

Agribusiness NEWS



**Farm
Advisory
Service**

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May 2021

News in brief

Onward and Upwards

With lambing, calving and spring work well underway, vaccine programmes gathering pace, lockdowns easing across the UK and the Devolved Government elections just a few days away, hopefully, we can truly start to look forward to rebuilding our lives and our livelihoods. As the Covid pandemic has had a profound effect on almost every aspect of our lives, it is important to take time to think about our own mental health and well-being and that of our family, friends and colleagues and to seek help when needed.

Despite the ongoing difficulties linked to the pandemic and Brexit, beef and sheep prices continue to remain buoyant, largely linked to tight supplies, but tight supplies of grain are also impacting on feed prices, and there are already concerns that the cold and dry spring weather will have an adverse effect on crop yields this autumn. It is hoped that good growing conditions will soon prevail.

With the mainstream media focusing on election reporting on the key areas affected by the pandemic namely health, the economy, and education, our brief election special gives a flavour of each party's thoughts with regards agriculture and the environment. How this actually plays out after the election will depend on what format the new government takes.

On a lighter note, with thoughts slowly turning to summer, and summer holidays, despite international travel restrictions potentially lifting on the 17th of May to countries on the 'green list'; staycations will continue to be the safe go-to for many. For those looking for adventure/becoming one-with-nature, wild camping is rapidly growing in popularity, which in turn can create a relatively low cost Agri-tourism business opportunity for crofts, farms and estates looking to diversify.

Next month:

Looking at Sector Carbon Reports

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Christine Beaton	



The European Agricultural Fund
for Rural Development
Europe investing in rural areas



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

Policy Brief

A snapshot summary of the main parties' rural and agricultural policies

SNP ([link to manifesto](#))

- *A second referendum on Scottish independence*

Campaign to re-join the EU and CAP, with agricultural support focused on enhanced nature value, low carbon farming, health and animal welfare.

Support sustainable, local, affordable and healthy food e.g., through continuing Food for Life in the public sector and circular economy programmes.

Investment in green rural connectivity and recovery; supporting remote areas and businesses including employment and reducing rural depopulation.

Conservative ([link to manifesto](#))

- *Oppose independence referendum*

Provide stability for agricultural support until a new system of subsidies in 2024. Continuation of Suckler Beef and Upland Sheep Support Schemes, the Beef Efficiency Scheme, extend and increase funding to AECS, and review the Agricultural Transformation Fund (ATP).

Rural support to focus on climate change, tourism and public goods e.g., new National Parks and public access, protect biodiversity, animal welfare, and increase in woodland planting and markets.

Labour ([link to manifesto](#))

- *Rebuilding NHS, jobs and education*

Adopt a 'public money for public goods' approach in agriculture, particularly addressing emissions from food production. Target of Net Zero by 2045, with a net zero transformation program investing in the natural environment (e.g., afforestation, peatland restoration), and a conservation workforce as part of a green jobs revolution.

Maintain agricultural support until 2024, then provide a system built around sustainable farming practices and land stewardship, focusing on food, climate and biodiversity.

Greens ([link to manifesto](#))

- *Green recovery, climate emergency & re-join EU*

Focus on reducing emissions from farming and supporting rural communities and green employment. Develop carbon business opportunities for agriculture, such as a food labelling scheme.

New subsidy scheme will provide financial rewards and support for agriculture in delivering public

goods, including biodiversity, climate change, flood mitigation.

Increase public benefit from the natural environment, such as increasing the number of National Parks, restoring natural environmental and biodiversity, including woodlands and peatlands.

Liberal Democrats ([link to manifesto](#))

- *Rebuilding NHS, jobs and education*

Create a new system of subsidies, of the same scale, focusing on sustainability, quality and efficiency.

Support and develop the Scottish Food and Drink industry through investment and the Good Food Nation Bill. Public procurement priorities to support local, seasonal and sustainable food.

Reduce the impacts of Brexit on agri-food exports and protect food production standards in trade deals.

Alba ([link to manifesto](#))

- *Scottish independence and interests a priority*

No published Food and Farming manifesto. Green New Deal and circular economies. Invest in Scottish businesses. Better use of land as a national asset.

Remember, you have 2 votes:

- Purple ballot paper: Constituency member vote – MSP to represent your area. 73 constituencies across Scotland.
- Peach ballot paper: Regional member vote for remaining 56 Additional Member System seats – MSP to represent regional/national interests.

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SUSSS 2020 payments

Scottish Upland Sheep Support Scheme (SUSSS) 2020 payments are due to commence at the start of this month. The payment rate for 2020 is £59.80 per hogg; £2.56 less than last year due to more hogs having been claimed.

