

Position Title:	Cheesery Assistant
Responsible to:	Cheesery Team Leader
Functional Relationships:	Dairy and Land team (people we support, employees, volunteers) including Cheesery, Farm, Gardens staff in Clive and Poraiti; Customer Experience team including Logistics & Distribution staff; Enterprise/Day Service staff; House staff; members of the Property Services, Admin and Leadership/ Executive teams
External Relationships:	Customers (internal, wholesale, retail); visitors to Hōhepa; suppliers/contractors; families/whanau of people we support
Location:	Based in Cheesery on the Hōhepa Clive site; some travel between Hōhepa sites and in the area may be required

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

The Hōhepa community provides 24 hour / 7 days a week support, enablement and care for children/tamariki, young people/rangatahi and adults, based on Anthroposophical principles of inclusive social development (Dr. Rudolf Steiner). We strive to make sure our practices are in line with Te Ao Māori – through the anthroposophical approach to farming, the holistic view of human development and the acknowledgment of the spiritual world at Hōhepa.

For each person supported at Hōhepa the focus is on their abilities, aspirations and needs, to achieve our vision of Every Life Fully Lived. Work opportunities for people we support include the Farm/ Cheesery, other enterprises and our Shops.

PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THE POSITION:

- Day-to-day operations in producing, packing and supplying the highest quality dairy products to meet the demand of the Hōhepa community, wholesale and retail customers.
- Work collaboratively and support an inclusive working environment with the cheesery and farm team, and wider Hōhepa team.
- Work under the Food Safety Programme and other regulatory compliance requirements.
- Provide meaningful training opportunities for people we support, wherever possible, to enable them to reach their full potential.

Key Responsibility Areas:

Milk Bottling

- Monitor and manage cleaning of all bottles, billies, containers and crates, to the highest food safety standards.
- Ensure milk is filled into bottles or billies to meet community and customer orders.
- Liaison with Logistics & Distribution team regarding order fulfilment and ensure return of containers where necessary.

Dairy Product Production

- Work closely with Cheesemaker to ensure all aspects of the cheesemaking process are consistent and follows the correct procedure to maintain product quality.
- Assist in production of yoghurts, soft cheeses and hard cheeses.
- Monitor coating and turning of hard cheeses during the maturation process.

Packaging

- Cutting of cheeses as allocated, packaging and labelling of cheese and yoghurts.

Pasteurisation

- Operate the Pasteuriser where necessary as per Standard Operating Procedure (SOP); this process is a Critical Control Point.

Stock and Suppliers

- Monitor ordering of materials, supplies and packaging where required.
- Stock control and stocktakes where required.

Quality Assurance and Control

- Work closely with cheesery team to maintain consistency in product quality and innovation.
- Ensure all products are compliant to food safety standards and within specification of product standards required for final sale and distribution.
- Ensure all packaging (including labels, bags, containers, bottles, caps, crates) are compliant to food safety and health and safety standards required for final sale and distribution.
- Monitor and manage all product/ packaging defects and process accordingly

Compliance

- Daily cleaning and sanitation of surfaces and equipment.
- Ensure compliance with MPI food safety regulations, BioGro and Demeter standards, Health & Safety, and quality control measures.
- Ensure standard operating procedures (SOP) and practices are maintained and record appropriately.
- Maintain accurate records and documentation.

Collaboration & Communication

- Work closely with Dairy team (cheesery and farm), people we support and volunteers
- Participate in team meetings and community events where possible to deepen understanding of Hōhepa and its special character
- Maintain open communication with other areas of Hōhepa, including Customer Experience team, Land Manager and team to align cheesery operations with broader goals.

Person Specification:

To be successful in this role you will:

- Ideally have some experience working in the dairy industry, preferably cheesemaking or in a food production capacity.
- Have strong communication skills; ability to work effectively and closely with the wider dairy and farm team and other Hōhepa departments.
- Be a team player; work closely with team, PWS and volunteers.
- Have a positive 'can do' attitude.
- Have the ability and understanding to facilitate meaningful work opportunities for people supported by Hōhepa, with a focus on enablement and independence.
- Have a strong interest in Organic/Biodynamic practices and principles, and the understanding and passion to be a champion of sustainability.
- Have flexibility and the ability to adapt where necessary.
- Be physically fit and strong; the role can be physically demanding at times

Review of job description:

As with all Hōhepa job descriptions, the contents of this JD will be kept under review and will be subject to change, in the light of experience. Any substantial changes will be discussed with you before being implemented; however, you are required to work flexibly and accept that any JD is an indicator only – you agree to any reasonable duties that are asked of you.

General Conditions of Employment

Any offer of employment will be subject to a satisfactory Police Clearance. Hōhepa takes up a police vetting report on all employees at the start of employment and then every two years. If you are convicted of an offence after being employed by Hōhepa it is important that you declare this promptly; if an undeclared conviction shows up on a future police report, this could be regarded as a breach of trust and may lead to disciplinary action including potential dismissal.

You confirm that you have the right to work in New Zealand and agree to provide documentary proof (e.g. through a birth certificate or passport).

Hours of work:

This is a full-time position.

Standard hours of work are 37.5 hours per week over five days per week, generally Monday to Friday. Exact days of work and working hours will be determined, there will be a need for some weekend working. Flexibility is required to take account of operational needs, especially around the seasonality of production where flexibility around working hours is required.

Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol:

Hōhepa is a completely smoke-free environment, including buildings, grounds and vehicles; if you accept employment with us, you guarantee that you **will not smoke** (even during break times) during work hours. You must also agree to attend work **free of any adverse effects of alcohol or drugs** (including illegal drugs and similar substances); and to consent to pre-employment testing then random testing if you are employed.