

## **Dawn Ngo**

*Quality Control Technician*

### **Career Description**

A Quality Control Technician tests food products and production processes to ensure they meet predetermined standards for quality and safety.

### **Profile**

Fast-paced. Multi-faceted. Team-orientated. That is how Dawn Ngo describes her work as a quality control technician for a large dairy processing company in Victoria.

Dawn applies her training in microbiology and biochemistry to ensure that the products the company produces are safe and of uniform quality. She works with a whole range of dairy products including milk, yogurt, cottage cheese, cream cheese and ice cream.

“I do a lot of microbiological testing to make sure that our products meet food safety standards,” Dawn explains. “I also perform a number of chemical and physical tests to verify that each product has the right texture, consistency and colour.”

For example, Dawn tests all the milk processed each day to make sure it contains the right amount of fat and protein, and does not contain any harmful bacteria. “Accuracy is important,” she stresses, noting all her results are carefully documented in case a problem is detected.

“You’ve also got to taste the product to make sure it has the right flavour,” she says with a grin. “Ice cream at nine in the morning makes a great breakfast!”

Dawn likes the fact that she gets to follow the product from start to finish. While she does the majority of her work in the lab, she also spends time on the plant floor taking samples and making sure the products are being labelled properly. Not to mention customer service.

“Quality control takes all of the customer calls, like any comments and unfortunately complaints too,” she explains. “So you get to talk to the end user and get feedback.”

### **Key Quote**

“I enjoy the mix of science and administration. You’re testing in the lab, troubleshooting problems with production, and communicating with customers. You’re everywhere.”

### **Ask Dawn: How do I know if I would like this type of work?**

“Try taking a couple of food science courses to see if you enjoy it. Or you could ask someone who is employed in the food industry to give you a tour of their production facility. There are all sorts of food processing companies that need people for food safety and quality control.”

### **Primary Location**

- Lower Mainland, Thompson-Okanagan, Vancouver Island

### **Interest/Skills**

- Lab technique
- Accuracy
- Communication
- Multi-tasking
- Documentation

### **Suggested Qualifications**

- Degree or Diploma in Food Science or Microbiology

### **Related High School Subjects**

- Chemistry
- Mathematics
- Home Economics

### **Related Careers**

- Quality Control Manager
- Food Product Technologist
- Food Safety Inspector

### **Did you know?**

- Your refrigerator should be kept at four degrees Celsius or below to help reduce the risk of food borne illness. (Source: Canadian Food Inspection Agency)