



Dr Hazel MacTavish-West



Hazel admits she is a bit of a swot and always wanted to be a vet, loving animals, science and studying. Unfortunately just missing out on a Vet course and knowing that she wanted to study at Sydney University Hazel took up a place to study Agricultural Science with the view to swap to Vet after 1 year. However Hazel stuck with Ag Science and had a lightbulb moment during one lecture that described plants “switching on” production of chemicals to ward off attacks from fungi. “Who knew plants were so interesting, I was hooked.”

Some 30 years later Hazel has managed to carve out a career studying and sharing how industry can make money from “the things that make plants coloured”, all those chemicals behind the reason for eating 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables a day.

Hazel’s career has been a full and varied one. After finishing an Honours degree she worked for CSIRO on microalgae, then completed a PhD at UTAS on fragrance production in brown boronia flowers. She moved back to the UK with her young family and switched from academia to working in research facilities funded by industry and government, projects such as hydroponic medicinal herb production for use in skincare and how Alstroemeria flowers are produced.

Hazel then set up her own consultancy business to allow for more

flexible work around her two children but continuing in the field of plants and how we can benefit from them. Along the way Hazel also set up another business developing bath and body personal care products, well ahead of its time.

In 2010 Hazel moved back to Tasmania, having to really start all over again. This did not take long as projects happened and things developed. During this time Hazel realised she really enjoyed the process of product development having assisted in the development of products such as gins, potato salads, crunchy dried apple snacks and a series of Innovation Workshops just to name a few of her achievements.

“By understanding the science behind things, and taking both a scientific and a creative approach, and understanding business realities, we add value to businesses in a unique way. No two days are ever the same; I love it!”



Creative Food Innovator - VegDoctor

The Role	Prerequisites	Skills Needed	Salary Guide	Training options	Resources needed	Next career step
<p>Listening to people</p> <p>Identifying needs and opportunity</p> <p>Always observing food trends around the world</p> <p>Think outside the box to come up with new ideas</p> <p>Help businesses get funding</p> <p>Using scientific knowledge and pool of resources to deliver the best solution to the client</p> <p>Communicate the value of products and process</p>	<p>Ability to communicate</p> <p>Have an open mind</p> <p>A “can do” attitude</p> <p>Be a risk taker</p> <p>Commitment to people and process</p> <p>Integrity and confidentiality</p> <p>Love the unexpected</p> <p>Cope with variety</p> <p>Willingness to travel</p>	<p>Knowledge of plant chemistry or your chosen topic</p> <p>Diploma or degree is preferable</p> <p>Constantly seeking out new knowledge and new skills</p> <p>Being able to collaborate</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Self driven</p> <p>Able to absorb large amounts of information</p>	<p>Depends on size of enterprise and level and responsibilities</p> <p>(no guide given)</p>	<p>Diploma in Science or Agriculture</p> <p>Degree in Science or Agriculture</p>	<p>Car licence and transport a must</p> <p>Professional indemnity insurance</p> <p>In this casestudy:</p> <p>Membership of relevant associations</p> <p>Subscriptions to relevant journals</p> <p>Office/Lab space</p> <p>Computer, phone</p> <p>Good social media network</p>	<p>Develop within current enterprise that you work for</p> <p>Move to a role for a larger company or one in a different sector</p> <p>Set up a new business</p>