



Food Safety Specialist

A Food Safety Specialist ensures that food is processed, packaged and prepared according to the food preparation and food safety standards set by the company and regulatory organizations.



Inspiring Minds to Grow

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career profile

Name: Agnes Dawson
Job Title: Food Safety
Specialist

Employer: United States Department of Agriculture

Education: BS, North Dakota State University: Fargo

 My entire family got sick from food poisoning when I was in high school. Everyone recovered, but it got me thinking about food safety and what is done to make sure food is safe to eat. The more I learned, the more I wanted to pursue a career in food safety. I majored in food science with the intent of doing something related to food safety.

 Right out of college, I got a job with the government as a food safety specialist, also known as a food inspector. My job is to help protect the public from foodborne illnesses by monitoring food quality, processing procedures, and equipment. I conduct inspections, take samples, and see that the samples are tested for the presence of bacteria, molds, or

non-desirable materials.

I observe employees and daily procedures. I review test results and prepare reports that are then issued to the company being inspected.

 I determine whether the organization is in compliance with safety regulations. If conditions do not meet quality control standards, I meet with company management to recommend changes. Sometimes I advise additional employee training in regards to food safety.

 I like my job even though it can result in tensions. The bottom line is that I am protecting the best interest of the companies I inspect, as well as the general public.



Food Safety Specialist

overview



A **food safety specialist** ensures that food is processed, packaged, and prepared according to the food preparation and food safety standards set by the company and regulatory organizations.

suggested high school courses



agricultural science, food science, biology, chemistry, and mathematics

experience needed



Participate on campus in labs and research trials when possible. Seek job placement opportunities while attending school. Plan and implement a related Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Program.

degree(s) required



A bachelor's degree in food science, chemistry, microbiology, or environmental health is required.

potential employers



food production companies, government inspection agencies

salary range



\$35,000 to \$70,000

employment outlook and trends



The job outlook for food safety specialists is considered to be **very good** to **excellent**.

professional organizations



American Society for Microbiology www.asm.org/
American Council for Food Safety and Quality agfoodsafety.org/
Institute of Food Technologists www.ift.org/
National Coalition for Food and Agricultural Research www.ncfar.org/



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