

This publication is dedicated to celebrating the outstanding achievements of our colleagues across the Group, keeping you informed about the latest community and charity events, and offering a closer look at the inspiring individuals who make our company a great place to work. Dive in to stay connected and be part of our shared journey as a high performing team.

Awards

Employer of the Year

We were thrilled to take home Employer of the Year at the Food Manufacture Excellence Awards! This is an achievement we are extremely proud of – but it's made possible entirely by you.

This recognition reflects the passion and hard work demonstrated every day across our sites: colleagues championing our Values in everything they do, the enthusiasm behind our Learning & Development initiatives, the wellbeing support we provide, the dedication of our Apprentices, Graduates, and everyone who has taken part in development opportunities over the last 12 months.

Thank you to every team, department, and colleague. Your contribution, your energy, and your willingness to continually improve are what make Dunbia the workplace it is. We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved together and excited for what comes next.



The Irish Times Business Person of the Year 2025

Congratulations to Niall Browne, our CEO on being named The Irish Times Business Person of the Year 2025.

This award recognises his outstanding leadership and strategic vision, demonstrated most notably through Dawn Meats' landmark international expansion with the majority acquisition of New Zealand's Alliance Group — a transformational step for our business and a strong endorsement of Ireland's agri-food sector globally.

Full article: <https://www.irishtimes.com/business/2026/02/19/niall-browne-of-dawn-meats-named-the-irish-times-business-person-of-the-year/>

The Green Food & Beverage Award

We're proud to have won The Green Food & Beverage Award at the Green Awards 2026.

This recognition highlights our commitment to sustainability through Plan Four Zero, our strategy for building a more sustainable business and supply chain. The award reflects the progress we've made so far and motivates us to continue working with industry and supply chain partners to further improve our environmental performance.

Learn more at www.planfourzero.com.





People & Culture

I WISH

Dawn Meats proudly participated in the IWISH 2026 Festival at the RDS on 5 February, an event that welcomed over 4,000 girls from across Ireland to showcase the wide range of STEM career opportunities available to young women.

Representatives from our L&D, Environmental, Marketing and FSQ teams were on hand throughout the day to engage with students and discuss career pathways within the business. A highlight of the event was an inspiring central-stage address from Sarah Ryan, who shared her own career journey and encouraged students to explore their potential in STEM.

Our stand also received a special visit from Katelyn Cummins, the current Rose of Tralee, adding to the excitement and visibility of the day.



2026 Graduate Accelerator Programme

Our 2026 Graduate Accelerator Programme officially launched in January. Over the first six months of the year, 32 graduates from both Year One & Year Two of the Dawn Meats Graduate Programme will take part in six full training days strengthening their knowledge, leadership capability and confidence as they progress through their early-career journey.



Regional Leaders Programme

Congratulations to Sonia Gibney, who recently completed the Regional Leaders Programme with Waterford Chamber Skillnet. The programme supports professionals in developing their leadership competencies through access to mentors and coaches from a wide range of sectors.



Learning & Development

Training

Our team delivered Food Safety Level 3 training to colleagues in both Preston and Devon. We're pleased to share that every participant successfully passed their assessment, with several achieving distinctions. Congratulations to all involved for their hard work and commitment.

At the end of January, Gary Rowland delivered HACCP Level 4 training to teams from across the organisation. It was encouraging to see colleagues investing in their professional development and enhancing capability throughout the business.

The Foundation in Sustainability training programme was officially launched on LMS on 13 March 2026. The programme provides a clear introduction to key sustainability concepts, equipping participants with essential knowledge while supporting both personal development and the organisation's wider environmental goals..



Supervisory Development Week

Twenty-one Supervisors attended the annual development week at Harper Adams University. The programme offered a focused environment for colleagues to strengthen self-management, enhance leadership capability and deepen their impact within the organisation. The commitment and enthusiasm demonstrated throughout the week was amazing and we commend everyone for putting themselves forward to develop themselves further. If you are interested in attending the next supervisory week, contact the L&D team for more information.

