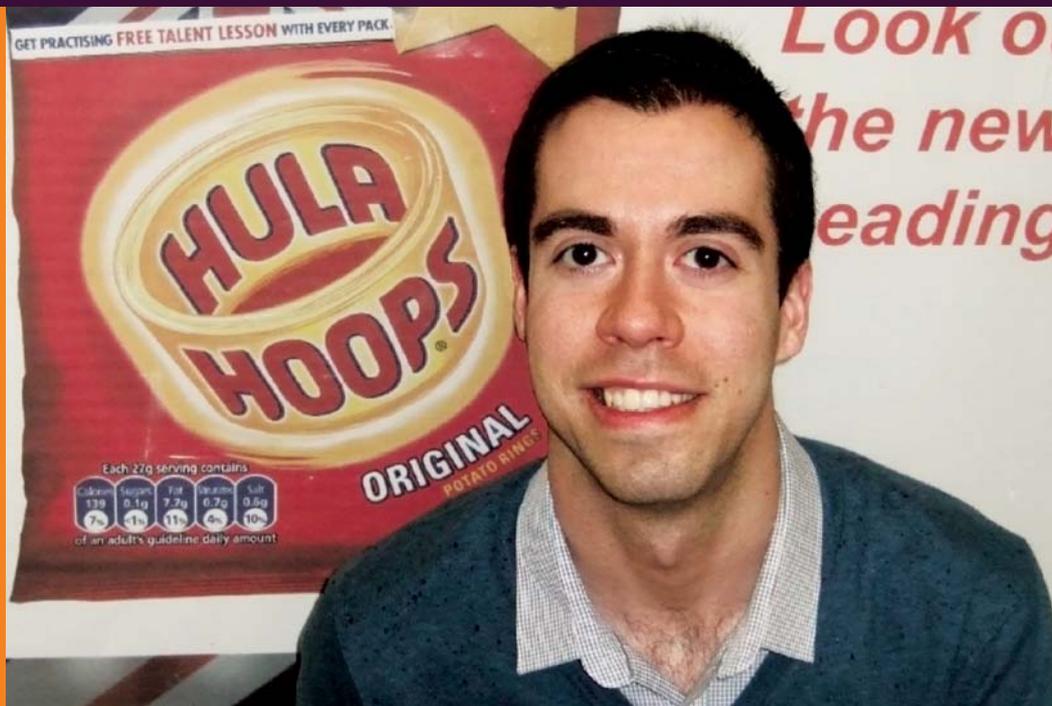
“There are lots of opportunities to travel and meet suppliers overseas which is brilliant.”

Ruben Rama

Job Title: Graduate Product Development Technologist

Employer: United Biscuits (Based at KP Ashby)

Qualification: BSc (Hons) Food & Nutrition - London South Bank University



“You need to love food, enjoy what you’re doing and have fun doing it”



Q: What does an average day involve?

A: Every day is different. It can involve anything from spending a whole day making products and tweaking recipes to meeting suppliers, presenting concepts to the marketing team and visiting factories in order to fully understand the challenges and find the new products that will allow United Biscuits to continue at the forefront of innovation.

Q: What was your career path to your job?

A: I studied to be a professional pastry chef in Spain. After that, I came to the UK to work in different Michelin star restaurants in London. I then had the opportunity to go back to university to study for a BSc (Hons) Food and Nutrition. I decided to apply for a job at United Biscuits because they produce so many exciting brands such as Skips, KP Nuts, Jaffa Cakes and McVitie's Digestives. To achieve the position, I had to pass an intensive, but really rewarding, recruitment process. It allowed me to meet the managers, make new friends and get an understanding of what working for United Biscuits would involve. I am now part of the new product development team, working with brands like McCoy's and Hula Hoops.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: The people I work with every day really help to make United Biscuits such a great company to work for. I love working with big brands, and being able to develop something that you can see on supermarket shelves every day and be proud of. That and that fact that no two days are the same, so you're never bored!

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

A: You need to love food, enjoy what you are doing and have fun doing it. Being a little crazy and having weird ideas, though not a must, also helps.

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I'd like to be in the innovation team. I also wouldn't mind travelling around the world a bit through the international section of United Biscuits if I got the chance. Working in sensory analysis, where human senses such as sight, smell, taste, touch and hearing is used for the purpose of evaluating consumer products is something that also rings my bell.

Q: What is your favourite snack and why?

