



Milk Markets Overview

Dairy markets across Europe have softened in recent weeks, with a more cautious tone now evident across commodity markets. Butter and skim milk powder have come under pressure, while whey has shown greater resilience.

Overall market sentiment has eased from the more positive outlook seen earlier in the year. This reflects ongoing uncertainty around energy and input costs, which continue to impact both farm margins and processor costs. Recent Global Dairy Trade (GDT) results also signal a weaker market trend, with fats coming under more pressure than proteins.

Global Supply

Milk production remains strong across the main exporting regions.

- Milk output in parts of Europe, including France and Germany, has eased slightly, which may indicate that peak production occurred earlier this year due to the impact of blue tongue. This continues to add uncertainty to milk supply patterns in a number of European countries, making production trends more difficult to predict.
- Milk supplies from New Zealand and the United States remain robust, adding to overall global availability.

Global Demand

- Demand outside China has remained relatively steady.
- China has yet to show any meaningful recovery in demand, with domestic milk prices remaining subdued.
- Adequate local milk supply in China is reducing import requirements, which continues to weigh on global dairy demand.

Loc8 Code & point8 App - Supporting Rural Access and Farm Safety

Loc8 Code is an Irish location-coding system that helps farmers and rural businesses ensure people can find remote farm yards and buildings, particularly where standard addresses or Eircodes may not lead to the right location or access point. This can be especially useful for farms with long driveways, multiple entrances or remote locations.

The **point8 app** is the recommended way to use Loc8 Code. It allows farmers to create and share a precise location code for their key farm location using GPS or by tapping a map. This makes it easier for contractors, vets, milk collection, service providers and emergency services to reach the correct location quickly and safely.

The new point8 native app has been developed with a strong farm and rural safety focus. This version was commissioned by NEWKD's farm family committee, funded by the Department of Agriculture, Food & the Marine, and built by Loc8 Code using its own technology. In addition to navigation features, it provides added support for on-farm safety, especially working alone.

The point8 app is available on smartphones and Loc8 Code is also supported on many Garmin satnav devices, making it suitable for use in farm vehicles and machinery.

For more information and to access the app, visit www.loc8.ie or scan QR code.



www.loc8.ie

Future Focused Dairying Programme

The **Future Focused Dairying (FFD) Programme**, introduced as part of the **Evolve RegenDairy programme** in the recent Evolve RegenDairy Information Booklet, is designed to support the long-term future of grass-based, sustainable dairy farming across our catchment.



FFD focuses on strengthening the resilience of farm businesses, supporting people at all stages of their farming journey, and building confidence in the sustainability and reputation of the dairy sector. It also aims to help ensure dairy farming remains a viable, attractive and rewarding career, while supporting generational transition and providing options for those considering stepping back from active farming.

For a full overview of the programme, please refer to the Evolve RegenDairy Information Booklet or speak to a member of our Agribusiness Quality or Sustainability team.

Grass, Nutrition and Breeding: Key Actions for the Weeks Ahead

With turnout well underway on many farms, now is a critical time to manage grass, nutrition and cow condition to protect milk solids performance and set cows up for breeding.

Grassland Management: Stay on Track

- Where first rotation is almost complete but grass supply or ground conditions are challenging, start the second round as planned.
- Target a 25-day rotation, using supplements where needed to bridge any grass deficit until growth improves.
- Avoid letting farm cover drop below 600kg DM/ha, as recovery becomes difficult once covers fall too low.

If turnout was significantly delayed and high pre-grazing covers remain:

- Mix first and second round grazing to increase cow daily energy intake.
- When conditions allow, remove heavy paddocks for bales. Grazing heavy covers into May can significantly suppress milk solids.

Grass Intake Drives Profitability

- Grass remains the cheapest feed on the farm and has the biggest impact on margin.
- As cows approach peak yield and breeding, aim for intakes of at least 18kg DM/cow/day of high-quality grass to maximise milk solids and control feed costs.
- Spring 2026 has again highlighted the importance of high-quality silage.
 - At least 50% of silage for spring-calving herds should exceed 74% DMD.
 - Prioritise quality for first-cut silage, particularly for early lactation cows.

