



Name:

Alexis Bertrand

Country:

Canada

Company:

Reid's Dairy Company Ltd.

Job Title:

Food Safety Technologist

What is your current role?

Currently, I work as the Food Safety Technologist for Reid's Dairy Company Ltd., where I am responsible for implementing and maintaining the Food Safety and Quality Management, Internal Audit and HACCP programs with the Food Safety team. I am also a part-time professor at Loyalist College in Belleville, ON, where I teach Microbiology, Applied Chemistry and the foundational skills of science for first and second year students in the Biosciences programs.

Why did you join the BRCGS Professional Programme?

I joined the BRCGS Professional Programme in order to further enhance my knowledge of the food safety and quality requirements inherent to the GFSI scheme. I had already gone through half of the required courses to achieve the professional status and consulted with the company who decided ultimately that it would be a great asset to have me complete the programme.

What value do you personally feel the BRCGS Professional certification brings to you?

I feel that the certification holds a lot of value for me professionally and personally. It has given me the knowledge required to push our systems to the next level while simultaneously allowing me the confidence to implement them. I believe that it will contribute to my personal and professional profile and give our suppliers and customers confidence in our brand.

How has/will the recognition programme impacted your work?

Going through the Programme has allowed me to improve already existing food safety and quality management processes at my company (going through the Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Assessment courses, specifically, brought forward a ton of changes to our program), as well as implement new and exciting programs which have allowed us to achieve a high level of success with the BRCGS standard.

How did you get to your current role?

I started my journey in quality and food safety over 5 years ago, where I started working in the quality lab as a Microbiology Technician. From there, I pursued a contractual role at a cheese manufacturer and acted as their Microbiologist, which brought opportunities to lead audits with Health Canada and to manage all CAPAs and customer complaints. When the opportunity arose to return to Reid's Dairy to create a Food Safety Team in order to achieve BRCGS certification, I jumped on it. After achieving certification, I now help maintain the program as well as train all of our new and existing quality and food safety staff. I also worked at Loyalist College as their Lab Assistant when I was going through my studies; it was there that I formed the relationships which helped me secure the position as Professor some years later.

What is your educational background?

Educationally, I hold an advanced diploma in Biotechnology from Loyalist College and I have just completed my Bachelor of Science in Interdisciplinary Science, with a specialization in Biology and Chemistry from Laurentian University. I have also taken professional courses such as HACCP, Food Safety Handlers, and a variety of courses through the Agriculture and Food Education Learning System from the University of Guelph.

What are your career ambitions/aims?

My ultimate goal in my food safety career would be to become an auditor for a certifying body or for the government (CFIA). I believe my knowledge, experience and passion for the industry will get me there in the future, and being certified as a BRCGS Professional only pushes me closer to that dream.