

Food Technologists & Technicians

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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1. Working as a Food Technologist and Technician

Job Description

Working as a Food Technologist or Technician may perform some or all of the following duties:

- Develop and test new food products, and search for new food sources
- Ensure quality and flavour remain consistent
- Determine the fat, sugar, vitamin, or mineral content of products
- Research ways to improve testing, preservation, packaging, and manufacturing methods
- Some enforce health and safety regulations

Source: *Career Cruising* database (Profile for Food Scientist). Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page: <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising>

Industry Overview

This is a relatively new and growing occupation sector.

Food research is expected to increase because the public is more aware of nutrition, food safety. The job growth in this industry will be in private sector.

There are currently 260 members registered with British Columbia Food Technologists, the organization representing food scientists and technologists in the province. Across Canada, there are 1200 members of the Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology.

Source: BC Food Technologists <http://www.bcft.ca/Membership.htm>

Job Outlook in BC

Technical Occupations in Physical Sciences (NOC 221)



Chart from WorkBC

The **Employment Outlook for BC** provides job openings projections for *chemical technologists & technicians*, which includes *food technicians and technologists*, within BC regions:

Region	2010 Estimated Employment	2015 Estimated Employment	Avg Annual % Change, 5 Years, 2010 to 2015
Vancouver Island	490	500	0.5%
Lower Mainland / Southwest	1,960	2,180	2.3%
Thompson-Okanagan	260	270	0.7%
Kootenay	70	80	3.1%
Cariboo	70	70	-0.8%
North Coast & Nechako	50	50	0.3%
Northeast	40	40	1.0%

Source: Regional Employment Projections, BC Stats. Projections for development regions.
<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/EmploymentUnemployment/RegionalEmploymentProjections.aspx> [accessed October 2014]

The **Employment Outlook for BC 2007-2017** provides job openings projections for *biologists and related scientists*, which includes *food scientists*, within BC regions:

Region	2010 Estimated Employment	2015 Estimated Employment	Avg Annual % Change, 5 Years, 2010 to 2015
Vancouver Island	720	740	0.5%
Lower Mainland / Southwest	1,820	2,000	2.1%
Thompson-Okanagan	360	370	0.5%
Kootenay	70	80	4.1%
Cariboo	100	90	-0.6%
North Coast & Nechako	60	60	-0.1%
Northeast	50	50	0%

Source: Regional Employment Projections, BC Stats. Projections for development regions.
<http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/StatisticsBySubject/LabourIncome/EmploymentUnemployment/RegionalEmploymentProjections.aspx> [accessed October 2014]

You can learn more about working in the food technology sector in BC from

- **WorkBC Career Profiles** <http://www.workbc.ca/Careers/> [Search Chemical Technologists & Technicians; Biological Technologists & Technicians; and Biologists & Related Scientists]

Types of Employers

Food scientists work for universities, colleges, government-run research agencies, and private companies in the food processing industry.

Salary

Entry-level positions can start at approximately \$35,000 a year. With experience, food scientists can earn \$40,000 to \$80,000 a year, though some in senior positions make as much as \$100,000 a year.

Full-time food scientists usually receive benefits, such as dental coverage, paid vacation, and sick days.

From *Career Cruising* database (Profile for Food Scientist).

Job Bank Canada, Wage Reports, provides hourly wages in BC regions:

Chemical technologists and technicians, including **food technologists and technicians** (NOC 2211):

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	14.42	21.50	45.00
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	12.50	19.00	45.67
Thompson--Okanagan Region	14.42	21.50	45.00
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	14.42	21.50	45.00

Source: Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

Biologists and related scientists, including **food scientists** (NOC 2121):

Location	Wage (\$/hr)		
	Low	Median	High
British Columbia	17.25	33.65	50.26
Cariboo Region	17.25	33.65	50.26
Kootenay Region	17.25	33.65	50.26
Lower Mainland - Southwest Region	16.88	32.50	56.41
Thompson--Okanagan Region	17.25	33.65	50.26
Vancouver Island and Coast Region	17.25	33.65	50.26

Source: Job Bank Canada <http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/>

Working Hours

Food technologists and technicians generally work a standard 35 to 40 hours per week. However, evening and weekend shifts may be required in order to meet deadlines. Most work on a full-time basis.

2. Skills, Education and Experience

Skills

- Ability to communicate technical information clearly
- Problem solving skills
- Ability to analyze
- Good eye for detail
- Patience and persistence
- Ability to work as part of a team
- Creativity

Source: Work BC

Education and Experience

Food technologists are usually required to have completed a two or three-year college program in chemical, biochemical, or chemical engineering technology or a related discipline.

Food technicians are usually required to have completed a one or two-year college program in chemical, biochemical, or chemical engineering technology.

