



FOOD INDUSTRY CAREERS

Discover where food graduates from
Loughry Campus are employed



DAERA
Department of Agriculture,
Environment and Rural Affairs
www.daera-ni.gov.uk

www.cafre.ac.uk



The Food Industry

With the global population passing 8 billion people the challenge of sustainable food production is creating an international conversation.

The Northern Ireland food industry is at the heart of our local economy. Food is a crucial export sector for Northern Ireland with nearly three quarters of all produce being sold to markets outside of the region.



Contributes
£5.4bn
to the NI economy

Employs
25,000+
people



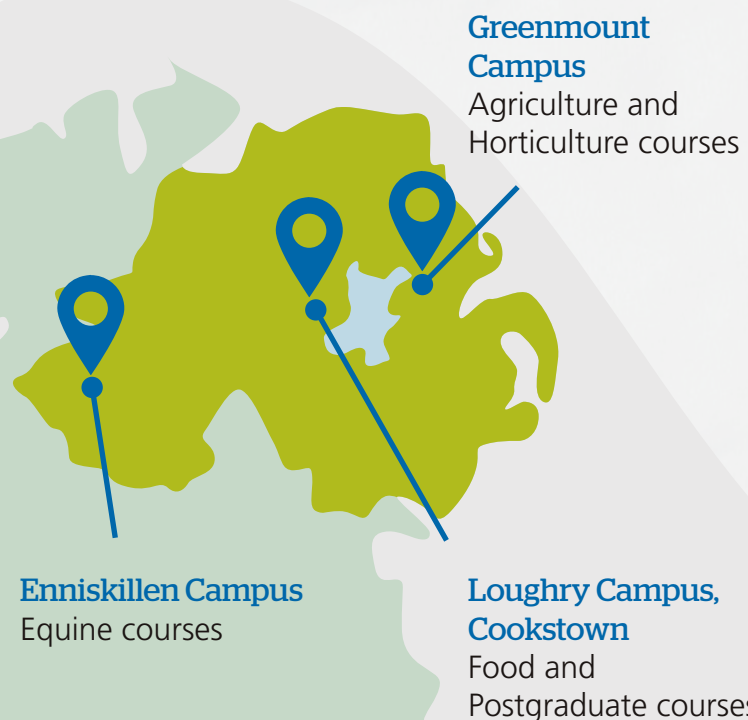
2nd
largest goods
exporter

Source: NISRA: Northern Ireland Food and Drinks Processing Report 2020

Innovative sector

CAFRE is an integral part of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs for Northern Ireland delivering education, knowledge transfer and innovation programmes.

This provides CAFRE with a **unique relationship with the agri-food industry**, who support the college with the provision of bursaries, guest lecturers, work placements and graduate employment.



Study at Loughry Campus

CAFRE is Northern Ireland's specialist agri-food and land-based college. Loughry Campus has provided food focused education since 1908. At CAFRE we place emphasis on using food science to explore innovative product design and processing techniques to prepare our graduates to help tackle the challenge of sustainable food processing.

Students gain scientific knowledge and technical skills enabling them to contribute to an international agri-food industry as they work to ensure global access to healthy diets.

The facilities at Loughry Campus are used by both industry and students providing students with many opportunities to make fantastic connections with major organisations. CAFRE prepares students to work in the local, regional, national and global food industry.

On average 95% of CAFRE graduates gain employment or progress on to further study within six months of completing their course.

Superb job opportunities in the food industry.

Become a future leader in a dynamic sector.

Excellent career progression with high earning potential.



Loughry students benefit from:

- **Specialist food facilities** - product innovation, packaging technology, food processing and automation, sensory evaluation and science labs.
- **Industry experienced** lecturing staff.
- **Excellent links** with the food industry - work placements, guest lecturers, industry visits and generous industry support programme.
- A friendly, rural campus offering a **supportive student environment**.
- **Competitively priced** on campus student accommodation and free car parking.
- **Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degrees** - awarded by Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast.

Snapshot of careers from farm to fork

Read more about career opportunities on the pages which follow, or refer to specific jobs on the pages as referenced.



Philip Buchanan

Food Technology Graduate
Procurement Manager
WD Meats Ltd, Coleraine



What's your job?

I liaise with livestock suppliers to procure animals that comply with retailer specifications. The marketplace is constantly changing with an increased focus on environmental and sustainability issues as we respond to consumers trends.

What did you study?

