



JOB TITLE: CATEGORY MANAGER

REPORTS TO: PURCHASING MANAGER

Revision Date: 2025

JOB FUNCTION: Oversee product selection and pricing according to purchasing guidelines set by the Purchasing Team in order to meet Lakewinds financial benchmarks for sales and margin; as well as our Strategic Plan and Mission. Develop and plan compelling in-store promotions. Facilitate Department Best Practice Meetings. Create alignment and consensus around operational and strategic plans. Work with departments to determine optimal product merchandising.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

CUSTOMER SERVICE

- Treat customers, co-workers and vendors fairly, consistently and with respect.
- Provide efficient, informative and friendly service according to established customer service standards.
- Provide product information and educational materials for customers and staff.

PRODUCT / PROMOTIONS / PRICING / PLACEMENT

- Determine the addition or deletion of products, considering Lakewinds product standards, mission and financial benchmarks.
- Work to seek new suppliers and products that align with Lakewinds mission and product standards, giving strong focus on local partnerships.
- Conduct timely category reviews; analyzing financial data to maintain a compelling assortment to achieve financial benchmarks and mission.
- Attend trade shows, and be current on upcoming trends - how they will impact Lakewinds, and how they can be interpreted through product selection.
- Manage and oversee promotional plans that provide a strong promotional assortment, while striving to achieve financial benchmarks. Coordinating and communicate plans with Department Managers and key stakeholders at the store level to ensure excellent execution.
- Collaborate with Marketing Department to highlight new items, promotions, trend, or new vendor activity.
- Set pricing for new products using target margin goals as the guide, as well as competition on key items.
- Address cost changes in a timely manner to ensure financial benchmarks are being met, and cost/margin data integrity.
- Collaborate with Department Managers to execute product placement to achieve department goals.
- Able to summarize and present data to key stakeholders that is meaningful and actionable
- Collaborate with the Scanning Dept. to ensure appropriate purchasing systems & vendors are maintained throughout the department, and that deadlines are met.
- Where applicable, meet NCG key due dates.

QUALIFICATIONS

- 3 year minimum experience purchasing and merchandising for a food retailer. Natural foods experience preferred.
- Demonstrated knowledge of current trends in the natural foods industry
- Proven written, verbal and analytical skills with a strong understanding of data analysis and forecasting methods
- Excellent computer skills including knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite
- Ability to plan, develop, and implement systems to provide for efficient and productive retail operations
- Strong organizational skills and attention to detail
- Ability to work well with others in a cooperative environment where teamwork and constant communication is essential
- Commitment to superior customer service and to provide the highest quality and convenient shopping experience possible
- Demonstrated ability to follow through on commitments

SAFETY

- Emphasize safety and safe body mechanics in a fast-paced department; participate in ongoing training.
- Be proactive in reducing work-related injuries; recognize and solve potentially hazardous situations, and/or bring to the attention of the Department Manager.

ESSENTIAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ability to communicate effectively with vendors, brokers, coworkers and customers.
- Ability to read, count and write, to accurately complete all documentation
- Ability to do math computations to figure margins, including addition, subtraction, division, fractions, decimals and percentages.
- Ability to freely access all areas of the store including offices, selling floor, stock areas, and walk-in coolers and freezers.
- Ability to travel to multiple work locations.
- Ability to operate office equipment – including telephone, fax, computer, handheld units, and peripherals – repeatedly and for prolonged periods
- Ability to move or handle merchandise throughout the store generally weighing up to 50 pounds.
- Ability to perform the following movements – used in checking stock levels – repeatedly and for sustained periods: walking, standing, bending, stooping, and reaching.
- Ability to work varied hours and days.

Disclaimer Notice: The job duties, elements, responsibilities, skills, functions, experience, educational factors, and the requirements and conditions listed in this job description are representative only and not exhaustive of the tasks that an employee may be required to perform. Lakewinds Natural Foods reserves the right to revise this job description at any time and to require employees to perform other tasks as circumstances or conditions of its business, competitive considerations, or the work environment change.