



Milk Markets Overview

Our most recent fixed milk price offer at 38 cpl was 5 cents lower than the 43 cpl offered a month prior. This is what price volatility looks like in CPL terms and is a clear reflection of the uncertainty that currently pervades the market.

EU milk production in January was down 1% but when you adjust for solids it was only down 0.2%. Germany and France are currently running ahead of last year. Farm gate prices are higher as co-ops across Europe are struggling for supply to fill factories. It was a similar story in the US where headline milk production was down 1.3% but when adjusted for solids it was flat. We must exercise caution when examining milk production figures, as it is the milk solids that are of significance from the supply perspective.

Demand from China is weak with domestic milk production continuously growing. Demand from Mexico, the second biggest importer of dairy, is also weak. There have been pockets of demand from the Middle East and North Africa but in overall terms, demand remains subdued.

Leading Milk Price Payment

Kerry Creameries Limited, following consultation with the Board of Kerry Co-Operative Creameries Limited, has paid an additional 0.90 cent per litre (Vat Inc., at Kerry average solids) in respect of all qualifying milk solids supplied under the Kerry milk supply contract for 2023. This payment, together with the payments Kerry Creameries Limited made for milk supplied throughout 2023, more than fulfils Kerry's commitment to pay the Leading Milk Price on a Like-For-Like Basis.

Fodder Arrives on Farms

Over recent weeks, we have been engaging with milk suppliers regarding fodder stocks on their respective farms, offering guidance and support as deemed necessary. As an integral part of our commitment to supporting our milk suppliers, we have facilitated the procurement of fodder for suppliers encountering shortages. Initial loads were dispatched and delivered to farms across our catchment from Thursday 11th April.

Spring Grazing in Rathmore

A spring grazing management walk was held recently on the farm of Conor Creedon, Rathmore, Co. Kerry. Despite challenging grazing conditions, Conor managed to graze cows post-morning milking, covering 35% of the milking platform. He maintained daily assessments of the situation, endeavouring to capitalise on grazing opportunities whenever feasible. While nitrogen fertiliser application lagged targets, 30 Kg N/ha had been applied and 70% of the farm boasted a 13% clover content in the sward, indicating robust pasture health. Clover integration has been facilitated through both full reseeds and overseeding initiatives. Conor noted that April typically presents favorable conditions for overseeding, given optimal soil moisture levels.



Building Fodder Stocks

The overarching objective for farms at present should be to procure an adequate supply of feed to satisfy herd requirements from the current period until mid-April 2025. This feed may be sourced in the form of silage or through increased grass production. Notably, a high perennial ryegrass sward exhibits significantly heightened productivity during the spring season.

Findings from a recent Teagasc study indicate that implementing a new high ryegrass sward has the

potential to amplify dry matter production by 2.7t/ha (equivalent to 6 bales of silage/acre/annum). The first step when reseeding is to identify the poorest performing paddocks on your farm and target the drier more fertile areas for reseeding. Prioritise the reseeding process to optimise turnaround time, aiming for completion within six weeks to minimise the duration during which the paddock remains ungrazed. Given the adverse grazing conditions this spring, stitching in may present a cost-effective method for introducing clover and ryegrass.



KERRY SOCIAL FARMING

WORKING TOGETHER!

Kerry Social Farming (KSF) offers a shared service platform that facilitates practical farming experiences and fosters social integration for individuals with physical and intellectual disabilities, acquired brain injuries, and those engaging with mental health services, all within their immediate localities.

In line with Kerry's longstanding commitment to community welfare, we take pride in our support of initiatives like KSF. Through our Evolve Dairy Sustainability Programme, we are pleased to allocate dedicated funding to sustain this voluntary Social Farming model, further contributing to the well-being of our community members.

Host Dairy Farm Focus

Bernie O'Donoghue works alongside her husband Muiris on their spring calving dairy farm on Valentia Island. Bernie took up Social Farming in 2021 and during the busy calving season Patrick O'Sullivan loves to help out. Bernie and Patrick bucket feed, and sometimes bottle feed, new born calves. Bernie is delighted to witness the sense of enjoyment Patrick gains when the calf he feeds devours the milk and to see how confident he has become in his role on the farm. Patrick grew up on a farm in the local South Kerry area and at weekends farms at home with his brother. Farming has always been a part of Patrick's life; it is his passion and his interest. Kerry Social Farming and Bernie and Muiris's caring nature and commitment to the project

enables Patrick to engage with this passion through his day services.

Patrick visits the O'Donoghue farm on one morning a week over the calving period from early February into May. Patrick has become extremely comfortable feeding the dairy calves and enjoys being able to watch milking from a safe distance. When calving is finished and the calves are reared in Valentia, Patrick attends Mary Dalys Farm, another host farm in the Cahersiveen area.



Bernie O'Donoghue pictured with Patrick O'Sullivan and Piper the dog.

Kerry Social Farming welcomes new host farmers to support the growing demand for the service in the county. For further information or to become a host farmer contact Joseph McCrohan.

**Email: jmccrohan@skdp.net | Mobile 087 2849165
www.kerrysocialfarming.ie**

Kerry Agribusiness Partners with Swyft Energy

Kerry Agribusiness has partnered with Swyft Energy, one of Ireland's largest installers of Solar PV, to provide access to solar panels and battery storage solutions to its suppliers. Swyft Energy, whose co-founder and director hails from Causeway in North Kerry, manage the entire solar PV process for farmers, all the way from design through to installation, TAMS application and aftercare.

Over the past several years, dairy farmers have been feeling the impact of increased electricity rates. While electricity prices have come down slightly over the past number of months, rates are still on average 53% higher than what they were in 2021 and are unlikely to return there any time soon.

Farmers have been turning to solar PV as a solution to help reduce electricity costs and increase profitability. With a 60% TAMS grant, Accelerated Capital Allowances and the ability to sell excess solar PV to the grid, a solar PV system can now pay for itself in 3 to 5 years.

PJ O'Halloran, a dairy farmer in Ballyheigue, made the switch to solar PV with Swyft Energy. PJ's 55 cow dairy farm consumes approximately 11,500kWh of electricity a year. The final design chosen for PJ's farm consisted of a 9.52kWp solar PV system, mounted on the corrugated

roof of the dairy. The system also included the installation of a hot water diverter to divert surplus generation from the panels to his hot water tank which provides sufficient hot water for cleaning, along with battery storage of 10kWh to maximise self-sufficiency.

2023 Results:

- Solar PV Production: 8,320kWh
- Annual Electricity Savings: €2,040
- 2.9 tons CO2 avoided per year (559 trees planted)

Based on 2023 savings, the solar PV system will have paid for itself in 3 years, with the system producing free electricity for 25+ years after that.

To get started on your solar PV journey, call John from Swyft Energy on 087-1142982 for a free consultation.

Please consult enclosed flyer for more information and to avail of a Kerry Agribusiness discount voucher of €500 on Swyft Solar PV installation.



PJ O'Halloran