UCD Management Development Programme

The new 2026 cohort convened in Dublin for their introductory session. This cohort is the largest to date, marking a significant milestone and highlighting the continued growth and success of the programme.

The cohort met again in February in Liverpool to explore the roles that Marketing and Sustainability play in supporting the organisation's strategic priorities.

Thanks are extended to Sylvia Gaudino and Louise Jones for their exceptional work in designing and preparing a high-quality learning experience and Michelle White and Gill Higgins for delivering highly insightful, engaging and interactive sessions that provided colleagues with a clear understanding of the strategic value these functions contribute.

Lunch & Learn

In December, we introduced a new series of Lunch and Learn sessions, beginning with An Introduction to NeuroInclusion. We're excited to share a sneak peek at what's coming next in April:

- Personal Effectiveness!

Keep an eye out for monthly Lunch & Learn updates, and if a session catches your interest, email Learning@dunbia.com with your preferred date and time. We'd love to see you there!





SPARK

Dunbia has now launched Spark, a new all-in-one digital wellbeing platform designed to make support easier, faster and more accessible for every colleague.

By using Spark, employees can access a wide range of services in one place, including 24/7 confidential assistance, virtual GP appointments, advanced nurse practitioner support, online physiotherapy, children and young people's mental health guidance, long term condition management, and digital cancer risk assessment, along with everyday wellbeing tools such as nutrition advice, fitness content and selfcare resources – bringing all wellbeing support together in a single, streamlined experience.



PROFILES



Name:
Lee Kay
Position:
Production Manager
Site:
Carroll's Cross

Could you share a little about who you are?

I started with the Company in April 2015 and am currently the Production Manager at Convenience Foods & DMM. I am responsible for the day-to-day production of frozen burgers for a number of retailers and wholesalers including McDonalds, Dunnes stores, Aldi, Lidl and Iceland. Over 100 staff report to me either directly or indirectly. I monitor yields, giveaway, downtime, throughput and a number of other KPI's to ensure the production of a product which meets the customers' specifications and legal requirements.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

It's one of the most difficult parts but equally just as enjoyable and that is dealing with people. A lot of what I do revolves around listening to the team and their concerns and challenges and supporting them and my shift managers/supervisors in the best way I can. In my opinion, to be a successful manager it's not about being able to do everything but being able to tap into the resources you have around you and the biggest resource we have is our team members.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

Where to start! I have completed a number of courses in my time with Dawn Meats, from Supervisory Management to the UCD Management Development Programme; and a few months ago, I was part of the Emerging Leaders Programme which was really something special. But for me it must be graduating from University of Limerick with a Degree in Quality Management Lean Systems.

How do you stay motivated and productive at work?

I try and push myself out of my comfort zone, I have found that the best way to learn is by testing and pushing your "weaknesses" or areas you feel you need improvement by continually doing this you can really improve on those areas

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

Looking at the big picture. Too often in a busy production environment, it's easy to focus only on problems and overlook what is working well by concentrating on each step in the process. I believe if we try (which I think we do) and put the right people in place to carry out the tasks, we should then give them the trust to allow them to carry out the job. This approach can't always be used and sometimes you need to roll up your sleeves and get stuck in, but as I said earlier, I believe building up the resources

and people around you to be able to stand back and let the show go on is very important.

What inspired you to pursue your current career path?

Before joining Dawn Meats I was a primary school coach working with Waterford GAA, where I would go around to different schools and coach kids the fundamental skills needed for Gaelic Football and Hurling, this was something I really enjoyed because I loved being able to get the best from the groups I would have and see the improvements as our sessions went on, I suppose similarly in my role now it's about trying to bring people along and in a way coach them and pass on some of the skills (if that's what you want to call them) and knowledge I have.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

I had a mentor/coach who showed me a lot about how to deal with people. His name is Jason Ryan, the Kildare and Wexford intercounty Gaelic football team manager a number of years back. I did a course where he was the co-ordinator and how he communicated and got the best from people was really important in shaping my management style.

