Dairy Update.

4 March 2020

GlobalDairyTrade Auction Results, 4 March 2020

	Change since last auction	Prices USD/ tonne
Anhydrous Milk Fat (AMF)	-1.7%	\$4,302
Butter	1.0%	\$4,131
Butter Milk Powder (BMP)	-	\$2,718
Cheddar	-4.7%	\$4,285
Lactose	5.7%	\$871
Rennet Casein	0.5%	\$9,891
Skim Milk Powder (SMP)	-3.2%	\$2,747
Whole Milk Powder (WMP)	-0.5%	\$2,952
GDT Price Index	-1.2%	966

Farmgate milk price forecasts

	2019/20		2020/21
	Westpac	Fonterra	Westpac
Milk price	\$7.20	\$7.00-\$7.60	\$7.30

Dairy prices



Imre Speizer, Market Strategist +64 9 336 9929 Last night's GlobalDairyTrade auction saw prices for most products fall, the headline index down 1.2%.

Our key export product, whole milk powder, fell only 0.5% - a smaller fall than yesterday's futures market predictions of a 3%-4% fall. At US\$2952, it is at the lowest level since February 2019.

Skimmed milk powder prices fell 3.2%, butter rose 1.0%, anhydrous milk fats fell 1.7%, and cheddar cheese fell 4.7%.

Last night's results suggest the coronavirus outbreak continues to affect dairy commodities, albeit moderately so far. Since the outbreak gripped global financial markets in late January, whole milk powder prices have fallen 8.7%. In comparison, Brent crude oil has fallen 20.4%, and copper has fallen 9.9%.

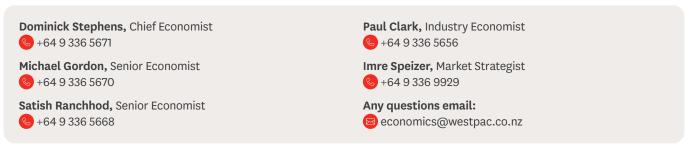
Looking ahead, the coronavirus outbreak poses both positive and negative risks to demand. Slower activity could crimp demand for dairy inputs to other products, but a renewed focus on nutrition could boost milk demand. North Asian demand at last night's auction was lower than usual, but demand from South East Asia and Oceania was higher.

On the supply side, persistently dry conditions in the North Island and flooding in the southern South Island could see milk production fall short of what the market is expecting. Against that, Canterbury and Otago, where irrigation is widespread, have reported good growing conditions. DCANZ data shows January national milk solid production was 1.1% higher than in January 2019, and the season to date (Jun-Jan) is 0.5% higher than the previous comparable period. Overall, there hasn't been any strong evidence of a supply shortfall to date.

The futures market for the 2019/20 farmgate milk price has been stuck at \$7.20/kg since early February, unsurprising given 70% of the season's production is known (80% if you include February), as are most of the season's sales. That is in line with our own forecast for this season of \$7.20. For the next season, we retain our forecast of \$7.30/kg, based on prices gradually recovering from coronavirus effects in the coming months, although futures markets remain more pessimistic at \$6.80.



Contact the Westpac research team.



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