Prepare Now for Breeding

Breeding season is approaching fast, so preparation is key:

- Order AI straws as soon as possible.
- Tail-paint cows to identify heats and pinpoint non-cycling cows.
- Monitor body condition score, addressing problems early.
- Late-calving or thin cows may benefit from once-a-day milking to reduce energy demand and support condition ahead of breeding.

Nutrition and Youngstock Performance

- Nutrition plays a central role in fertility.
- For in-calf heifers:
 - Check weights against target.
 - Get heifers to grass where possible.
 - Where animals are behind target, continue supplementation, typically around 2kg of a high-protein concentrate on average silage.

Repair and Protect Damaged Paddocks

Where paddocks were damaged during first grazing:

- Aim to graze them in dry conditions during the second round, even at lighter covers, to aid recovery.
- Avoid rolling, which can compound damage.
- Where available, apply phosphorus to encourage tillering and sward repair.
- If P is unavailable, apply watery slurry or parlour washings (up to 2,000 gallons/acre) when conditions allow.
- Overseeding with clover can speed recovery and help reduce future nitrogen fertiliser requirements.





Pictured at the recent MTU Tralee Careers Day are: Kalum Buckley, Redmond Horan (Agribusiness), Claire Power, Ava Barrett and Niamh O'Sullivan (Agribusiness).

Feed for Fertility: Propak Fertility Nut

Good fertility is essential for a profitable dairy system and is built before breeding begins. Nutrition, body condition, cow health and stress management all play a key role in achieving strong pregnancy rates.

Many herds with fertility challenges are producing high milk volumes but are under nutritional pressure, particularly in early lactation. Key nutritional factors affecting fertility include:

- **Energy balance** – negative energy can delay cycling and weaken heat expression
- **Protein utilisation** – excess rumen ammonia due to poor protein utilisation places pressure on the liver, impacting hormone production and embryo survival
- **Trace minerals** – essential for ovulation, heat expression and holding to service

Propak Fertility Nut: key benefits

Propak Fertility Nut is designed specifically for herds with potential fertility issues while maintaining milk yield and solids:

- High energy: **0.99 UFL**
- Balanced protein: **14% crude protein**
- Fully organic trace minerals for improved availability
- Ammonia binder to support conception
- Live yeast (Yea-Sacc), rumen buffer and Megalac for rumen stability and energy density

Feeding rate

- **2.5 – 4.5 kg per cow per day**
- Fits easily into existing feeding systems

Good fertility is built, not fixed, and nutrition plays a central role in getting cows back in calf efficiently.

For further information, please contact your local **Sales Liaison Manager**.

Building Capability for a More Sustainable Dairy Sector

As part of our ongoing commitment to supporting education for sustainable dairy farming, Kerry Dairy Ireland will again deliver the Level 7 Certificate in Sustainable Dairy Development in 2026. The programme reflects our continued focus on equipping milk suppliers with the knowledge and practical tools needed to strengthen the long-term sustainability and resilience of their farms.

The 12-week, part-time programme will run from September to December 2026 and is delivered at Level 7 on the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). It combines online learning with a series of in-person sessions, offering flexibility while maintaining strong engagement and practical relevance.

The programme addresses the key environmental priorities facing modern dairy farming, with modules covering:

- Greenhouse gas emissions
- Water quality management
- Climate adaptation and mitigation
- Soil science
- Biodiversity and conservation

The course is **co-funded by Kerry Dairy Ireland and IRD Duhallow Skillnet**, with academic support from University College Cork (UCC), ensuring a high-quality and robust learning experience. It is particularly suited to milk suppliers who are committed to continuous improvement and to playing an active role in the development of a sustainable dairy sector. This initiative is funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Union.

New for 2026, a follow-on module, **“The Future of Farming: Sustainability, Business and Wellbeing,”** will be available to milk suppliers who have previously completed the Level 7 Certificate.

To register your interest, please scan the relevant QR code below or contact Monica Gilmore at monica.gilmore@irdduhallow.com or 029 60633 (IRD Duhallow)



Level 7 Certificate



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