JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE	Dairy R&D Manager
REPORTS TO	Head of NPD
LOCATION	Home-based (with frequent travel)
TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS	Expected to be able to travel to Meadow locations approximately 3–4 days per week for key meetings and trials. Travel and expenses supported.
SALARY & BENEFITS	Competitive package based on experience, including a company car.
JOB PURPOSE	We are looking for an experienced Dairy R&D Manager to develop and drive an R&D pipeline, alongside supporting the wider team and business with more complex EPD/NPD projects. The role requires a high level of expertise in set and stirred cultured dairy and soft cheese, with additional experience in broader dairy processing technologies being advantageous. You will be responsible for managing all R&D projects, complex new product development (NPD) and existing product development (EPD) projects, providing technical leadership, and driving innovation in line with business objectives. This role will involve close collaboration with cross-functional teams, customers, and industry partners to ensure product excellence and compliance with industry standards.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Project Delivery (Complex NPD & EPD)

- Lead the development and launch of technically complex new products (NPD) through the stage gate process, ensuring timely delivery and resolving formulation or processing challenges.
- Oversee product renovation (EPD) to maintain product relevance, improve quality, and align with evolving industry and customer needs.
- Manage an active development pipeline aligned with business priorities.
- Provide technical support to the wider NPD team, acting as an expert in dairy formulation and processing.

Product Technical Guidance & Compliance

- Provide technical leadership and guidance internally and to customers on dairy formulation, processing, and product optimisation.
- Troubleshoot complex technical challenges, ensuring project timelines remain on track.
- Ensure compliance with current industry regulations and best practices, working closely with the technical and regulatory teams.
- Support knowledge-sharing initiatives to upskill the wider NPD and operational teams in dairy formulation and processing techniques

JOB DESCRIPTION

Research & Development (R&D)

- Scope and drive R&D initiatives that align with future growth opportunities, both within and beyond existing capabilities.
- Develop new and refine existing cultured dairy and fresh dairy products, ensuring market and customer requirements are met.
- Identify and execute the development of technical solutions that address industry challenges and enhance product performance.
- Validate ingredient technical functionality in application, ensuring that formulations meet performance, stability, and processing requirements.

Continuous Improvement

- Foster a culture of continuous improvement, identifying new ingredients, tools, and technologies to enhance product and process efficiencies.
- Work closely with site directors and operations teams to identify and implement manufacturing process improvements.
- Provide technical expertise to production and quality teams, supporting the resolution of customer complaints, production inefficiencies, and product-related challenges.
- Establish and promote best practice standards in dairy product development, ensuring innovation is embedded across the business.

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

Essential

- Strong background in dairy with hands-on experience in formulation, processing, and scale-up from bench to factory.
- Expertise in cultured dairy (e.g., yoghurt, sour cream, crème fraîche) and soft cheese development.
- Experience with product fortification (e.g., culture, protein, starches, stabilisers).
- Proven track record in managing B2B product development.
- Ability to influence and manage multiple projects, balancing priorities and delivering results.
- Excellent problem-solving, communication, and project management skills.

Preferred (Desirable but not essential)

- Experience with custard, mascarpone, sweetened/stabilised cream, sweetened condensed milk, chocolate crumb, butter/AMF.
- Knowledge of reverse osmosis (RO) and ultrafiltration (UF) technologies.
- A basic understanding of dairy ingredients in finished product applications.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

We are looking for a proactive and motivated individual with a curious mindset and a passion for dairy innovation. You should be comfortable working both independently and collaboratively, with the ability to drive projects forward and solve technical challenges.

If you have a strong background in dairy R&D and are looking for an exciting opportunity to shape the future of dairy innovation, we'd love to hear from you!

To apply, please email your CV to hr@meadowfoods.co.uk