- GCSEs at Downshire School, Carrickfergus
- Level 2 Agriculture, Greenmount Campus
- Level 3 Food Technology, Loughry Campus
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology
- Work placement at the Northern Ireland Food Chain Certification (NIFCC) working within the Farm Quality Assurance Scheme

What Philip has to say:

"The food supply chain offers a wide range of career opportunities. Working in **procurement** combines my interest in **sustainable** agriculture with the production of **quality** food products."

Why choose Loughry:

CAFRE students studying on food programmes at Loughry Campus benefit from **primary production** visits to the CAFRE Farms at Greenmount Campus. This on-farm experience provides students with an understanding of the factors contributing to the development of a prosperous **agri-food supply chain**.



Antonia Costley

Food Innovation and Nutrition Graduate
Head of Product Development
Avondale Foods (Craigavon) Ltd.



What's your job?

I lead and enable the process of new product development and design for major retailers, including Marks and Spencer within the UK and Ireland.

What did you study?

- A-Levels at Belfast Royal Academy
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Innovation and Nutrition

What Antonia has to say:

"While studying at Loughry I further developed my passion for food product development, **innovation** and **nutrition**. I particularly enjoyed participating in the industry supported product development module. Developing products from concept to launch focused my determination to follow a career in food **product development**. My career aspiration which started as a A-Level student has me now leading a team of innovative and passionate food technologists. As a Loughry graduate I have the privileged opportunity to inspire the next generation of food technologists through the annual Avondale Product Development Challenge."

Why choose Loughry:

Product development modules delivered at Loughry benefit from CAFRE's established food **industry connections**. Local food companies challenge students to design innovative food products to meet emerging consumer trends. Products are presented to an industry panel at a 'Dragons' Den' style competition.



Kate Lagan

Food Technology Graduate
Laboratory Technician
Bushmills Distillery



What's your job?

As a member of the Distilling team, I have responsibility for the analysis and documentation of raw materials, process, environmental samples and finished product sensory profiling. I ensure site wide conformance to quality and environmental standards. I'm involved in process improvements and proactively identify potential processing problems to ensure high quality, safety and environmental standards are maintained within the laboratory.

What did you study?

- Studied A-Levels at St Patrick's College, Maghera
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology

What Kate has to say:

"The Food Technology course at Loughry provided me with a wide range of **skills and knowledge** which has enabled me to develop and overcome challenges in my role. In particular, the opportunity to partake in practicals and taste panels at Loughry has prepared me well for the **world of work in a laboratory**."

Why choose Loughry:

The analytical laboratories at Loughry Campus are used to assess the **quality, safety and legal compliance of food products**. Our microbiological, chemistry, sensory and process laboratories are equipped with a range of resources to support teaching and learning.

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David Hughes

Food Business Management Graduate
Environmental Officer
Lakeland Dairies NI (Ballyrashane Site)



What's your job?

I am an Environmental Officer in a milk processing company supplying fresh milk, cream, buttermilk and cheese to 70 national and international companies. The role involves addressing **environmental and sustainable** considerations which impact retailer decisions. The goal is to balance the climate, environment and economy to make a positive impact on the people, planet and places where we operate.

What did you study?

- Studied A-Levels at North Coast Integrated College, Coleraine
- Work placement with Ballyrashane which led to graduate employment within the company
- Graduated with a BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management

What David has to say:

"If you have the same opinion as I had; that the food industry is all about fast foods, then you too would be wrong! **Studying at Loughry changed my perceptions.**"

Why choose Loughry:

Global food companies work closely with CAFRE to offer excellent **paid work placement** opportunities. Work placements provide students with the opportunity to **develop professional, technical and personal skills**. Students are supported by the CAFRE placement co-ordinator when preparing for and during placement.

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Matthew McIvor

Food Business Management Graduate
Packaging Technologist
The Kraft Heinz Company
(Netherlands)



What's your job?

Generating new packaging concepts to react to technological innovations and environmental targets. The market demands sustainable, cost effective **packaging solutions** which meet quality standards.

What did you study?

- GCSEs at St Pius X College, Magherafelt
- Level 3 Food Technology, Loughry Campus
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management

What Matthew has to say:

"Food packaging technology has a crucial function in the modern food industry. Studying at Loughry prepared me to work for an **international, dynamic company** as a Packaging Technologist. During my final year degree study I selected a packaging themed **research** project. This enabled me to develop my **packaging science and technology** knowledge which now helps me react to the driving forces of packaging innovation."

