



CAREER FOCUS
FOOD INDUSTRY
TRADES

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Dear Students

With careers ranging from fishing to farming roles in agriculture and fishing are important to the development of any country. In this edition we will learn more about some of these important food industries in our country. Apart from earning a salary you also get the chance spending time in nature that helps you to find balance in your busy day-to- day life.

- Martina

FISHING INDUSTRY

Namibia has one of the most productive fishing grounds in the world, based on the Benguela Current System, one of the four eastern boundary upwelling systems in the world (the others are off North – West Africa, off California and off Peru). These systems support rich populations of fish, which form the basis for the Namibian marine fisheries sector.

Namibia's 200 nautical mile Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)'s commercial biomass contain about 20 different species consisting primarily of small pelagic species (pilchard, anchovy, horse mackerel and mackerel) and lobster along the shallower onshore waters on the continental shelf, as well as large pelagic species including adult mackerel, demersal hake and other deep – sea species (monkfish, sole and crab) in the waters further offshore.

The fishing industry has grown to the extent that it is currently Namibia's second biggest export earner of foreign currency after mining (90% of national output is marketed for export). In 2005, Namibia harvested about 552 164 tonnes of fish. The final value of processed products (export value) that year was around US\$376.0 million.

The fishing industry is a source of considerable employment for many Namibians. It is currently estimated that the total employment in the fishing industry is about 13 700. Of this total, approximately 5 575 is employed on-board vessels, 68% of which are Namibians while 7925 are involved in onshore processing, of which nearly all are Namibians. Total employment in the aquaculture sector is estimated at 200 people.

Fishermen

Staff on a fishing boat are responsible for operating fishing gear or hydraulic equipment to catch fish. This might include setting nets, traps and lines to catch the fish and later pulling that equipment back on the boat. They load and unload fishing equipment and freshly caught fish. After removing the fish from the net, they wash the fish and store it on ice. They ensure all fishing equipment, gear and nets are in good condition and perform any repairs needed.

Once processors have cleaned or filleted the fish and shellfish, they then package it for sale.

FISHING INDUSTRY

Seafood Processing Jobs

Working as a seafood processor can involve unloading freshly caught fish from a fishing boat. It can also mean gutting, butchering or filleting frozen or fresh fish for packaging and sale. Many seafood processing plants also clean crabs and shellfish.

Fishing Boat Captain

A fishing boat captain leads fishermen in catching a quota of fish, shellfish or crab. He determines the best location for fishing and directs the crew on when to set nets or traps to catch fish. The fishing boat captain also records the boat's daily activities in the log. This occupation can be very stressful, because the captain is responsible for the safety of everyone on the boat, including during dangerous weather conditions.

Fish and Seafood Brokers

Fish and seafood brokers provide assistance to fishing boats by acting as a link with retailers. Brokers take the responsibility of finding a buyer for the catch, arranging for the catch to be transported and collecting payment from the buyer. With experience selling fish and shellfish, brokers have the marketing materials, contacts and knowledge to complete these sales quickly. Brokers also help commercial fishermen obtain and maintain required fishing licenses. They interact with government regulatory bodies to ensure they have the most up-to-date information on quotas and regulations and funnel this information to commercial fishermen. In areas where customs laws govern the fishing industry, a broker can assist fishing operations with customs processing

Other duties include repairing fishing nets and gear, observing instruments for sighting schools of fish, being on watch duty and cleaning the vessel.

Fishermen who work in the sport fishing industry specialize in line fishing. They work on vessels chartered by tourists and holidaymakers for fishing trips ranging from a few hours to a few days. These types of fishermen assist people who have chartered the vessel by locating game fish, baiting hooks, hauling and gaffing fish, cleaning, eviscerating and storing fish, navigating and cleaning the vessel.

One of the drawbacks of this industry is that the work is seasonal. Many fishermen take on other work in the low season, such as working in fish-processing plants or fishing-tackle retailers.

Satisfying Aspects

- working outdoors and in a relatively stress free and relaxed environment
- either working alone or with people

Demanding aspects

- working in all types of weather conditions
- seasonal work
- having to be away from home for periods of time
- not finding fish or only netting a small catch
- facing dangers at sea

Requirements

A fisherman should:

- be in good health;
- have physical strength;
- have coordination and mechanical aptitude for operating and repairing fishing equipment;
- have perseverance, working long hours at sea;
- tolerate being away from the family for long periods;
- be able to work as part of a crew;
- able to withstand cramped conditions for long periods;
- be flexible / versatile to be able to assume any other crew member's duties at a moment's notice.

