



Late lactation, the most cost-effective time to rectify cow BCS on farm.

Poor weather in the spring, which delayed turnout on most farms, followed by drought like conditions during the early summer and an extremely wet July/August has resulted in challenging grazing conditions throughout the year.

The demanding grazing conditions have led to a heightened necessity for diet supplementation. However, due to continuously high input costs, the provision of additional concentrate in the diet has been somewhat challenging. This has had a knock-on effect on some farms where cow body condition is not where it needs to be at this stage in the year.

To ensure that cows are dried off in the correct BCS, assess the herd now and increase feeding rate where needed. Feeding in late lactation will increase milk sales and improve cow BCS.

The quality and especially energy levels of grass is falling. This, in combination with poor weather and reduced daylight hours, will have an impact on both milk constituents and cow condition. Therefore, supplementation in late lactation is very favourable.

Kerry Agribusiness is currently running a 2023 promotion on the Bloom XTEND range.

This high energy concentrate is designed to balance autumn grass and silage. Bloom Elite XTEND contains Yeast and Mag12 to ease the transition on to grass silage and support higher feeding rates as well as a high-quality blend of organic trace elements to support cows through a variable period.

Please call your Branch/Sales Manager for more information.

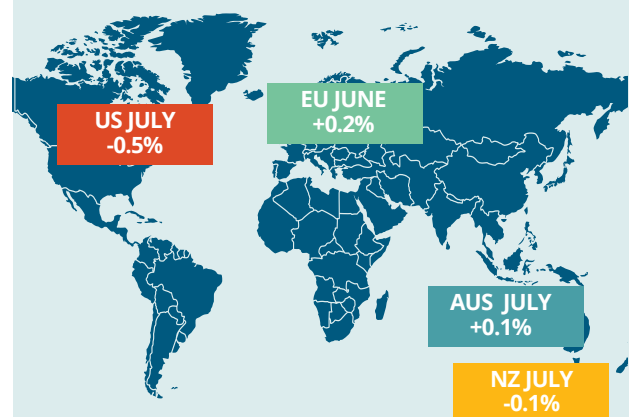
SEPTEMBER MILK MARKETS

Following long periods of decline, prices in Europe and GDT have been slightly up in recent days. The main driver of the positive sentiment is coming from the supply-side with milk production in Germany and France slowing significantly.

Global Supply

Supply growth is slowing with US, NZ and Argentinian milk production lower than expected in the month of July. Lower margins at farm level and the risk of El Nino should keep milk production down as we move toward and into 2024.

New Zealand milk season has had a poor start. Weather and pasture growth are good, so the sluggish start is likely due to the high cost of production. New Zealand farms are highly indebted so high interest rates, among other costs, coupled with a lower forecasted milk price should ensure milk production growth is slow this season. US cow numbers are falling but feed is getting cheaper so should offset some of the decline in herd size. Weekly data coming from France and Germany shows that milk production is down and is driving some small price increases in Europe as buyers look for cover.



Global Demand

The demand situation for dairy is still poor. Algeria and Mexico are taking advantage of some weaker prices, but China, Southeast Asia and Japan are still slower than previous years. The weaker demand requires milk production to fall further before we see a meaningful increase in commodity prices.

Evolve

Dairy Sustainability Programme

Protecting Our Waters

The main pressures on freshwater systems from agriculture are:

- Run-off of nutrients (N & P)
- Sediment
- Pesticides
- Point sources from farmyards

With the Protecting Our Waters initiative, Evolve 2023 hopes to address the on-going challenges associated with water quality across the catchment by supporting suppliers in identifying potential problem areas and advising of methods to improve local water quality.

All suppliers can act now and complete a free on-farm water quality assessment. Kerry ASSAP advisors Terry O'Mahony and Caoilfhionn Dodd can help identify potential pressures on your farm which could be adversely impacting water quality in your area. Upon completion of agreed actions set out by Terry/Caoilfhionn you will be eligible to receive a €200 Evolve payment.

To avail of this free on-farm water quality assessment, contact your local area office for sign up.



Avail of a free on-farm water quality assessment. Kerry water quality advisors help identify any potential pressures which could adversely be impacting water quality on your farm. Upon completion of agreed actions receive the €200 Evolve payment.

John, Mary & Ian Fox, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick underwent a water quality assessment earlier in the year and completed two actions to avail of the €200 Evolve payment. A silage slab was repaired, and a drain was widened to reduce effluent run-off. Willow and native trees were planted along the watercourse to intercept and filter nutrients before entering the nearby stream.



Evidence of Repaired Silage Slab

Ian's aim is to farm in an efficient and sustainable way. They are always mindful of their impact on water quality and Evolve has supported them on this journey.



Willow and native trees planted by Ian

Nitrates Derogation limits have been reduced from 250Kg organic N/ha to 220 Kg N/ha as of the 1st of January 2024.

All farmers now need assess their own situation (N & P levels) with their advisor, to ensure that the farm will be compliant with these new regulations going forward.

Correct Soil pH and top up Potash

Research shows that liming acidic soils increases grass production by 1.0t DM/ha. This is valued at €180/t DM.

An application of 5t/ha (2t/ac) of ground limestone to correct soil pH represents a cost of €25/ha/year over 5 years. The return on investment from lime gives €7 worth of extra grass for every €1 invested in lime. At least 35% of ground limestone (350 kg/tonne) is fast acting with the remaining broken down in the soil in the medium term (6-24 months).

Recent Teagasc soil test analysis found that 42%, 47% and 36% of samples were suboptimal for Potassium (K) in Kerry, Limerick and Clare. To maximise the efficient use and return from applied nitrogen, it is important to maintain sufficient soil K levels and apply K regularly based on recent soil analysis. Typical offtake for grazing is 32 units/ac, 100 units/ac for 1st cut silage, 60 units/ac for 2nd cut silage and 30 units/ac for surplus bales.

For those incorporating clover into swards remember that both red and white clover are particularly sensitive to shortages of potash.