

## 2017/8 Summer students at Dairy Goat Co-op and Fonterra Brands Tip Top

When she worked as an Assistant R&D Technologist at the **Dairy Goat Co-operative (DGC)**, **Robin Jervis** had completed the second year of her BSc Chemistry and Biological Sciences at the University of Waikato.

At DGC, she ran short term storage trials, compiled Product Development's (PD) Standard Operating Procedures and templates to the PD manual, and completed various data analysis tasks from trials run in the past.

Robin says there are many benefits to a summer job: "The work placement program cements the theory learned in lectures and the skills learned in practicals into a more realistic environment applied to a real world context. Meeting people who are a part of the industry has been a wonderful opportunity to appreciate the day to day tasks of a career in food science. This kind of experience cannot be learned in a lecture or University lab.

This has been one of the best summers of my life. The opportunity to get your foot in the door in a professional workplace is of immense value. The work placement is a wonderful prospect to get started in your career, as it becomes much easier to get a job in your field in the future, as employers will see you have already had experience in the workplace."

During her time at DGC, Robin's supervisors were **Louise Tolenaars, Science Project Manager** and **Lene Nielsen, Product Development Manager**. Louise says: "This is the third consecutive summer we have employed a student from the University of Waikato and Robin has proven to be a capable and effective addition to our team. She has been involved in a number of small projects where her can-do attitude and analysis skills have been put to good use.

She has spent time with both our Product Development and Science Teams, and has managed the multiple priorities with ease."



**Zara Beckingsale** and **Charlotte Hitchings** had both completed 3 years of their food tech degrees at Massey when they spent the summer working at **Fonterra Brands – Tip Top**.

Zara worked under the supervision of **Senior R&D Technologist Esraa El Shall**. Her work included collating all the information associated with each product and creating a one stop shop for all the technical information. She supported the team with many tasks, from documentation updates to flavour and colour work, pilot plant work, ingredient validations and ice cream making demonstrations.

Zara says her experience at Tip Top was very enjoyable and valuable. “I had an excellent mentor, who taught me several things over the course of the summer, and was able to answer any questions that I had about the company or the tasks I was assigned to do. The team I worked in displayed great co-operative spirit, which made it a highly enjoyable work environment, and taught me valuable team work skills. A highlight of my work experience has been working with flavours and colours, and observing first-hand the new product development work from the food technologists in the team. Working at Tip Top has been a great eye-opener as to the applications of my degree, and has made me excited for my final year of study.”

Esraa says Zara was a pleasure to have on the R&D team. “She was always happy and willing to do the work and in fact couldn’t get enough of it! She finished all the initial work that was expected of her and went above and beyond to learn new things and help out as much as she can. I speak for all the team when I say we will all definitely miss having her around.”



*Charlotte (left) and Zara (right)*

Charlotte worked with **Louis Van Niekerk, Quality Projects Manager**. Her work included several projects investigating heat shock occurrences in the factory and throughout the cold chain, running the daily quality taste table (that's a hard job!), and working on a project to improve the taste table process.

Charlotte also enjoyed working at Tip Top. "I feel very privileged to have been given the opportunity to work in such a recognised food company within NZ. It has given me an insight into how a large business runs, and I have really enjoyed my trips down into the factory. Working alongside the quality team has been highly enjoyable and I have been provided with great guidance from my supervisor. The daily taste table has been a great perk of the job. The opportunities provided to me throughout the summer have reinforced my passion for food technology and I look forward to my fourth year of study. "

For Louis, having a summer student in the team has mutual benefits. "For us, it adds additional resource during a very busy time of the year. This gives us the ability to have a focused effort on various projects. The projects that summer students complete, provide business-wide learnings, and have led to easy wins in the way that we manage out processes and materials.

We find summer students are a refreshing addition to the team, and they are eager to tackle the challenges thrown their way. It's always a loss when they have to go back to their studies.

For the student, it provides valuable exposure to the business, and gives them a bit of an idea of what to expect when they graduate. Additionally, it builds rapport with wider teams and provides networking opportunities, which will always prove beneficial for their future employment endeavors. The summer internship is a chance for students to show us what they're made of, and is welcomed every year."