Food scientists are required to have completed a bachelor's degree in food science or a related scientific discipline, such as biology or chemistry as a minimum. However, a master's degree will increase one's chances of advancement, and is important for those aiming for senior research or management positions.

Some people enter food science with related college diplomas. However, they are usually limited to food technician positions in the private sector.

Source: WorkBC Career Profiles [Search Chemical Technologists & Technicians] And *Career Cruising* database (Profile for Food Scientist).

Qualifications

Licensing Requirements for Food Technologists & Technicians

Food technologists and technicians can apply for professional certification through the **Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of B.C. (ASTTBC)**.

The following criteria must be met:

- *Applied Science Technologist (AScT)* designation - completion of an accredited diploma program and two years of industry work experience
- *Certified Technician (CTech)* designation - completion of an accredited certificate program and two years of industry work experience
- *One year of the work experience must be in Canada for both designations*

Internationally trained professionals may qualify for 'Provisional' membership provided that the foreign academics and experience are acceptable. You must successfully complete the one year of required Canadian experience for full certification: <http://www.asttbc.org/registration/itp/>

- For more information, please visit the **ASTTBC website** at <http://www.asttbc.org>

Certification for chemical technologists is also available through the **Canadian Society of Chemical Technology**. Designation as a Certified Chemical Technologist (CCt) normally requires graduation from an accredited program and at least two years of industry work experience.

- For more information, please visit the CSCT website at http://www.cheminst.ca/sites/default/files/pdfs/cCT/CSCT_Certification.pdf

3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional associations' publications.

Local Newspapers

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily, the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and in *The Province* on Sundays.

Job White Pages

- Available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/jobfreewaycom>
- (see categories 1630-2019, "Science/Engineering Professionals")

NOTE: *You can only access this database from the Central Library or VPL branch libraries. Access is NOT available from home or outside the Library.*

Online Job Postings

- **Careers in the Federal Public Service**
<http://jobs-emplois.gc.ca/>
Search by organization for jobs with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- **Indeed.com**
http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards

Professional Associations' Career Resources

- **British Columbia Food Technologists**
<http://www.bcft.ca/Employment.htm>

- **Institute of Food Technologists**
<http://www.ift.org/cms/?pid=1000053>

- **Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology**
<http://www.cifst.ca/default.asp?id=909>
Job opportunities for food technologists across Canada.
Available to members only.

Identifying the Right Position

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For ***food technologists & technicians***, look for these related job titles:

- Agricultural Technician or Technologist
- Food Processing Quality Control Technician or Technologist
- Food Bacteriological Technician or Technologist

For ***food scientists***, look for these related job titles

- Food Products Bacteriologist
- Food Products Scientist
- Food Research Scientist

Source: NOC [search 2211; 2221; and 2121]

Creating a List of Potential Employers

You can use directories to produce lists of companies who employ food technologists & technicians in Vancouver or the Lower Mainland. Contact them directly to find out if they're hiring.

- **British Columbia Food Processors Directory**

Available at the Central Library 380 Fo6CBdb
or online at: <http://www.foodprocessorslist.ca/directory>

- **Canadian Company Capabilities**

<http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/ccc-rec.nsf/eng/home>

Try searching by NAICS 541710 (Research & Development in the Physical, Engineering & Life Sciences) or 541380 (Testing Laboratories) or search by keyword (i.e. "food technology"). You can narrow search by province or city.

- **Food in Canada**

Resource guide in the January/February issue and buyers' guide in the October issue Available at the Central Library 664.05 F6861 and online <http://www.foodincanada.com/>

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "food" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

NOTE: *You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).*

- **Research Means Business : a Directory of Companies Built on NSERC-Supported University Research**

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/doc/Reports-Rapports/resbus_e.pdf

4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter that identifies the position you are applying for and summarizes your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following pathfinders which are available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]

- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]

- **Networking for Employment**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Networking for Employment]

- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>
[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

Industry Associations

Associations for food technologists and technicians in BC and Canada provide assistance to individuals. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **Applied Science Technologists and Technicians of B.C. (ASTTBC)**
<http://www.asttbc.org/>
- **British Columbia Food Technologists**
<http://www.bcft.ca/>
- **Canadian Institute of Food Science and Technology**
<http://www.cifst.ca/>
- **Canadian Society for Chemical Technology (CSCT)**
<http://www.cheminst.ca>
- **Institute of Food Technologists**
<http://www.ift.org/cms/>

Industry Journals

Search the Vancouver Public Library catalogue for journals related to your profession. You'll find recent editions at the Central Library:

- **Food in Canada / Maclean-Hunter**
Available at the Central Library, 664.05 F6861
<http://www.foodincanada.com/>

Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library, Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.

Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>.