

# Dream Jobs: Ice cream maker

By Mark King, The Guardian, adapted by Newsela staff on 12.23.16

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A woman making ice cream. Nico De Pasquale Photography via Getty Images

Katy Mace and her assistant stir milk, cream, sugar, eggs and strawberries into a huge metal bowl. They pour the mixture into a giant ice cream machine. When it comes out 20 minutes later, after a lot of spinning and whirring, it has been cooled to minus 12 Celsius (10.4 Fahrenheit). Now it is ready to be poured into tubs. This is Downsview Farmhouse homemade ice cream.

## **Cream Rises To The Top**

Downsview Farm lies off a quiet road in the English countryside. Mace has been Downsview's chief ice cream maker for four years. Sarah Farnes, who owns the business, explains that the price of milk began falling five years ago. So, she needed a new product. Fresh ice cream was the result.

## **Banking On Ice Cream**

Mace was working in a bank when she met Sarah Farnes at the school their children attend. The demand for the ice cream grew too quickly for Farnes and her family to cope with. Soon, she offered the job of ice cream maker to Mace.

Most of the cattle at Downsview Farm give birth all year round, so there is a steady supply of fresh milk and cream. This means that two of the ice cream's four main ingredients move quickly from the herd of 160 cows to the tubs of ice cream.

"It really is incredibly fresh, although I never see the cows while making the ice cream," says Mace.

Mace says that being an ice cream maker is less stressful than her former job. However, the summers can get very busy. There are other challenges, as well.

"We make lots of flavors, but chocolate is the hardest. It's very thick and difficult to stir in," she says. "It's also the messiest. If you get the slightest bit on you, before you know it you find it's smeared everywhere, on your face, arms and legs."

### **All Mixed Up**

All the ingredients are mixed in the metal bowl by hand, sometimes using a thick-wired whisk mixing tool. It is then poured into the ice cream machine, which cost the farm £43,000 (\$53,000). The machine heats the mixture to 84 C (183.2 F) for pasteurization, which kills any bacteria. Then it cools it to about minus 12 C (10.4 F). The heating and cooling take 20 minutes.

Some flavors require additional ingredients, which must be stirred in by hand. Anything with added bits, like white chocolate chips or raspberries, takes longer to make.

Each batch Mace puts through the machine makes 10 liters (10.6 quarts) of ice cream. In one summer day, she will produce 20 to 25 batches. In winter, when demand falls, she might produce 20 batches a week.

### **Plain Vanilla And Beyond**

The ice cream is sold in small individual tubs (120 milliliters/4.1 ounces) and bigger pots (500 milliliters/16.9 ounces). A larger, 5-liter tub (5.3 quarts) is available for catering companies. The most popular flavors for those buying the small tubs are vanilla, strawberry, chocolate and honeycomb.

Once the ice cream has cooled in the machine, it oozes out at the bottom into a metal cylinder. Mace uses a hand crank to create a smooth stream of ice cream, which goes into the tubs. These tubs go straight into a freezer, ready to be sold to farm shops, cafes and restaurants.

Mace also helps develop new flavors. "We've had some strange ones," she laughs. Some of the most unusual flavors include parmesan ice cream, lavender flavor and even a soy sauce ice cream for a Chinese restaurant, she says.

## **Making Ice Cream Is Not A Piece Of Cake**

The list of 22 more recognizable flavors Mace makes includes pistachio, cinnamon, coconut and caramel. The daily grind of preparing the ice cream, mixing it, filling the tubs and then cleaning and sterilizing the equipment is not easy.

Still, Mace says the work can be exciting. It's not like working on a factory assembly line. For example, she recently helped local schoolchildren create new ice cream flavors for a competition. The winning ice cream will go on sale to raise money to fight cancer.