

Benefits of Early Milk Recording

John Galvin is dairy farming on the Dingle Peninsula for the past 35 years.

He was one of the earliest participants to join milk recording in 1990 and since then has completed 10 milk recordings each year. John completes his first milk recording in February, which allows him to evaluate the effectiveness of his dry cow management and also to identify cows with high SCC in early lactation which can then be promptly managed.

He uses the colour coded milk recording reports to track cow performance and productivity. Two milk recordings are completed in advance of the breeding season - providing valuable information to inform sire selection and identify best cows for breeding replacement heifers and cows to be bred to beef. The main aim is to boost constituent performance throughout the herd. John also puts strong emphasis on selecting bulls with a positive health sub-index.



Spring Grazing

Spring grazing is worth €550 per week for every 30 cows out grazing.

February weather has presented a great opportunity to kick start the grazing season. This has allowed calved cows get out to grass and utilise this high-quality feed. Replacing silage and offering a cheap source of protein in the cows diet. February grazing and N application will help provide an ample grass supply in the 2nd rotation in April. No doubt we will get periods of challenging weather again this spring but remember that in two 3-hour grazing periods, cows can consume 90% of what they would eat if out fulltime.



While poaching needs to be managed remember that ryegrass is a robust plant, don't be too cautious! The aim is to graze one third of the farm by March 1st or March 7th on heavier soils. Use the Spring Rotation Planner available on PastureBase to monitor your progress. Ensure to graze

paddocks out well whenever ground conditions allow as this will ensure high quality grass for when cows are at peak milk yield.

MILK MARKETS OVERVIEW

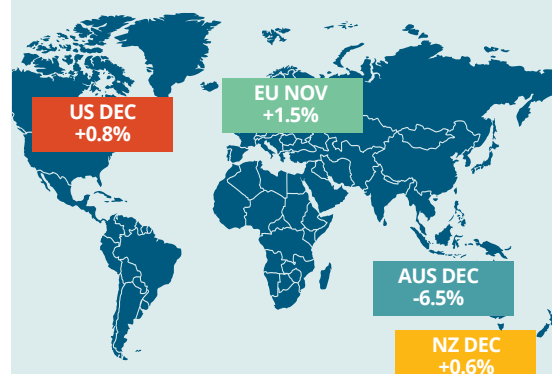
Global dairy prices have been falling since mid-2022 and have fallen even more sharply in January (particularly in the EU). The drivers of falling prices have been plentiful milk in Europe, poor demand due to the high prices globally and particularly weak demand out of China. The first two weeks in February have seen an improvement in Butter, Gouda and Mozzarella prices with Skim Milk Powder flat and cheddar continuing to fall.

Global Supply

The market expects that as milk prices fall in Europe and US, production will follow. Milk prices in Europe are only beginning to come down and we haven't seen any reduction in volume thus far. The weather in New Zealand has improved and there is more milk available compared to earlier in the season. The US herd size has reduced as farmers there respond to lower milk prices. We expect that the growth in milk production will fall.

Global Demand

The big question is always around China. Chinese lock down and New year are now over. China bought a little more product at the most recent GDT auction, but domestic milk production is very strong and stocks of Whole Milk Powder are high. Chinese imports need to start improving soon to halt the current decline in prices.



Early Lactation Nutrition

Cows will inevitably experience some level of negative energy balance post calving, causing cows to lose body condition. Research has shown that excessive BCS loss can lead to reduced milk yield/solids, poor fertility, metabolic diseases such as ketosis and increased incidences of lameness.

The key to minimising the amount of BCS loss is to maximise energy intake. The most effective way to achieve this is to prioritise the feeding of high energy feeds. Dairy cows being fed fulltime indoors on grass silage may experience an energy deficit. When feeding a grass silage of approximately 70 DMD – the average dairy cow will need 7–8 kgs of concentrate per day in early lactation.

The table below is a helpful tool to calculate feeding requirements based on litres of milk produced.

