

Oduro Ampaw



Oduro Ampaw is Technical and Sustainability Director, Ready Meals at 2 Sisters Food Group (2SFG).

What does your job involve? What are your responsibilities?

My responsibilities include food safety, legislation and sustainability in our ready meals division. Those range from traditional and global ready meals as well as ready-to-cook pizzas. I also look after some of our bakery products. I work very closely with the technical and operational teams across our five sites in this division. I've been with 2 Sisters Food Group since 2005 in various roles, but more of that later...

Thinking back to school days, did you know what you wanted to become?

I've been interested in science and food science since I was 10 years old. I enjoyed, and was good at, science.

What were/are your main interests, e.g. science in general, food technology, microbiology, nutrition, something else?

Sadly, I lost a sibling to food poisoning and this prompted my interest in microbiology. I started medical school, but decided I wanted to understand and prevent illness rather than looking at cures.

What qualifications do you have? GCSEs? A Levels? Degree(s)/other?

I have a first degree in Food Science and Nutrition from the University of Ghana and a post grad degree in Food Biology from the University of Wolverhampton. I have also studied food law at the University of Central Lancashire.

In rough outline, what was your job pathway – companies and job titles, plus anything of particular note, e.g. level of responsibility, exposure to any particular developments/issues?

After graduating, I stayed at university as a teaching assistant and moved to the UK to take up a role as a raw materials technologist at Freshway Foods. This was a real eye-opener for me! I had no idea how demanding the UK food industry was compared to my experience in Ghana. The role offered a fantastic opportunity to develop my knowledge and experience in raw materials and it was then that I took the post grad qualification.

I was invited to join 2SFG in 2005 as technical and quality champion and promoted to Senior Quality Assurance Manager in 2006. The post of Technical Manager came up at Mission Foods in 2008 and I stayed with them for four years. During this time, I developed a special interest in food law and therefore took a post grad course at the University of Central Lancashire. This broadened my understanding of the complex legislative framework in the UK and EU.

My time at Mission also included working in Moscow, which was very interesting. As a technical lead in a merger with another company, I had to adopt new ways of working and adapt to the language and cultural differences. It's not something I expected to be doing, but shows how varied this sector can be.

I returned to 2SFG (under the Northern Foods brand) in 2012 as a Technical Manager in the meals division, and then in the Food to Go section. I became Divisional Technical Controller in 2016.

An opportunity took me to Müller Yoghurts and Desserts as UK Head of Quality for a short spell, but I was drawn back to 2SFG to look after 12 factories as Divisional Technical Director. I am working in prepared meals and now have sustainability as part of my role within ready meals specifically.

What were your aspirations when starting your career and what are they now?

I am passionate about my work and about people. I want to keep on improving my knowledge base and sharing what I know. I love working with people, understanding and relating to them and encouraging them in their work.

I am a big believer in continuous self-development and the dynamic nature of the food industry puts me in exactly the right place. There is always something new to learn – innovation and research abounds, and I soak it up! The challenges have come from Brexit and COVID most recently and I value the support of colleagues in the CFA. I will never ever be bored in this sector.

What single piece of advice would you offer someone curious about working in the sector?

You need to be passionate about what you do. You should want to make a difference and this sector will empower you to do that, as it has for me.

What would you say to encourage them further? i.e. what are the best bits?

My excitement for my work has never, ever diminished. Whenever I've been away it soon kicks back in. Chilled has so many demands – back to food safety again – and there is always something to learn about and discover. We are making a difference. Food safety remains my passion and I am proud to be making decisions that directly affect what we eat – to give our customers the highest quality, safest food possible.