



Manufacturing Career Feature

Food manufacturing – The industry and the prospects

The food manufacturing industry is a huge one, and food manufacturing jobs exist in almost every country in the world. From large processing factories to small cottage type businesses, the manufacturing positions available are as different as the foods we consume.

In many large food manufacturing plants, a food processor works with the production, packing and shipping the various food items the factory may produce. These plants may produce frozen, canned, dried, baked or pasteurized foods. The production lines you would be working on are fast moving and use conveyor belts and other mass production technologies to move the items through various stages of preparation, cooking, chilling and packaging. Your job may entail the monitoring and assisting the food through any part of this process. Workers are also employed to control, monitor and if necessary repair the machinery that processes the food. Employees are also needed to make sure there the supply of ingredients is adequate and of a high quality. The [employment](#) of diligent quality control employees in the food manufacturing factory environment is essential, especially in the light of a number of salmonella and other food contamination scandals across the globe in the last few years.

Of course, not all foods are manufactured in such mass production environments. The current worldwide demand for organically grown and prepared foods in the wake of the contamination scares has a string of small food production companies appearing everywhere. Such companies usually market their products as a safer, healthier and more flavorful alternative to mass produced items. Therefore the selection of quality ingredients and careful preparation is essential. As these types of foods usually cost the consumer a good deal more than their prepackaged counterparts, attention to quality at every stage of preparation is a must. Despite the general public's perception tends to be that organically grown

and produced foods are "safer", these items are just as prone to contamination, and therefore the need for workers to be diligent in all phases of food manufacture is just as important.

There are no real set educational requirements to obtain an entry level [manufacturing position](#) in the food industry. Working on a mass food production line can be grueling, with long hours spent standing and occupied with the performance of repetitive tasks. However from these entry level jobs there are a number of ways that a good employee can advance in their career. A good quality control inspector is an invaluable asset to any food manufacturer, as is a good manager who can demonstrate the ability to ensure the products produced are of the best possible standard without wasting resources and incurring unnecessary expense to the company. Many food manufacturers retain their own design team to create attractive and eye-catching packaging, as well as a marketing department to plan the strategies needed to ensure their product is available to the largest number of consumers possible. Cooks and chefs are also employed to prepare new dishes and improve on traditional favorites.

Initially, the salary for an entry level job in the food manufacturing industry will not be that high. It is most often in line with that of any entry level manufacturing or retail worker. However the industry offers both the prospect for steady employment in uncertain economic times and the opportunity to advance in a number of career directions.

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