FOOD SCIENCE

What can I do with this major?

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
RESEARCH Applied research: Novel preservation methods Sustainable food processing Active and smart food packaging Product development Basic research: Food microbiology and safety Food chemistry and quality Foods for health Bioactive/functional foods for Preventing or treating diseases Food process engineering	Food processing industry Food ingredient suppliers Food equipment suppliers Packaging manufacturers Consumer products companies Test kitchens/food laboratories Universities and research institutes Federal government: U.S. Food and Drug Administration U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Defense State government agencies Department of Agriculture Department of Health	Maintain a good GPA, and become active in under graduate research to prepare for graduate school. Gain relevant experience through internships or volunteer to work in a faculty member's lab. Participate in professional organizations such as the Institute of Food Technologists and seek leadership roles in student section. Demonstrate creativity and curiosity when interacting with faculty mentors. Obtain a graduate degree to reach higher levels of research and management.
QUALITY CONTROL Food safety Quality inspection Quality assurance Process inspection Sensory evaluation/analysis	Federal government: U.S. Food and Drug Administration U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Environmental Protection Agency U.S. Department of Defense State government agencies Food processing industry Food ingredient suppliers Food equipment suppliers Consumer product companies Quality-control laboratories Test kitchens/food laboratories Pharmaceutical companies Universities and colleges Nonprofit research organizations (e.g., National Science Foundation International)	Gain related experience through internships. Assist a professor with research to gain laboratory and technical skills. Take additional courses in the sciences. Become highly detail oriented. Join the Institute of Food Technologists to learn more about the field and for networking opportunities Participate in research paper competitions or summer research programs sponsored by professional associations or government agencies. Obtain a graduate degree to reach higher levels of research and administration. Maintain a good GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations to prepare for graduate school.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
BUSINESS		
Production management Sales Marketing Distribution Consumer education	Agribusiness: livestock and feed Pharmaceutical companies Equipment and supply companies Food and meat processing companies Food distributors Food processing industry Food manufacturing plants Food ingredient suppliers Food equipment suppliers Container manufacturers Large retail chains (e.g., Starbucks, Target) Consumer products companies Test kitchens/food laboratories Federal government: U.S. Food and Drug Administration U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Defense State government agencies	Earn a minor in business or agribusiness. Take courses in statistics. Become adept using computers. 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. Demonstrate creativity and curiosity for positions in product development. Earn a graduate degree for advanced opportunities in research or management.
EDUCATION		
Teaching Agriculture literacy Non-classroom education (e.g., Adult Agricultural Education, Young Farmer Extension Programs)	Schools (e.g., secondary and post-secondary) Extension services Agricultural agencies Agricultural communications and media firms Agribusinesses Government: U.S. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service U.S. Department of Agriculture U.S. Department of Health and Human Services U.S. Food and Drug Administration U.S. National Science Foundation	Develop excellent communication skills including verbal, written, and interpersonal. Obtain teacher certification, which varies by state, for public school opportunities. Secure master's degree for teaching at community or two-year institutions; a doctoral degree is necessary for college and university teaching. Gain related experience through volunteer positions, summer jobs or internships with age group of interest. Seek leadership roles in student organizations. Be prepared to live in rural communities for extension positions.

AREAS	EMPLOYERS	STRATEGIES
PREPROFESSIONAL/HEALTHCARE		
Medicine	Hospitals	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.
Dentistry	Clinics	
Optometry	Private or group practice	
Podiatry	Health networks	
Pharmacy	Nursing homes	
Veterinary medicine	Rehabilitation centers	
Allied health:	Mental health institutions	Maintain a high grade point average, particularly in the sciences, to improve chances of admission to graduate or professional school.
Occupational therapy	Federal, state, and local health departments	
Physical therapy	U.S. Government agencies	Research accredited institutions. Check graduation rates, success rates on licensing exams, cost, location, admission requirments, etc.
Medical technology	U.S. Armed services	
Nuclear medicine	Correctional facilities	Secure strong faculty recommendations.
Dietitian	Colleges and universities	Join related student organizations and demonstrate leadership abilities.
Nutritionist	Pharmaceutical companies	
	Retail pharmacy chains	Meet with a pre-health advisor periodically to discuss curricular decisions.
	Research laboratories	
	Animal food companies	Seek research experience and participate in undergraduate research competitions.
	Zoos	
		Gain exposure to field of interest through volunteering, part-time or summer jobs, or internships etc.
		Speak with current students if possible.Shadow a pharmacist, dentist, physician, etc. to learn more about the occupation.

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 doctoral degree is required for university teaching. A masters degree is required for work as a occupational therapist, dietitian, and nutritionist.
- A high percentage of food scientists work for local, state, or federal government. Learn government application procedures and gain assistance from your college career center.
- Learn to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Develop strong written and oral communication skills. 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 in your desired field regarding their backgrounds. Arrange a shadowing experience.