

# FOOD SCIENCE

## What can I do with this degree?

### AREAS

### EMPLOYERS

### STRATEGIES

#### BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY

Quality Assurance  
Food Safety  
Quality Inspection  
Process Inspection  
Production Management  
New Food/Flavor Chemistry  
Sensory Evaluation  
Applied Food Research  
    Preserving  
    Processing  
    Packaging  
    Storing  
    Delivering  
Sales  
Marketing  
Consumer Education

Food processing plants  
Food manufacturing plants  
Food ingredient suppliers  
Food equipment suppliers  
Container manufacturers  
Large retail chains, e.g. Starbucks, Target  
Feed companies  
Dairy, beef, or hog farms  
Federal government including:  
    Food and Drug Administration  
    Department of Agriculture  
State governments

Earn a minor in business or agribusiness.  
Become adept using computers.  
Take courses in statistics.  
Gain relevant experience through internships.  
Participate in student professional organizations and seek leadership roles.  
Compete on a meat or dairy products judging team.  
Join the Institute of Food Technologists to learn more about the field and for networking opportunities.  
Develop strong interpersonal and communication skills. Learn to work well in a team.  
Earn a graduate degree for advanced opportunities in research or management.  
Demonstrate creativity and curiosity for positions in product or flavor development.

#### SCIENCE

Basic Research  
Food Microbiology/Food Chemistry  
Product Development  
Food Engineering  
Food Safety  
Quality Inspection  
Quality Assurance  
Process Inspection

Federal government including:  
    Food and Drug Administration  
    Department of Agriculture  
    Environmental Protection Agency  
State governments  
Food processing plants  
Food manufacturing plants  
Food ingredient suppliers  
Food equipment suppliers  
Quality-control laboratories  
Pharmaceutical companies  
Universities and colleges

Join the Institute of Food Technologists to learn more about the field and for networking opportunities.  
Gain related experience through internships.  
Assist a professor with research to gain laboratory experience.  
Take additional courses in the sciences.  
Become highly detail oriented.  
Participate in research paper competitions sponsored by professional associations.  
Research apprentice membership in the Society of Flavor Chemists if that is an area of interest.  
Obtain a graduate degree to reach higher levels of research and administration. A doctoral degree is required for university teaching.

## AREAS

### PRE-PROFESSIONAL

Medicine  
Pharmacy  
Dentistry  
Veterinary Sciences  
Other Healthcare Fields

## EMPLOYERS

Hospitals  
Clinics  
Private or group practice  
Health networks  
Nursing homes  
Rehabilitation centers  
Mental health institutions  
Federal, state, & local health departments  
Government agencies  
Armed services  
Correctional facilities  
Colleges and universities  
Pharmaceutical companies  
Retail pharmacy chains  
Research laboratories  
Animal food companies  
Zoos

## STRATEGIES

Food science is good preparation for professional graduate programs in pharmacy, veterinary science, dentistry, or medicine because of the strong science background that is developed.  
Research admissions requirements for individual programs.  
Maintain a high grade point average and prepare for required entrance exams.  
Secure strong personal recommendations from faculty.  
Gain exposure to field of interest through volunteering, part-time and summer jobs, or internships.  
Research accredited institutions. Check graduation rates, success rates on licensing exams, cost, location, etc. If possible, speak with current students.  
Develop back-up career plans in case admission is denied.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

- The food processing industry is one of the largest in the US and throughout the world, so many opportunities exist for students trained in food science.
- A bachelor's degree is sufficient for some opportunities in applied research and in food processing. Earn a master's or doctoral degree to conduct basic research. The PhD. is required for university teaching.
- A high percentage of food scientists work for local, state or federal government. Learn government application procedures.
- Learn to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Develop strong communication skills both written and oral. Also develop analytical skills and an attention to detail.
- Join professional associations and student organizations to stay abreast of current issues in the field and to develop networking contacts. Get involved with the Institute of Food Technologists.
- Talk to professionals already in your desired field regarding their backgrounds. Arrange a shadowing experience.

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### Food Science

[Institute of Food Technologists](#)

[Culinary Arts and Food Science Career Descriptions](#)

[Food and Flavor Chemistry from the American Chemical Society](#)

[Food Scientist](#)

[Agricultural and Food Scientists from the Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)

[Job Postings in Food Science](#)

[Career Explorer from the National FFA Organization](#)

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Prepared by the Career Planning staff of Career Services at The University of Tennessee,  
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