Key dates for May

Date	Action
17 May	SAF submission deadline

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Cereals and Oilseeds

More questions than answers

Once again, we have seen very dry conditions across the British Isles through the crucial spring growing period this year. And we are not alone, in France, Germany and indeed, across large areas of the key Northern Hemisphere growing regions, dry weather is playing its part.

What was once a risk is starting to become a reality and with the projected tightening of global stocks in 2021 the market cannot afford any significant production decrease. The market is nervous as a result and until new crop condition is more clearly understood the only solution to balance supply and demand is for demand to be rationed and consequently for prices to be supported for now.

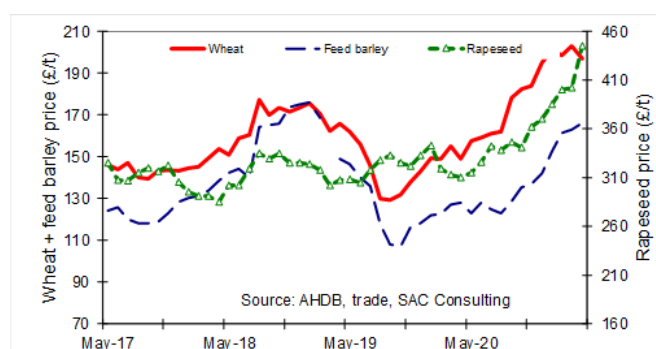
It is perhaps not surprising therefore that, in contrast to a lacklustre February and March where the grain market moved down and sideways at best, April has seen an almost day-by-day strengthening of the London November '21 wheat futures price, closing out at £191.30 on 26th April, a rise of £31/t above the end of March low. If you are planning to commit a percentage of new crop to the market, consider doing so at these new contract highs.

With world stocks projected to decline, maize output will no doubt heavily influence new crop grain prices going forward; where maize goes wheat and barley follow. Certainly, there is less grain left on farm than was expected at this time, be it maize, wheat or soya and whether it be here, in the EU or America. Time and weather will tell how much maize the US will plant in May and June or how big the Brazilian maize crop will be, and of course ongoing Chinese demand will no doubt feature in the equation. Until these questions are answered there remains the risk that futures could change quickly; up or down.

Whilst the AHDB forecasts the UK to stay a net importer of wheat for 2021/22, we will have an exportable barley surplus despite a 11% decline from last season on account of better wheat drilling progress. Old crop barley prices have rallied on account of slow grass growth in April and a return of confidence to the hospitality sector supporting beer and spirits demand for malting barley. Feed compounders are showing a particular interest and with prices within £5/t of this year's highs it may be

a good time for those with remaining supplies to finish off the marketing year well ahead of budget.

Scottish spot ex-farm grain and oilseed prices



How will malting barley fair this season?

It would be fair to say confidence in malting barley has been undermined by the poor prices induced by oversupply last season with many growers in Scotland only returning £130/t, once shortfalls to specifications have been factored in.

Contract transparency remains a frustrating issue for many growers at a time when brewers and maltsters remain reluctant to pay the new prices currently underwritten by the new crop raw material price rally.

Could dual use varieties serve to de-risk the crop in future? Whilst we expect a small increase in planted area in Scotland this season, the discount of barley to wheat seems to have settled at a minimum of £15 to £20/t under wheat for the foreseeable future.

Volatility in oilseeds

Whilst global demand for oilseed products is proving to be stable; global stock levels are expected to decline. Attempts to ration demand through higher prices are failing. CBOT meal and oil futures found new contract highs this week pushing up domestic prices of oilseed rape more than £20/t across the board. The market remains volatile, exacerbated by weather issues and leaves questions as to just where prices will end up?

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Indicative grain prices week ending 22 April 2021 (Source: SACC/AHDB/trade)

* Before oil bonus, # Ex-farm England spring brewing max 1.85%N, ~ nominal

£ per tonne	Basis	Apr '21	May '21	Jul '21	Harvest '21	Nov '21
Wheat	Ex-farm Scotland	197.10	203.80	205.00	172.00	175.00
Feed barley	Ex-farm Scotland	166.60	162.96	165.00		150.00
Malt. barley- distil	Ex-farm Scotland				204.00	
Malt. barley- brew	Ex-farm England#		188.00			175.00
Oilseed rape*~	Delivered Scotland		445.00		420.00	430.00

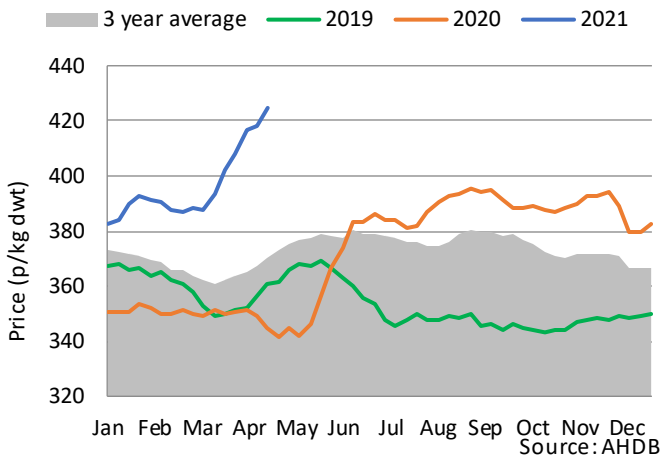
Beef

April has seen a continued rise in the beef price with prices being quoted in excess of 430p/kg deadweight, a lift of over 15p/kg from the start of the month. It would seem cattle numbers are still tight, and movement is very quick on cattle ready for sale.

