# NZ Forecast Update: Farmgate milk price

1 February 2022



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Susan Kilsby for more details.

## Farmgate milk price forecast revised up

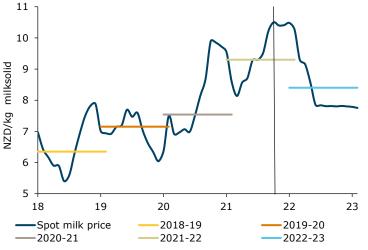
#### Key points

- We have revised our farmgate milk price forecast for the 2021-22 season up another 50c to \$9.30/kg milksolid (MS).
- Our forecast for the 2022-23 season has also lifted slightly from \$8.00/kg to \$8.40/kg MS. Prices are expected to moderate as demand and supply start to realign.
- The NZD is assumed to appreciate steadily across our forecast period to reach USD0.70 by the end of the 2022 calendar year.

#### Prices become more certain as the season progresses

We have revised up our farmgate milk price forecast for the 2021-22 season to \$9.30/kg MS (from \$8.80/kg MS). This puts our forecast just above the mid-point of Fonterra's latest milk price guidance of \$8.90 - \$9.50/kg MS.

#### Figure 1. Farmgate milk prices



Source: Fonterra, ANZ Research

Farmgate milk prices have benefitted from both the sharp lift in global dairy commodity prices and the softer NZD. Dairy prices lifted much faster than anticipated in January as the impact of tight global supplies for milk started to have a material impact.

#### Table 1. Farmgate milk price sensitivity table (2021-22 season)

		-	-	2	•	2			
	NZD/USD effective								
		USD/t	0.680	0.685	0.690	0.695	0.700		
Commodity price basket	10%	4560	10.65	10.55	10.50	10.40	10.30		
	5%	4365	10.10	10.05	9.95	9.85	9.75		
	Base	4150	9.50	9.45	9.30	9.25	9.20		
	-5%	3945	8.95	8.85	8.80	8.70	8.60		
	-10%	3735	8.35	8.25	8.20	8.10	8.05		
	-15%	3525	7.75	7.70	7.60	7.55	7.50		

Source: ANZ Research

Milk supplies in all of the major milk producing countries are either tracking behind last season or growing only modestly. This lack of additional supply is now being felt in the global markets.

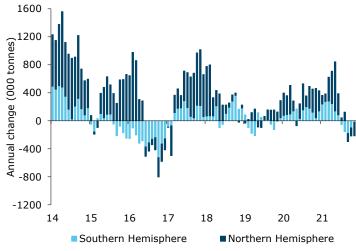


Figure 2. Global milk production growth for major exporters

Source: DCANZ, Dairy Australia, Eurostat, USDA, CLAL, ANZ Research

The most recent milk production data from New Zealand, supported by dairy company announcements, means buyers are now well aware that there will not be a lot of additional product available from New Zealand during the latter part of the milk production season. New Zealand's milk supply is tracking 3.2% behind for the season to December, with production for the month of December down 5.5% on the same month last season. Dry conditions throughout January mean milk supplies are likely to be curtailed for much of the remainder of the season.

#### \$8.40 forecast for next season

Looking ahead, the 2022-23 season is also expected to deliver an aboveaverage milk price. We have upgraded our forecast by 40c to \$8.40/kg MS. But we remain very cautious, as dairy commodity prices tend to have a habit of correcting quite quickly when prices reach high levels.

Global milk supplies will lift again when the Northern Hemisphere production hits in seasonal peak in about April/May. At this stage it seems unlikely that supply will surge more than normal, but strong prices may result in more milk being produced – particularly in the US.

		NZD/USD effective								
		USD/t	0.64	0.66	0.68	0.70	0.72			
Commodity price basket	20%	4500	11.30	10.90	10.50	10.15	9.80			
	10%	4125	10.15	9.80	9.45	9.10	8.80			
	Base	3750	9.05	8.70	8.40	8.10	7.80			
	-10%	3375	7.95	7.65	7.35	7.05	6.80			
	-20%	3000	6.80	6.55	6.30	6.05	5.80			
	-30%	2625	5.70	5.45	5.25	5.00	4.80			

Table 2. Farmgate milk price sensitivity table (2022-23 season)

Source: ANZ Research

We are also likely to see some decrease in demand for dairy products. Prices are now at such exceptionally high levels that they will be priced out of reach of consumers in some of the poorer nations. Typically, demand from North Africa/Middle East, and parts of South East Asia tends to ease when prices are this strong. Demand from China tends to be less price sensitive, but any reduction in demand from this massive importer of dairy products would have a meaningful impact on the dairy markets.

At present the NZX futures market is pricing in much stronger dairy commodity prices and the milk price contract for next season (Sep 23) is priced at \$9.35/kg MS. That is nearly \$1 above our forecast.

#### Steady lift in NZ dollar anticipated.

We anticipate a gradual increase in the NZD across the forecast period. The NZ dollar has remained very subdued and hasn't strengthened in response to the RBNZ starting to tighten monetary policy. Most central banks around the globe are now poised to commence monetary policy tightening, so it is not just New Zealand that is experiencing rising interest rates. If New Zealand's interest rates are higher than other countries then we tend to attract more money flowing into New Zealand which puts upward pressure on our exchange rate. We now anticipate the NZD will gradually firm to USD0.70 by December 2022



Source: Bloomberg, ANZ Research

Overall the outlook for the farmgate milk price remains very robust in the near term. Unfortunately, on-farm costs have also risen rapidly, due to rising compliance costs, higher interest rates and increasingly scarce and expensive labour. These factors are taking the shine off of the record milk price that is expected to be delivered this season.



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Last updated: 15 October 2021

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