Cheese Maker

Job Description:

**Cheese** **Makers** change milk into cheese. They make several varieties of cheese from the hard, soft, and semisoft base products. Each of these types of cheeses uses different ingredients, which the workers blend, cook, and prepare in a different manner. Some of the work in cheese production is done by hand. However, most workers tend machines that produce the cheese. In some plants workers are also responsible for maintaining, cleaning, and performing minor repairs on the machines. Other aspects of a cheese maker’s job may include overseeing lambing, calving and kidding, milking the livestock, and cleaning tools.

Job Responsibilities:

* Cooks milk and specified ingredients to make cheese, according to formula: Pasteurizes and separates milk to obtain prescribed butterfat content.
* Turns valves to fill vat with milk and heat milk to specified temperature.
* Dumps measured amounts of dye and starter into milk.
* Starts agitator to mix ingredients.
* Tests sample of milk for acidity and allows agitator to mix ingredients until specified level of acidity is reached.
* Dumps and mixes measured amount of rennet into milk.
* Stops agitator to allow milk to coagulate into curd.
* Pulls curd knives through curd or separates curd with hand scoop to release whey.
* Observes thermometer, adjusts steam valve, and starts agitator to stir and cook curd at prescribed temperature for specified time.
* Squeezes and stretches sample of curd with fingers and extends cooking time to achieve desired firmness or texture.
* Gives directions to assistive staff or other workers to make curd, drain whey from curd, add ingredients, such as seasonings, or mold, pack, cut, pile, mill, dump, and press curd into specified shapes.
* Directs other workers who immerse cheese in brine or roll cheese in dry salt, pierce or smear cheese with cultured wash to develop mold growth, and place or turn cheese blocks on shelves to cure cheese.
* Tastes, smells, feels, and observes sample plug of cheese for quality.
* Records amounts of ingredients used, test results, and time cycles.
* Makes variations in time cycles and ingredients used for succeeding batches.
* Dumps specified culture into milk or whey in pasteurizer to make bulk starter.
* May be required to hold state cheese maker's license.

Job Qualifications:

* Associates in culinary arts or diploma from accredited culinary institute required
* Bachelors in culinary arts or related field preferred
* Experience as a cheese maker

Opportunities as a cheese maker are available for applicants without experience in which more than one cheese maker is needed in an area such that an experienced cheese maker will be present to mentor.

Job Skills Required:

* Passionate about cheese
* Working knowledge of food chemistry related to curdling, cheese making, and cheese aging
* Knowledge of industry standards and regulations
* Knowledge of health department regulations
* Ability to make cakes and candies
* Ability to multitask
* Good communication skills
* Able to work calmly under high pressure
* Team Player
* Ability to spot and resolve problems efficiently
* Keep up with cooking trends and best practices
* Working knowledge of various restaurant software programs
* Pleasant, polite manner and a neat and clean appearance.
* Able to work in a fast-paced environment
* Able to multitask, prioritize, and manage time efficiently
* Physical endurance to stand for an entire shift
* Self-motivated and self-directed
* Works well as part of a team and on individual tasks