Housing Status	Kg/L
Indoor Fulltime	0.33
On-Off Grazing	0.22
Out Fulltime	0.11

Monitor and manage cows that have issues eg. low BCS

- Increase feeding of concentrates/once a day milking (reduces milk yield and improves energy balance)
- Ensure cows are on good quality silage post-calving and have adequate feed space.

For more information on the Bloom Feed range please contact your local Sales/Branch Manager.

Kerry Agribusiness Dairy2Beef Campaign

An accessible method of selling and sourcing healthy dairy-beef calves

- Readily available genetic data (Tag No./Age/Sex/Sire Breed/CBV Value)
- Filter calves to specific areas and county
- Real-time age and breed specific guide prices from the mart

Calves must be sold and purchased through the Kerry Agribusiness/ICBF APP to qualify for the Evolve programme

Dairy Farmer

Incentive: **REBATE TO MILK ACCOUNT**

€50 if ≥ 5 calves sold

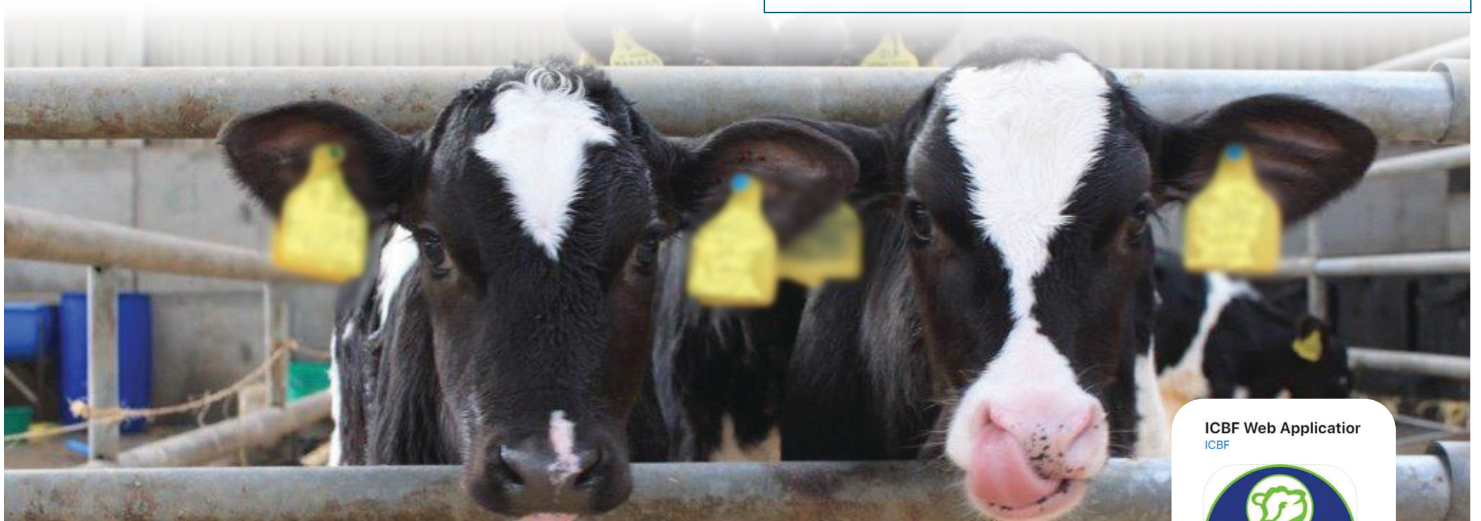
€100 if ≥ 10 calves sold

Dairy-Beef Farmer

Incentive: **STORE VOUCHER**

€10/calf purchased ≤ 15 calves

€100 if 90% of calves purchased are kept on farm for ≥ 6 months - min 10 calves



DOWNLOAD THE ICBF APP

Click Menu > Services > Stock Express > Kerry Agribusiness > Buying/Selling
For more information please contact your local Milk Quality Manager.



If you have any questions/comments on the Newsletter please CONTACT US VIA EMAIL AT enquiries@kerryagribusiness.ie