Dairy Update.

16 September 2020



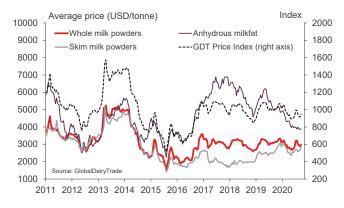
Waxing and waning... and waxing.

- Dairy auction prices posted solid gains overnight.
- The positive result broke a run of three consecutive price falls.
- The result reinforces our 2020/21 milk price forecast of \$6.50/kg.

GlobalDairyTrade Auction Results, 16 September 2020

	Change since last auction	Prices USD/ tonne
Whole Milk Powder (WMP)	3.2%	\$2,985
Skim Milk Powder (SMP)	8.4%	\$2,889
Anhydrous Milk Fat (AMF)	2.0%	\$3,910
Butter	-1.4%	\$3,282
GDT Price Index	3.6%	947

Dairy prices



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Dairy auction prices firmed overnight. Key WMP prices posted a 3.2% lift, while overall auction prices were a touch firmer, lifting 3.6%.

The result reverses some of the cumulative fall over the August and the first September auction. WMP prices now sit 8.5% below their recent peak in July, while overall prices are around 4% below. Looking back to the pre-Covid levels, WMP and overall prices are 6.8% and 10.4% lower, respectively.

Last night's 3.2% WMP price fall was better than our expectations. We had pencilled in unchanged prices, although futures pricing had pointed to a modest price increase.

Meanwhile, skim milk powder (SMP) prices continued to outperform, jumping 8.4%. The overnight lift was the fourth consecutive SMP price gain. Recall at the last auction we highlighted that SMP or protein prices are holding up relative to milk fat prices since Covid and this latest auction reinforced this pattern. Indeed, SMP prices now sit just 6% below pre-Covid levels, while milk fat (butter and anhydrous milk fat) prices remain around 20% below.

Prices continue to wax and wane as expected

The pattern of price falls followed by prices rises is in line with what we have been expecting. Covid outbreaks over August and early September put pressure on market confidence and in turn on prices. But as Covid case numbers settle again, confidence has returned to dairy markets, and prices have stabilised once again.

From here, we expect this pattern to continue. By and large most key dairy markets (notably China) continue to manage Covid well, but outbreaks are likely to occur from time to time. On the flipside, if the virus surges in key markets, then prices are likely to fall below recent ranges.

Stepping back, global dairy demand, particularly from China, continues to underpin dairy prices. We do note though that milk fat prices are softer given their exposure to restaurant and café demand more than other products. On the supply side, global supply growth is relatively contained.



We remain cautiously optimistic on the outlook, but risks remain high.

All up, we remain cautiously optimistic on the dairy price outlook. The result overnight is consistent with our \$6.50/kg milk price forecast for 2020/21. Note in the short term, we have allowed for prices to fall as New Zealand production rises towards its peak, before prices firm again later in the season.

However, it's still early days in the season, and the uncertainties around the Covid impact through the full dairy season remain large. On this basis, we recommend that farmers approach the season with 'eyes wide open' and continue to closely follow dairy market developments.

Farmgate milk price forecasts

	2019/20		2020/21	
	Westpac	Fonterra	Westpac	Fonterra
Milk price	\$7.15	\$7.10-\$7.20	\$6.50	\$5.90-\$6.90

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