School Subjects

No specific requirements.

Compulsory Subjects: None

Recommended Subjects: None

Training

IN-SERVICE TRAINING:

The fisherman is trained on the job to effectively perform his duties.

Employer

- Commercial fishing companies
- Charter companies
- Self-employment - fishing offers good entrepreneurial possibilities. The fisherman with the necessary capital for a vessel and equipment, can open up his own commercial fishing company or charter company.



FARMING INDUSTRY

Farming covers the production of almost all kinds of animals, crops, fruits and vegetables suitable for a moderate to subtropical climate. Farmers are responsible for most of the production of a country's foodstuffs either through crop or stock farming. Another important responsibility of farmers is the conservation of the country's natural resources.

Farmers combine agricultural and business methods in operating small or large farms. Farmers' objectives are to make farming activities productive, profitable and professional.

The nature of the work differs according to the size and type of farm. The topography, climate and vegetation of an area determine the type of farming practised. On small farms, farmers may perform the actual labour, as well as plan and direct farming operations.

With crop farming, farmers perform a wide range of duties, such as determining land use, planting, fertilising, spraying, cultivating and harvesting procedures as well as marketing.

On livestock farms, farmers take care of animals. The correct breeding or incubation programme as well as feeding programmes, need to be followed. Pastures have to be planned and controlled in such a way that enough grazing will be available for the animals. Animals must also be vaccinated against illnesses. Wool, meat and dairy products need to be processed and marketed.

Farmers are also employers. The number of labourers each farmer employs is in direct proportion to the size and profitability of the farm and the degree of mechanisation. Farmers need to be well informed on all legislation that regulates labour relations in agriculture.

Farmers evaluate existing practices and look at methods for improvements. They maintain financial records, purchase supplies, determine labour needs and hire and supervise workers.

Satisfying Aspects

- working outdoors
- working independently
- living in rural areas away from urban congestion
- developing and using a wide range of skills, from mechanical to business
- working with animals and/or plants

Demanding aspects

- working in bad weather conditions
- long irregular hours
- coping with natural disasters, such as floods, drought, insect plagues and animal diseases
- losing crops or livestock.



Requirements

A farmer should:

- enjoy working outdoors, in all weather conditions
- like working with plants and/or animals
- have perseverance, diligence and patience
- have organizational ability
- have good planning, analytical and problem-solving skills
- have good leadership qualities and interpersonal relationships
- have good health and physical strength, stamina and agility
- have ability to endure isolation and limited social contact
- be independent, responsible and self-disciplined
- have mechanical aptitude and able to work with computers

School Subjects

Prospective candidates should have IGCSE GRADE 12 meeting diploma requirements for a diploma course

Each institution will have its own minimum entry requirements.

Compulsory Subjects: Mathematics, Physical Sciences - for degree course

Recommended Subjects: Life Sciences, Geography, Accounting, Agricultural Sciences

Training

Formal training in agriculture is available on 3 different levels, namely schools, agricultural colleges, universities of technology and universities.

Schools: Certain secondary schools offer Agriculture as a formal subject. There are also special agricultural schools where the students are obliged to take one or more agricultural subjects. These schools usually have a farming unit with enough agronomic and animal material for demonstration as well as for training purposes. At most agricultural schools, the choice of subject is such that matric exemption can be obtained.

Agricultural colleges in the country are the *Tsumis Agricultural College* and *Agricultural Training Centre Krumhuk Windhoek (ATCK)*. The ATCK is situated on a small farm, and provides training ground for small scale farmers, while the two associated commercial farms, Farm Krumhuk and Farm Eichenbach, provide the commercially orientated training facilities. Organic Agriculture and Bio-Dynamic Agriculture form the foundation of the Agricultural course.

Every agricultural college has its own entry requirements and those interested in this course are urged to write to the college of their choice. The **Neudamm Agricultural College**, for example, requires an **IGCSE/NSSCO** Grade 12, or equivalent qualification, with passes in English (D-symbol or higher), Mathematics (E-symbol or higher) and one Science subject (D-symbol or higher). Students should also have obtained a D-symbol or higher in three other subjects. The diploma courses can be done in three years of full-time studies. After successful completion of the diploma, candidates can seek employment as extension and research technicians, animal health inspectors, and farm managers, or can be self-employed.