A: Twiglets. I love both the texture and the flavour!



“You work on a project basis so you never do the same things!”



Carole Guignard

Job Title: Health, Safety and Environment Manager

Employer: Firmenich

Qualifications: Master of Engineering in Risk Prevention, Health, Safety and Environment - Engineering School at Polytech' Grenoble, France

Q: What does a health, safety and environment manager do?

A: Working in health, safety and environment doesn't really lead to an average day. Apart from the administrative work, there is not a real routine. It's more about working on a project basis, such as those looking to improve the environment we work in, or that are responding to an incident or accident where we need to react to make the situation safe again.

Q: What was your career path to your job?

A: After my French Baccalaureate (A-levels equivalent), I went to university for two years to do an intensive program in mathematics and physics. After that, I wanted to do something more practical and more meaningful, so when I heard about health and safety I applied to do a masters specialising in this area. I did a three-year master of engineering degree and after graduation I found a contract job with a food ingredient manufacture in the UK. I really enjoyed working in this environment and that's what led me to look for a permanent position within the food and drink industry, which I found at Firmenich.

Q: What is the best thing about your job?

A: You cannot get bored! There are so many different aspects to this job. Of course there is the administrative work, creating procedures and paperwork, but it is compensated for by all of the other challenges such as, amongst several others, delivering training, getting external certifications, implementing new processes and making sure they are safe before handing it to production. And you work a lot on a project basis, so you never do the same things!

Q: What advice would you give to someone thinking of pursuing this career?

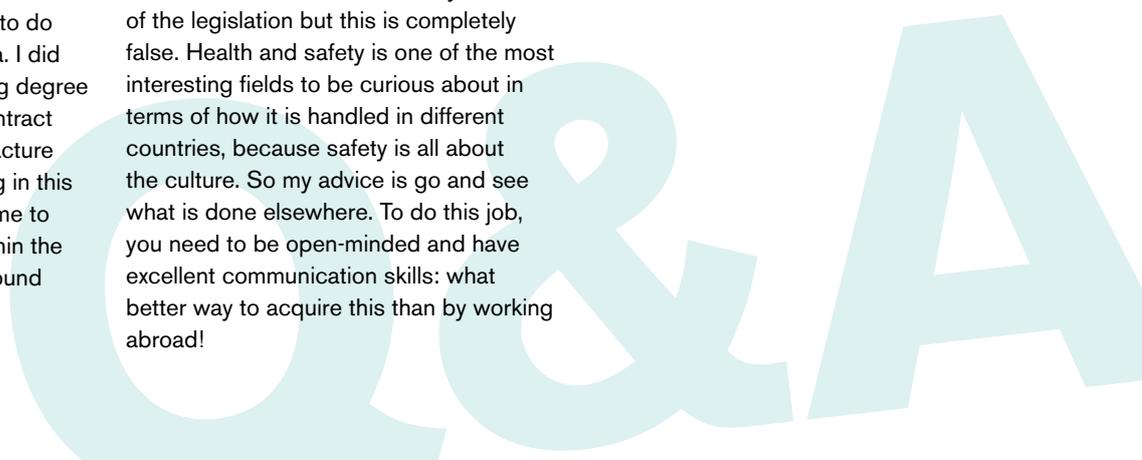
A: We often hear that it is difficult to work abroad in health and safety because of the legislation but this is completely false. Health and safety is one of the most interesting fields to be curious about in terms of how it is handled in different countries, because safety is all about the culture. So my advice is go and see what is done elsewhere. To do this job, you need to be open-minded and have excellent communication skills: what better way to acquire this than by working abroad!

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years time?

A: I still see myself in health and safety, because I don't think I will have seen all of it in 5 years time.

Q: Who would be your ideal fantasy dinner date?

A: Jude Law.



A FUTURE IN FOOD

DISCOVER CAREERS IN
THE FOOD AND DRINK
INDUSTRY



“If you have a passion for food and enjoy science subjects then this may be the career for you.”

Name: Clare Walker

Job Title: Food Technologist, Taylors of Harrogate



About Us

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 focus, FDF is committed to improving the image of our sector as a career destination of choice.



Food and Drink Federation 

Delivering Sustainable Growth

6 Catherine Street, London WC2B 5JJ

tel 020 7836 2460

email tastesuccess@fdf.org.uk

web www.tastesuccess.co.uk
www.fdf.org.uk