How do you balance your work and personal life?

I enjoy socialising (usually a few beers with friends) and I'm a big movie buff, so I go to the cinema almost every week. I'm also a member of Kilrossanty GAA. All of this helps me keep a good balance between work and home life.

Can you share a fun fact about yourself that your colleagues might not know?

I dislocated my left shoulder 16 times playing Gaelic Football, I had surgery on it to fix the issue and my first game back after the injury I tore my ACL in my knee. That put an end to my sporting "career"

What are you passionate about?

Volunteering, I have been going to Lourdes for the last 4 years as a "brancardier" (French for stretcher carrier) with the Waterford and Lismore Diocesan Pilgrimage. I wouldn't say I am really religious but this one week every June I find so mentally rewarding and it really sets me up for the year ahead.

What are your career goals for the next few years?

I have only been in the Convenience Foods section of the business for just over a year, so I want to expand my knowledge on all of the different products, recipes, and my overall knowledge of the raw materials that we use.

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you most excited about for the future?

Automation is definitely the way forward, with the different demands at the moment on sourcing staff in what is a highly competitive market automation I believe will play a key role as the industry evolves.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

You have 2 ears and 1 mouth for a reason, Listen, Listen, Listen. I can't remember who said this, but I believe it's very true "One of the sincerest forms of respect is to actually listen to what another has to say"



Health & Safety

Celebrating 1,000 Days Accident-Free at Carrolls Cross

Health and Safety remains a continuous focus across Dawn Meats, and Carrolls Cross recently celebrated an impressive 1,000 days accident-free at the McDonald's plant. To mark the achievement, all staff received a branded fleece and gathered together to celebrate this significant safety milestone.

Workplace Mental Health First Aid Workshops

In December 2025 and January 2026, members of our ROI HR and Health & Safety teams took part in Workplace Mental Health First Aid Workshops. The training helped managers better understand mental health challenges, improve supportive communication, and strengthen personal resilience — reinforcing our commitment to a healthy, supportive workplace.



Sawley achieved a great milestone of reaching 500 days RIDDOR free and were presented with a certificate and a trophy.

PROFILES



Name:
Karen Tasker
Position:
Sales & Planning Admin
Site:
Highland Meats

Could you share a little about who you are?

I started on 24th February 1986 so it's my Ruby (40th) Anniversary of joining the company under all the various names over the years. In my current role, I have the responsibility of controlling the frozen stock, entering orders and organising transport and keeping the young ones in line and being the mammy to get things done.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy being with my workmates they feel like family and every day brings a new drama and issue that keeps me on my toes and keeps your day interesting on top of all the day-to-day stuff.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

Surviving 40 years, I believe is the most significant achievement!!!

How do you stay motivated and productive at work?

Coming into work to do a good job. I am proud of the job I do and my work ethic that's all I need to motivate myself. The legacy I leave behind of my work is my motivation.

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

I think being organised and having a consistent work routine helps enormously. Continuously learning new programmes also keeps you sharp and adaptable. It's important not to be shy — speaking up during busy or high-pressure moments ensures tasks are completed correctly and on time. That being said I also hope people think I am being helpful to get the job done.

What inspired you to pursue your current career path?

I started full time when I was 20 years old and I didn't know anything about the industry, but I fell into this role and surprisingly I found it to be really interesting work. Looking back, I would still advise my younger self that this is the right career choice for me. Not only did the job bring me a career for 40 years but it's where I met my husband all those years ago and if it wasn't for here, I wouldn't have my daughter or the life I have.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

My parents were my inspiration. They were both hard working and put everything they had into their

life and into us as kids to give us the best life they could and that inspired me to live life to the fullest and embrace every day. I have carried that through my personal and professional life and also passed this onto my daughter in her career.