Why choose Loughry:

CAFRE recognise that sustainable, cost effective food packaging is central to the success of food products. That's why the Food Packaging Laboratory at Loughry Campus, **unique** on the island of Ireland, is integral to the student **learning experience**. Students investigate shelf-life properties, packaging durability and how consumers behave when using packaging.

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Jill Barrett

Food Technology Graduate
Food Safety, Integrity and Quality Manager
Linden Foods, ABP Food Group



What's your job?

Leading the development and effective implementation of the **food safety** and quality management system to ensure compliance with customer and legislative requirements. Managing, coaching and developing the Quality Assurance team and providing technical guidance, training and support to drive **business improvement**.

What did you study?

- GCSEs at Drumglass High School, Dungannon
- Level 3 Food Technology, Loughry Campus
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology Degree incorporating a work placement year with Linden Foods

What Jill has to say:

"At school I had a strong interest in where food comes from and **how food is produced**. So, when CAFRE visited my careers class and I heard about the range of food courses at Loughry I knew that was the route for me. When at Loughry I completed two work placements which gave me experience, **skills and industry contacts**. My placement was my route to **graduate employment** with an award-winning innovative meat company."

Why choose Loughry:

CAFRE open doors to excellent career opportunities. **Over 95% of CAFRE graduates secure relevant employment** within six months of completing their course. Often Loughry food students make such a great impact they secure offers of employment prior to graduation. Many of the senior managers driving change and innovation in the Northern Ireland Agri-Food Industry are proud to be **Loughry Alumni**.

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Claire McConkey

Food Business Management Graduate
Supply Chain Management Graduate
Moy Park



What's your job?

As part of the Graduate Scheme in Moy Park I gained experience in **managerial roles** within the agri-food supply chain. I liaised with primary producers to promote sustainability and support **business improvement**.

What did you study?

- A-Levels at Slemish College, Ballymena
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management

What Claire has to say:

"**Studying in America** during my third year provided a great opportunity to meet people from across the globe, exchange accents and cultures. It proved an exciting and educational experience for me! Through **international study** you learn a lot about yourself and become truly **independent** and more **confident**."

Why choose Loughry:

CAFRE has been running a student exchange programme with Michigan State University (MSU) since 1996. By completing this **Exchange Programme** CAFRE Higher Education students benefit from studying at a university, ranked in the top 100 Universities in the world. The MSU exchange programme is a competitive process. Successful students secure financial support to help cover travel, tuition, accommodation, and food costs.



Fiona Hamilton

Degree Apprenticeship in Food
and Drink Manufacture
Production Group Leader
Kerry Omagh

What's your job?

Since joining Kerry Omagh as a Higher Level Apprentice, I have progressed through a number of job roles including Production Team Leader, Material Call-Off in the Kerry Omagh and Glasgow sites and recently I have undertaken the role of Production Group Leader. My production leadership role is interesting and challenging. I have the responsibility to ensure products are manufactured efficiently, and meet customer and business continuity targets.

What did you study?

- GCSEs at Omagh High School
- Level 3 in Food Science, Loughry Campus
- Higher Level Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture

What Fiona has to say:

"I left school after GCSEs and enrolled on the Level 3 full-time two-year course at Loughry Campus. During the course we completed a twelve-week work placement, which I thoroughly enjoyed. Having gained industry experience and the opportunity to earn money intrigued me into finding out about **part-time study** options at CAFRE. Apprenticeship programmes at Loughry offer the opportunity to **earn and continue learning** - a great combination for me."

Why choose Loughry:

Higher Level and Degree **Apprenticeship programmes** offered at Loughry Campus are validated by Ulster University. These programmes offer those working in the food industry with the opportunity to **develop their knowledge and skills alongside their employment**. Apprentices may obtain these part-time qualifications whilst **not incurring tuition fees**.



Jack Coulter

Food Innovation and Nutrition Graduate
Key Account Manager
Crust and Crumb Bakery Ltd.



What's your job?

As a Key Account Manager I am responsible for managing, growing and optimising customer accounts. I work with the management team to organise the production and supply of goods to meet customer requirements. Building successful business relationships is crucial in my role.

What did you study?

- A-Levels at Enniskillen Royal Grammar School
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Innovation and Nutrition

What Jack has to say:

"I was fortunate to be awarded with two bursaries during my time at Loughry - each have helped me develop both professionally and personally. The **financial benefits** allowed me more freedom within my studies and personal life, whilst these honours bolstered my CV, helping me **secure a placement** during my studies and a prominent role within one of Northern Ireland's leading food manufacturers."

