

## Statement of Purpose

I am Renita Correya, a 23-year old girl; hailing from Ahmedabad, Gujarat; popularly known as the Manchester city of India. I enjoy reading fiction books; especially historical fiction, cooking and playing basketball. As for my schooling; I completed my 10<sup>th</sup> grade from Mount Carmel High School with a 93.66% and 12<sup>th</sup> grade from St. Xavier's High School Loyola hall with 81%. My love for Science and the biological systems kept pushing me to take up Biotechnology as my major for my undergraduate program from St. Xavier's College. It was a perfect blend of different disciplines of sciences which helped me realize what my true calling is. We had the opportunity to study Biochemistry, Microbiology, Fermentation Biotechnology, Chemistry, Molecular Biology, Human physiology, Animal and plant culture, Metabolism and Immunology. It was during one of those fermentation classes that I realized the magnificent intersection of Biotechnology and Food Technology. This proved to be my eureka moment as it started becoming increasingly clear that this intersection held tremendous potential when it came to food quality, innovation and sustainability. This fuelled my curiosity about the complexities of food production, quality control and preservation. I completed my under graduation with a 7.44 CGPA and dived right into my next chapter. I began with my PG Diploma in Food Quality and Safety Management from MIDFT College, Mehsana under IGNOU. Thus; began my foundation for Food Technology- by deepening my understanding of food chemistry, food safety and quality, food laws, and the intricate processes of production, packaging and preservation. This was where my deep fascination with food and science truly met and gave birth to a magnificent dream. I passed the course with 77.49%. This also was the time when I worked on a survey project to understand the effects of food additives (Monosodium Glutamate) on palatability and satiety levels. Additionally, this improved the way I apprehended the effects of colour, flavour and texture upon the palatability of food and its shelf life. It proved to be a cornerstone in my pursuit to understand methods of preservation and fortification and to find ways to monetize these principles and come up with innovative product ideas that would help meet the daily nutrient uptake of the modern busy individual.

In order to understand the food industry better, I applied for an internship at AmulFed in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. This experience helped me bridge the gap between academia and industry but more importantly, pushed me out of my comfort zone. It was a wonderful opportunity where I was able to grow my network and learn about surplus milk handling, ice-cream production, butter making and packaging, milk powder processing,

microbial/chemical/analytical quality control during batch preparation and final product and dairy wastewater treatment. Round about this time; I was selected for the esteemed hands-on internship program conducted by the Department of Biotechnology, Government of India (LSSSDC). I was blessed with the opportunity to work as a quality control biologist alongside many brilliant minds and experienced professors at Parul University, Vadodara. It was instrumental in updating me with the current analytical instruments and techniques. This was a transformative 3-month journey that enriched my professional and personal growth, where every day came with its own set of challenges. It provided me with the opportunity to collaborate with like-minded individuals, learn to navigate diverse opinions and reach conclusions as a team. Engaging with industry experts and participating in dynamic brainstorming sessions fuelled my creativity and innovation. Apart from building my confidence and network, my days at Parul University boosted my problem-solving ability and adaptability. For the past 2 months, I have been working as a content writer at Zealous System in Ahmedabad. This new journey I have embarked on has significantly enhanced my abilities to manage time, organize tasks, and pay attention to detail. It has also improved my planning and communication skills with various teams, honed my research capabilities, and enabled me to articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively.

My love for food or rather cooking developed from a very young age, but it was not until my undergraduate days that it dawned upon me to combine my love for science and food to pursue a career. It all began with a whiff of my mother's aromatic Thrissur-style chicken curry, which turned into a hobby and then blossomed into a profound curiosity about bigger questions like what makes my favourite prawn pickle from going bad or why my coffee sometimes curdle. This wonderment eventually led me to apply for a Master's degree in Food Science and Technology at the esteemed University of Hohenheim. Getting accepted to the university was nothing short of a dream come true! Germany's leading and oldest University in Food Sciences and Agricultural research opens up a plethora of opportunities to refine my technical skills and set a strong foundation for my career. German universities are renowned for its cutting-edge research facilities and strong emphasis on practical experience which will open up doors for me to diversify my skill sets. I plan on making the best use of one among the several research project groups like AMAZE-P, Carb-Q-4-Health and projects funded by DFG. I wish to contribute to one of these prestigious research groups and work towards providing solutions for the safe processing of products as well as explore techniques to extract functional ingredients. What really captivated my attention was the several opportunities for hands-on

learning in the form of internships at renowned industries and collaborations with the university's industry partners. This would help me grow my network of experts and bring me closer to the food industry where I can make real change. The University of Hohenheim, especially the Department of Natural Sciences boasts a handful of small-scale industries on campus where students can convert their classroom learning into innovative solutions. Moreover, the diverse and engaging curriculum at the college captured my attention right away. I am excited to explore modules such as Food Process Design and Food Rheology, as well as the diverse range of electives especially Encapsulation of Functional Food Components, Food Product Development and Drying and Granulation. Additionally, Stuttgart is home to several prominent industries and start-ups as well as a host to many industrial conferences and trade fairs that offer opportunities for students to connect with professionals to explore the latest innovations, industry trends and learning opportunities from the best.

Coming from a country known for its diversity and cultures, I have realized the immense power of food – the power to spread joy and bind people together. I wish to be part of this industry and help make a difference in the lives of the multitude. I strongly believe in the power of innovation and bio-functionality of food which also resonates with the vision here at Universität Hohenheim. During my tenure at the esteemed university, I look forward to working and contributing towards the special nutritional needs of those affected with digestive and eating disorders like celiac and for those affected with diseases like diabetes mellitus, obesity and cardiovascular diseases. My focus is to explore the potential of bioactive compounds in food that could be instrumental in preventing diseases and help act as supplements to cure them. Recent news about health drinks being falsely branded has underscored the immense importance of quality control and the need for healthy, clean products in the market. The expertise and experience I will gain during my Master's degree will significantly guide me in advancing product standards in India's dynamic market. I aim to contribute by improving product quality and introducing innovative, gut-friendly, and environmentally sustainable alternatives. This knowledge will enable me to address current market challenges and promote better practices in the food industry back in India. My goal is to work as a product developer for one of the many multinational food and beverage companies in India - Hindustan Unilever, Amul, ITC, PepsiCo India, and Mondelez India to name a few. In the long term, I envision becoming an auditor and rendering the service and expertise that I gather during my career.

I am confident that with my hard work and never-say-die attitude, I will be able to uphold the academic excellence of the University as well as work towards positively contributing to the projects undertaken by the University. I am grateful for your patience and careful evaluation of my application. I eagerly look forward to joining the diverse and vibrant community at Universität Hohenheim.

Thank You,

Renita Correya.