How do you balance your work and personal life?

As of January, this year I have reduced my working week to 4 days per week as I turn the BIG 60 years YOUNG this year. For me this has really helped me spend even more quality time with my family and friends and helps me be focused for the working week.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

I enjoy going out for meals - LOVE a Miller and Carter!!!! I love my steak, another key driver for my career within the meat industry!! Also, I keep myself busy gardening and reading books. I am also a fur mum to my two cats Max and Mickey!

Can you share a fun fact about yourself that your colleagues might not know?

I might have mentioned a few times that I met the singer Tom Walker and had my photo taken with him! I am not sure my fellow colleagues have heard this enough, so I am taking the opportunity to mention it again in case they have forgotten!!!

What are you passionate about?

My Family as they are my whole world!!

What are your career goals for the next few years?

I don't have any career goals. I am happy being a strong team player in the role I do to support the team, and I hope they feel the same about me!

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you most excited about for the future?

A lot has changed in the 40 years I have been working in the industry, I remember getting computers in the office for the first time! That was exciting! I think it will always change for the better. Over the years the amount of paperwork has increased for H&S and legislation reasons but equally things are now decreasing due to efficient processes and more online systems. I have seen many major changes even within the factory itself. Only time will tell what the future holds.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

I would advise anyone to never be afraid to ask questions, I still do. Every day I am always learning something new even after 40 years and imparting my knowledge and wisdom to others.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

There are no problems in life, only challenges which can be overcome!! There are always solutions.



Community & Charity



Kildare

Dawn Meats Kildare had a bake sale to help raise funds for Breast Cancer Ireland. The contributions and spirit across the site were brilliant as everyone came together to support an amazing charity.

Group: International Women's Day

Thank you to everyone who participated in our IWD Give to Gain activities across our sites. From the nominations and messages of appreciation to the thoughtful gift-giving, it was fantastic to see so many colleagues getting involved and recognising the women who make such a difference across Dunbia.



Grannagh

Dawn Meats are delighted to finance and be part of The Waterford Trees for Life project, an initiative of the Waterford Lions Club, which promotes environmental sustainability by planting native Irish trees in schools and community areas across Waterford.



Preston

Preston hosted a Macmillan Coffee morning raising £660. Additionally, the £1870 raised from their Christmas raffle was donated to Derian House Children's Hospice and they received a lovely tour when they presented the hospice with the cheque.



Dungannon

Dungannon completed a litter pick in the industrial estate the site is based in, in conjunction with Mid-Ulster Council to kick off their Big Spring Clean Campaign.

PROFILES



Name:
Jer Spillane
Position:
Production Manager
Site:
Grannagh

Could you share a little about you who are?

I'm the Production Manager in Dawn Meats Grannagh. My main responsibility is ensuring that each department hits their weekly KPI's e.g. safety/quality/throughput/labour. I've been with the company for 8 years now. I had originally applied as a Commercial Graduate but ended up changing course early on and have worked in production since.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy the variety in my job. Working with so many different personalities and processes keeps the work interesting and challenging.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

I played a major part in the recent upgrade of our boning hall. We redesigned the whole process to implement CL Analysis of all meat destined for mincing & improve throughput and reduce foreign body risks. It was a large investment into the site which will allow us to deliver a higher quality product to our customers.

How do you stay motivated and productive at work?

The good thing about working in production is that your team's effort is very tangible, and you can see instant improvements from focused effort. There is a certain

buzz you get when people and processes are working in tandem and your achieving objectives together.

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

I believe you need to be able to be a strong communicator and be disciplined. There are so many variables in the production area that poor communication and distractions can have a negative impact on productivity & hitting objectives.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

I have had exposure to some great mentors in my time with Dawn. I got to work closely with Ray Fitzgerald and Conor O'Brien; who both have extensive meat experience and knowledge. I won't mention how many years' experience they both have but they gave me some great advice and guidance throughout my time.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

I'm a big supporter of the GAA and sport in general. I'm still trying to play hurling and football with my adopted club here in Waterford. It's a great way to switch off and socialise with people in the community.