Why choose Loughry:

With a total cash value of £91,000 students at CAFRE benefit from the **Student Bursary and Scholarship Programme**, sponsored by leading agri-food and land-based businesses. The generous financial commitment made by bursary and scholarship providers demonstrates their support to **encourage the next generation of talent** to enter the sector.

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Kaitlyn Martin

Food Business Management Graduate
Brand Manager
GM Foods



What's your job?

Marketing within the food industry covers a broad spectrum, from strategic planning to new product development launches and campaign management. It also includes event planning, developing website content and managing social media platforms. In marketing no two days are ever the same. Marketing requires **adaptability** to keep up with consumer purchasing behaviour, competitor activity and technological **trends**.

What did you study?

- A-Levels at Regent House School, Newtownards
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management

What Kaitlyn has to say:

"At Loughry we were encouraged to take every moment as an opportunity; learn from people around you, no matter what their job role. Pay **attention** when things go well and own up to your mistakes - we learn from those just as much as our successes. As Walt Disney said 'keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things... your curiosity will lead you down the path of **success**'. What a fantastic sentiment for anyone starting off their career."

Why choose Loughry:

The Degree courses at Loughry provide students with the opportunity to apply their technical knowledge of food into business environments.



Adam Rutherford

Higher Level Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture
Technical Manager
Golden Popcorn



What's your job?

I am responsible for food safety and quality control. I review, update and implement new procedures required to maintain the food safety and quality management system.

What did you study?

- GCSEs
- Experiential learning and career progression within the food industry enabled me to apply for the Higher Level Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture

What Adam has to say:

"Studying alongside my work will open doors to continuing my **career progression** within the company. I am gaining an in-depth knowledge of business processes. I am developing my **confidence** when communicating with customers and auditors."

Why choose Loughry:

CAFRE offers learners the opportunity to access formal education at a **variety of entry levels**. Contact us to determine courses that may be accessible to you.



Rebecca Hanna

Food Business Management Graduate
Process Improvement
Lakeland Dairies



What's your job?

I'm a Process Improvement Agent in the dairy industry with responsibility for implementing the company's Enterprise Resource Plan. This is an important role in a constantly evolving and **changing global industry** to deliver relevant products profitably and sustainably.

What did you study?

- A-Levels at Bloomfield Collegiate, Belfast
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management

What Rebecca has to say:

"Staff at Loughry Campus prepare students to work within companies exporting large volumes of produce to international markets. Lecturers apply their **industry experience** making **classes relevant** to the complexities of an innovative processing environment."

Why choose Loughry:

Lecturing staff at CAFRE have experience working in the food industry and benefit from **continual professional development**. This helps augment and enhance their abilities to make learning proactive and relevant.



Celebrating Loughry Alumni who bring food to your plate.

In an industry which is evolving to meet future challenges, we're proud to have an alumni community shaping the future of the industry.

Our graduates are an important part of what makes the Northern Ireland food industry unique. CAFRE graduates are agile and can adapt to a changing landscape. Friendships formed at Loughry are long remembered after graduation. Our alumni support each other in the industry and often return to the campus to inspire future talent and for continual professional development.

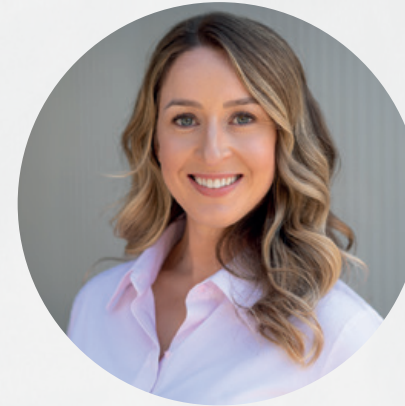


Niall Callan

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology graduate
Production Planner
Linden Food Group

Past pupil of Sperrin Integrated College, Magherafelt

“ My work as a Production Planner involves scheduling production for Hilton Foods UK and Hilton Foods Ireland, who supply Tesco Stores across the UK and Ireland. My job involves prioritising and planning operations to maximise performance through managing and forecasting production requirements. If I had to sum up my time studying at Loughry Campus I would say it was enjoyable, memorable, and packed full of real-world learning. Choosing to study at CAFRE was the right choice for me. ”