Employer

- Large farming corporations
- Owners of large farms
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Universities, universities of technology and agricultural colleges
- Self-employment, with own farm.

MEAT INDUSTRY

Meat production is a significant contributor to Namibia's economy and is expected to continue to contribute to the economy as the organisation and stakeholders continue to investigate and develop new agreements.

"Agriculture is the lifeblood of Namibia; it is in our bones, in our dreams and what's more, farming is also Namibia's reality. It does not matter what Mother Earth throws at us, every Namibian farmer continues to raise cattle or tend a tract of land.

Farmers have embraced the responsibility, sometimes for generations, to feed Namibia. "At least once in a lifetime you will need a doctor, a lawyer, an architect - but every day, three times a day, you will need a farmer!" This famous, yet anonymous Argentinian quote, sums up the essence of farming and how vital it is.

*According to the Namibia Statistics Agency, agriculture and forestry is estimated to have recorded an increase of 1.6% in real value during the 3rd quarter Gross Domestic Product (GDP) review of 2016, compared to a decline of 15.5% during the 3rd quarter of 2015." **Meatco - Importance of Agriculture in Namibia***

Butchers or meat cutting technicians cut, prepare and sell meat in a butcher's shop or a supermarket. They order the animal carcasses from the wholesalers and package meat for display in refrigerators.

Butchers usually break down and bone animal carcasses to saleable cuts of meat for customers and cut and tray different styles and types of meat for display and sale. Some butchers wrap and weigh selected meat, for example steak, roasts or sausages. They need to ensure that meat products are cut to company and customer specifications.

Butchers also help to train other staff and are involved in forecasting customer needs and planning future meat requirements. They need to maintain a hygienic working environment, sharpen and maintain knives and butchery equipment and do stock-taking.

Butchers need to have skills in handling, preparing and presenting meat products. They need to have customer service and listening skills, and organizational ability. They also need to be able to calculate how much meat they need to get from a carcass in order to cover costs.

They need to know about different cuts and grades of meat, methods of cooking it and how long it will remain fresh. They need to know how to use knives and other butchery equipment safely. They should also be familiar with food hygiene legislation and regulations.

Satisfying Aspects

- being able to work at your own pace
- meeting and serving all kinds of people
- working with your hands
- the potential of owning your own business

Demanding aspects

- working long hours to purchase, prepare or process meat
- coping with the sights, sounds and smells of a butchery can be taxing
- working with dangerous machinery and tools

Requirements

- enjoy working with people and good customer relations
- friendly and helpful
- managerial skills
- keen business sense and flair for figures
- careful, accurate and safety-conscious
- able to follow instructions, but also able to use initiative
- good hand-eye coordination
- good health and able to stand on feet for long periods
- reasonable strength

School Subjects

- Prospective candidates should have at least an **HIGCSE/IGCSE** Grade 12 or equivalent qualification to be accepted for in-service training in Namibia.

In South Africa a Grade 9 or higher qualification is recommended to enter the field. For those who wish to attend the Apex Training Centre, a Grade 10 certificate is required.

Compulsory Subjects: None

Recommended Subjects: Life Sciences, Mathematics, Accounting

Many employers prefer learner butchers to have at least three years of secondary education in order to begin training. Pre-employment courses in meat retailing are also available.

Tertiary Education

In-service training usually provided by companies in the meat industry. In Namibia, the Hospitality Training Centre also offers a five-day course for butchers.

Candidates usually receive in-service training at meat retailers and supermarkets. While receiving in-service training, meat cutting technicians can follow courses at the Apex Training Centre in South Africa. The courses are designed for those already employed in the field.

Employer

People within the meat industry are usually employed at butcheries and abattoirs.

Job opportunities for skilled people seem favourable.



FINAL THOUGHTS

The next time you're wandering down the aisle of your favourite super market just imagine how many people in the world sweated, got up at the break of dawn, invested thousands of dollars and the hours it took just to bring that can of corn, bread or that banana to your store shelf.

If you enjoy eating three times a day — thank a farmer.



References :

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- NamCareer guide
- Pace careers

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