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you most excited about for the future?

It's great to see Dawn Meats, which is one of Europe's leading red meat processors, grow with the acquisition of Alliance Group in New Zealand. It will be exciting to see this strategic partnership develop over the next few years.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

Be enthusiastic and ask as many questions as you can. Help the person on the production floor and they will share their knowledge with you. Push yourself outside of comfort zone and difficult tasks become a lot easier. Be patient and opportunities will come your way.



Food Safety & Quality

FSQ Week

Our 10th annual FSQ Week took place in February teaching people across the business about various topics through fun games and quizzes.



Survey responses wanted! - UCD MDP Project Survey

A UCD MDP project team is researching how to improve the FSQ training culture across all sites and would value your input. Please complete the survey by scanning the QR code:



PROFILES



Name:
Harry Brooks
Position:
Sustainability Officer
Site:
Devon

Could you share a little about who you are?

The role of Sustainability Officer is highly varied. A consistent theme is sustainability reporting and there is usually something going on throughout the year for this. For example, we are currently working on our Origin Green report in the Republic of Ireland. There are also a lot of ad hoc responsibilities, often related to customer requests or seminars related to new guidance which require attention.

How long have you been with the company?

Almost 2 years. May 2024 – April 2025 as a graduate, and from May 2025 – present as Sustainability Officer.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

Variety – as sustainability is relevant to all of our operations, we get to meet and talk to people in all parts of the business. This means that no day is the same. Learning

– sustainability is a rapidly evolving landscape, and to stay on top of it, we always have to be reading and learning.

Can you share a significant achievement or project you are particularly proud of?

Coordinating our 2025 EcoVadis submission, raising our score from 63 to 68, meaning that we were in the top 35% of reporting companies that year. I also authored our submission for the Irish Green Food & Beverage Company of the year as part of the Green Awards, which we ended up winning.

What skills or qualities do you think are essential for success in your role?

For success in the role, being open to learning new things is an absolute essential. Starting from a baseline of zero and building your knowledge base up to where you are confident in a given subject matter is a core part of the role.

What inspired you to pursue your current career path?

After finishing my master's degree, I applied for an FSQ grad role. However, the business offered me a role as a Sustainability Grad, which was new at the time. I took the role and the rest is history.

Who has been your biggest mentor or influence in your professional life?

Gill Higgins – she is a fount of knowledge.

How do you balance your work and personal life?

I work from home, so it is easy for the lines to become blurred. I like to go for a walk or run once I finish work and my brain knows that once I leave that door, the workday is finished. As well as this, setting clear boundaries between your work and personal life is key.

What are your hobbies or interests outside of work?

I'm a big reader, with my favourite author being George Orwell, as well as enjoying work on political science and economy. I like running and find that it is really beneficial for keeping a clear head. Finally, I am a big F1 fan, supporting Max Verstappen.

What are you passionate about?

People and our environment. I would like everyone to be able to live a happy, safe, and fulfilling life.

What are your career goals for the next few years?

I am currently on the UCD Management Development Course, so first of all, I would like to successfully complete that and implement the learnings into my day-to-day work. It is a great opportunity, and I am fortunate to be a part of a great team. Realistically, I am at the very beginning of my career, so I do not have lofty goals. I would like to improve a little bit each day, and hopefully after a few years, I will be able to look back and see the progress that I have made.

How do you see the industry evolving, and what are you most excited about for the future?

I will speak for sustainability. This sector is at a very exciting point, with the potential to go in many different directions, as to which way that ends up being, I'm not sure. But it is exciting, nonetheless.

What advice would you give to someone starting in your field?

The pace of change, as well as that of learning is fast. Try not to be overwhelmed by this and see it as an opportunity to be a part of something new and exciting.