Gemma Cosgrove

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology graduate
Technical Services Manager
Saputo Cheese, USA

Past pupil of Newtonhamilton High School

“ Working closely with our Technical Services team I ensure that our cheese products are not impacted by changes in ingredients, equipment upgrades or process developments. Liaising with our Sales team in developing our range I match competitor products or create new products to meet customer needs. I certainly have a tasty job - one which involves lots of time being spent on evaluating and eating Pizza! ”

Kieran Given

FdSc and BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology graduate
Country Plant Manager
Coca Cola HBC

Past pupil of St Malachy's College, Belfast

“ Whilst working in the food industry I came to realise the importance of attaining formal food qualifications. I first completed a Foundation Degree and then a BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology through part-time study at Loughry Campus. The theory I learnt at CAFRE was so applicable to operations at work. Over the years I have progressed my career and I am now working as a Plant Manager for Coca-Cola. Our production process starts with syrup or concentrate, mixed with water and packed in a variety of recycled plastic or glass bottles and cans. We are committed to sustainability. Quality management is embedded into our production through sophisticated control equipment and testing programmes. Studying at Loughry has helped me develop interpersonal and management skills demanded by the industry. ”



Joanne McStraw

Level 3 Food Technology
Divisional Manager
Ecolab CID Lines

Past pupil of Banbridge Academy

“ Through studying at Loughry I developed an interest in food hygiene and an understanding of the importance it plays in the food supply chain. Having worked in laboratory and technical roles I progressed my career into managerial positions within the hygiene sector. I work to supply businesses with a range of high quality animal health care products. We offer a proactive service which leads on innovation. Our products offer complete hygiene solutions. Healthier animals lead to profitable farms, safer food and sustainable production processing. ”





Hannah Wilson

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology
Lead Technical Trainer
Moy Park

Past pupil of The Royal School, Dungannon

“ Studying at Loughry offered me lots of opportunities to develop both my food knowledge and my communication aptitude. Now working in the Moy Park Technical Academy I design and deliver training to ensure our team members are compliant with legal, regulatory and customer Codes of Practice and support them through their personal development. It's fulfilling to see staff achieving their goals. ”

Nathan Crozier

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management
Key Account Manager
TS Foods

Past pupil of Devenish College, Enniskillen

“ In school I developed a general interest in business but when I researched into degree courses I soon realised most of the major graduate employers were agri-food businesses. With Loughry's close links with industry I knew I would quickly secure employment if I studied at CAFRE. I now work as a Key Account Manager developing and liaising with customers. It's a role which offers variety and rewards - knowing you have made customers happy gives me satisfaction and enormous pride in our products. ”



Aimee Wilson

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Technology
Specifications Technologist and Supplier Approval
Hughes Mushrooms

Past pupil of St Joseph's Grammar School, Donaghmore

“ Since graduating from Loughry Campus I have developed experience in a number of job roles within various food businesses. I work for Hughes Mushrooms who manufacture a range of vegetarian and vegan meal alternatives. With an estimated third of consumers reducing their consumption of animal based products this is an expanding market. The industry offers exciting opportunities to students considering a career in food. ”

Conor Field

BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Business Management
Retail Operations Manager
Lidl

Past pupil of Royal Belfast Academical Institution

“ CAFRE offered me the opportunity to really grow my qualifications. From starting study on the Foundation Degree I successfully progressed on to the Honours Degree course before applying for study on the Master's in Business programme at Loughry Campus. I have used my technical knowledge of food and my business acumen to secure a position with a global food company as a Retail Operations Manager. ”



Study for a food qualification at CAFRE

Loughry Campus courses offer those fascinated with food the opportunity to enter with GCSE or A-Level and equivalent qualifications. Choosing a course in food means you will find a satisfying career, one which spans from the farm to fork.



Study after GCSEs

Level 3 Full-time courses

- Extended Diploma in Food Technology and Science
- Extended Diploma in Food Technology and Nutrition

Work-based Apprenticeships

- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture
- Level 3 Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture

Study after A-Levels or equivalent qualifications

Full-time courses

- FdSc Food Innovation and Technology*
- BSc (Hons) Degree in Food Innovation Management with pathways in Technology and Nutrition*

* Subject to revalidation by Ulster University

Work-based Apprenticeships

- Level 5 HLA in Food and Drink Manufacture
- Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Manufacture

For course information visit: www.cafre.ac.uk

All course enquiries
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DiscoverCAFRE    

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