

Deakin University

Full name: Chrystal Yam
Year graduated from Deakin: 2007
Course name: Bachelor of Applied Science (Food Science & Nutrition) - Honours
Campus: Burwood Campus

What is your current job?

Nutritionist within the food industry working at Simplot Australia.

What does your job entail?

My role within the nutrition department as part of the Quality & Innovation division involves applying my knowledge and promoting understanding in food and nutrition. My daily activities are varied and I deal with most areas of the business from marketing and sales to procurement. I assist in the development of internal health and wellbeing initiatives, and with maintaining working partnerships with external organisations (Heart Foundation, national school canteens associations, etc). Other common daily tasks include assisting in packaging approval, monitoring health claims, assisting in product development projects, involvement in nutrition related materials (newsletters, brochures, websites, fact sheets) and assisting with reviews of current products.

What are the things you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy the flexibility and variability of my role. I deal with many different areas of the business and each day is different and I don't lose interest due to repetition. The advantage of working in a large company is that I have the opportunity to see how a large business is run and where I fit in the big picture.

What have been your career highlights to date?

I am fortunate to have helped develop an internal health and wellbeing program for employees and to have travelled to many of Simplot's manufacturing sites to coordinate this. I am occasionally involved in nutrition research projects in collaboration with notable Australian universities and it is great to use my research experience through Honours at Deakin. It is also an amazing feeling to see a product which you have worked so hard on sitting on the supermarket shelf. Most people don't realise how much hard work is involved to get a product on shelf!

What do you intend to do in the future?

My current role is a fantastic stepping stone into the food industry because it gives me the opportunity to learn all aspects of the food industry. I have no immediate plans to start a new position however I am interested in nutrition research. I am hoping to further my studies in the future through a Masters of Public Health.

How do you feel your Deakin course has helped your career – both in obtaining your current position, and in the future development of your career?

Deakin's reputation in the nutrition industry may have helped me with my current position. By studying food science and nutrition I have gained valuable knowledge which allows me to take any direction I choose – from the food industry to community health. Through completing my honours year I am a member of the Golden Key Association. I still have a strong relationship with Deakin through student placements for students studying Food Science and Nutrition as well as the Nutrition Society of Australia which is run by a number of Deakin lecturers.