

TASTE YOUR FUTURE: A CASE STUDY OF SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

An interview with Kristi Barnes, Human Resources Director
of Performance Culture at Maple Lodge Farms

WHAT IS YOUR POSITION AT MAPLE LODGE FARMS?

I'm the Director, Performance Culture which is part of the Human Resources team. My role heavily focuses on Talent Management, Performance Management, Talent Acquisition, and Learning & Development.

WHEN DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH TASTE YOUR FUTURE?

I first got involved with Taste Your Future (TYF) in my first few months of joining Maple Lodge Farms.

HOW HAVE YOU AND MAPLE LODGE FARMS COLLABORATED WITH TYF?

- Member of Taste Your Future's Careers in Food and Beverage Processing Implementation Team (CIT)
- Presenter with TYF at the Cannexus conference, a national event for career services professionals
- Participated with TYF at the Ontario School Counsellors Association conference in 2017
- Arranged participation by Maple Lodge Farms staff at the TYF booth at Ontario Independent Meat Processors' 2017 Meat Expo
- Arranged participation of Maple Lodge Farms staff at the 2018 "Career Showdown" networking event at Steam Whistle brewery
- Panelist at the TYF workshop "Connecting new Canadians to careers in food and beverage processing" in Brampton

HAS BEING ON THE CIT EXPANDED YOUR NETWORKS AND HELPED YOU SHARE YOUR RECRUITMENT MESSAGES?

Absolutely. Partnering together with other industry reps and service providers gives us optimal opportunity to engage in conversations with others who may have similar challenges. We also share new approaches to attracting young talent or new Canadians to our industry.

DOES MAPLE LODGE FARMS HAVE CONTENT ON THE TYF WEBSITE OR DO YOU EVER SHARE CONTENT FROM TYF'S SOCIAL CHANNELS?

Yes, Maple Lodge Farms participated in an initiative of TYF wherein current employees answered 5 questions about their careers as well as aspects of the industry that they enjoy.

TELL US ABOUT MAPLE LODGE FARMS' EMPLOYMENT CHALLENGES AND HOW TYF HAS SUPPORTED THE COMPANY?

I believe we struggle with challenges similar to others in our industry when it comes to attracting new employees. The job market is at a critical stage with more opportunities than there are people so we are all competing for strong talent. Partnering with TYF has helped us develop a network where we can partner with employment service providers who can introduce new Canadians to our industry and get the message about the fantastic food industry careers available to our youth through various educational events.

“Our industry is exciting, innovative, and has a vast array of opportunities.”

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE JOBS YOU ARE RECRUITING FOR?

We have a wide range of positions that we are recruiting for - beginning in the Grower Service side of the business, to the processing facility where there is a demand for line employees, machine operators and sanitation teams. There are also opportunities in Marketing, Special Events, Sales and Logistics. Our opportunities are available on our website at maplelodgefarms.com/careers.

ARE YOU OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FINDING NEW TALENT?

It will be a challenge given the global crisis facing employers, but with networks and partnerships such as TYF, I have confidence that we will find great talent. Our industry is exciting, innovative and has a vast array of opportunities for anyone looking for a challenging, rewarding career.

“With partnerships like Taste Your Future, I have confidence that we will find great talent.”