

Career Pathways in Lane County



Food & Beverage Production Sector Profile



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- Types of jobs in the local food and beverage manufacturing industry
- Skills you need to get hired
- Training and post-secondary education options for after high school graduation
- Information about food and beverage manufacturers and the prospects for jobs in Lane County
- What you can do to get started now on a career or as an entrepreneur in food & beverage.

Jobs in the Food & Beverage Sector

Production & Distribution

Production Line Workers: Follow a recipe, measure and combine ingredients, or control a machine that makes the product, and package it. This person must know and follow sanitation rules.

Warehouse Workers: Help move ingredients from storage to production, and from production to distribution. Warehouse workers often know how to drive forklifts and must observe safety regulations.

Warehouse/Maintenance Manager: Responsible for maintaining equipment and machinery; has training in sanitary welding, electrical wiring, plumbing, mechanics, and pest control.

Production/Distribution Manager: Schedules supply orders as well as distribution timelines, has a strong understanding of supply and demand. Must have good attention to detail and understand logistics.

Distributor: Helps transport product to a transit center, wholesaler or customer for direct sales. Understands food supply chains and transportation logistics.

Process Engineer: plans, designs, and implements improvement processes to increase production and enhance efficiency; provides technical support for operations.

Food Science

Quality Assurance: Requires a degree in chemistry or food science, this position is often federally-mandated for manufacturers to ensure the quality and safety of the products the public consumes. QA testers must randomly test product, document information and log data, ensuring attention to detail.

Research & Development: Requires extensive knowledge of a company's product as well as current trends in the market; this position likely also has a college degree or significant experience to test new products, the public's response to them, and the statistical probability of the success of a new product.

Business Administration

Human Resources & Finance: helps to hire people for the company and support employees while at the company, and has knowledge of company policies surrounding employee benefits and federal regulations. Manages payroll and bookkeeping.

Marketing: Understands brand marketing and strategies for increasing product visibility. Creative directors design logo, product packaging, and more.

Sales team: sells product to the customer through face-to-face interactions, phone conversations, web demonstrations, and/or trade shows.

Customer Service: works with customers to troubleshoot problems and take orders; knows how to explain and understands the larger market for the product.



Local manufacturer **Yogi Tea** was founded in the early 1970s by the Sikh community. They recently expanded their operation in West Eugene with a new building that will enable them to produce 2.6 million tea bags per day. The company employs 120 people, with an expected growth of another 15-20 employees and a 30% increase in output in the next year. Yogi Tea CEO Giancarlo Marcaccini says, "We value the environment, our surroundings and the local community, and we consider ourselves part of the history and the fabric of Eugene-Springfield."

Employable Skills

Jobs in food and beverage production require fundamental 21st century skills such as **dependability, teamwork, and determination**. Some companies use temp agencies to staff their production and warehouse positions; often, workers who are able to prove themselves to be **reliable** and **willing to learn** will quickly move up to a shift management position.

Working in manufacturing requires people who are **punctual** and have good **attention to detail**, since the industry relies on tight timelines with small margins for error. It is important for scientists working in Quality Assurance to **carefully document** data to prevent contamination and ensure the safety of their products.

In addition, employees in any department of the company must **work together as a team** to accomplish tasks. **Collaboration** and a strong work ethic are necessary to get a job in food and beverage production.

Undoubtedly, perhaps the most important set of skills is that of **good verbal and written communication**. This includes proper spelling and grammar, as well as the ability to express yourself clearly to others. Gerry Gegenhuber, Vice President of Global Purchasing at **Yogi Tea** says, “Being able to communicate well is an important skill. This means both writing and speaking skills. You need to be able to effectively get your point of view across in a concise way.”



Whit Hemphill, CEO of Wildtime Foods says, “There are many opportunities to move up in the food and beverage production sector. You first need to start by showing up on time, being responsible, and being a team player.”



Entrepreneurial Mindset

The food and beverage production industry is **tangible and accessible** because most of us have been customers in this sector, and have a basic understanding of business here.

Many local entrepreneurs in Lane County started with a passion or found a niche that they saw would be helpful to people with certain dietary needs. For instance, **Springfield Creamery** was one of the first companies to produce yogurt with live probiotics because of their health benefits. **Coconut Bliss** began making delicious, dairy-free coconut-based ice cream for a circle of friends a few times a year. Entrepreneurs also are able to understand the food supply chain and where inefficiencies can be improved.

If you are considering starting a company in the food and beverage industry, it is important to first understand how companies present their brands, why people buy certain food products, and how you might be able to impact your community. Lara DePietro, Account Manager at **NuNaturals**, advises, “Take time in the grocery store. What makes you react? Think about where it comes from. Be an observer of food.”

“How can I get a job in Food & Beverage Production?”

Post-High School / GED

- Get a job as a production or warehouse worker in a local manufacturing company.
- Gain experience necessary for production management.
- Make a yearly average of \$33,264 as a Packaging Machine Operators.

Post-Apprenticeship

- Complete an Associate of Science Oregon Transfer degree in Advanced Technology.
- Apply for positions as a sanitary welder, machinist, or warehouse maintenance manager.
- Earn an average of \$40,941 as an Agricultural & Food Science Technician.

Post-4 Year Degree

- Get a Bachelor’s degree in Chemistry, Food Science or Business (Marketing and Management).
- Specialize in Quality Assurance, Food/Beverage Testing, or Project Management.
- Apply for a job as a Market Research Analysts.
- Earn an average of \$60,542 per year.

Over the next 10 years, there will be over 4,000 jobs in Food and Beverage Manufacturing available locally in Lane County. Alan Turanski, President of **Glory Bee**, says, “Every job is important in food production. As a company, we value people who care about what they are doing and take pride in their work.”

Micah Elconin, **Food and Beverage Sector Strategist** says, “If you are interested in a career in food and beverage production, you need to develop an understanding of basic nutrition, food labels, and the ingredients in the food and drink you consume.” Learn to cook and understand how ingredients react. Finally, since there are many different ways to enter the sector (ex. the trades, chemistry, marketing & management), start building professional skills through job shadows & internships.

Local economy: laneworkforce.org/sector-strategies/food-and-beverage-sector-strategy

Events: Manufacturing Day, eugenechamber.com/manufacturing-day.html

Job shadows & Internships: elevatelanecounty.org

Check with your high school counselor for the Career & Technical Education courses offered at your school.

Get Started!