This time last year, trade was 335p/kg deadweight. With over a 90p/kg difference, this could equate to £330 more per head this year for finishers.

However, it is not all good news for finishers as store prices have continued to rise and are now averaging over 250p/kg, this, combined with straw shortages and increases in feed prices means much of the improvement in sales price will be lost to the increase in costs.

Average Beef Prices p/kg dwt. Source: AHDB.



Re-opening of the hospitality sector

With Covid restrictions easing south of the border there have been reports from retailers of reduced demand due to the hospitality sector reopening. This will no doubt continue and have an effect in Scotland from 26th April.

It is anticipated that a large volume of imported beef will be required to service the hospitality sector and

typically, the majority of this would come from Ireland.

Imports

In February 2021 imports to the UK were 40% lower than the previous February with Ireland accounting for most of this. At present, the Irish beef price is around 338p/kg, making it very competitive against the UK and Scottish prices.

Whilst Ireland has had tighter cattle supplies in the past few months, processor throughput has increased to ensure they can meet the anticipated demand from the UK hospitality sector.

Impact of price on demand

We are all aware that there is a price point at which consumers regard beef as too expensive and switch to cheaper protein sources. At the current beef price, we are certainly in that territory. However, because of the time lag in how retailers pay processors the current price levels are yet to hit the retailer's shelves, when that does occur, we will most likely see a further drop in beef demand.

Cull cows

Cull cows remain a very strong trade, with both the increase in demand for manufacturing meat and the 7% drop in cow slaughterings from last year being to blame. This is partly due to a reduction in the number of dairy cows available for slaughter.

Looking forward

How long this buoyant trade will remain for is difficult to forecast as cattle supply is expected to be tight for the next while, so the price will most likely be driven by the level of retail demand.

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Scotland prime cattle prices (p/kg dwt) (Source: Drawn from AHDB and IAAS data)

Week Ending	R4L Steers (p/kg dwt)			-U4L Steers			Young Bull-U3L		Cull cows	
		Change on week	Diff over N. Eng.		Change on week	Diff over N. Eng.		Diff over N. Eng.	R4L	-O3L
3-Apr-21	416.5	8.4	12.6	414.9	7.5	14.8	413.2	13.7	326.7	294.7
10-Apr-21	417.8	1.3	11.3	416.3	1.4	10.0	415.3	11.1	328.8	292.5
17-Apr-21	424.7	6.9	14.3	425.7	9.4	16.0	414.3	2.4	328.4	298.3

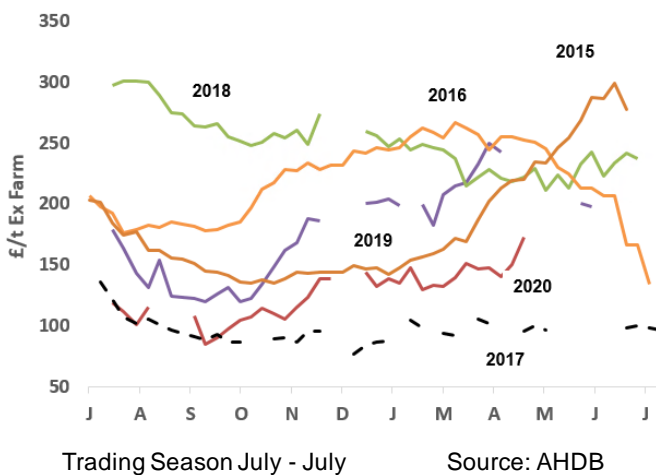
Potatoes

Market price update

- The latest GB Weekly Average Price reported for week ending 19th April was £187.04, down £2.84 on the previous week.
- The latest GB Weekly Average Free-Buy price reported on week ending 19th April was £172.97, up by £22.80 on the previous week.

Crop Year 2020/21	19 Apr	12 Apr	5 Apr
Average Price (£/t)	187.04	189.98	186.95
AVP change on week (£/t)	-2.84	+2.93	+9.45
Free-Buy Price (£/t)	172.97	150.16	140.06
FBP change on week (£/t)	+22.80	+10.10	-7.73

GB Weekly Average Free-Buy Price (2015-2020 crop years)



Market Update

April 26th marked a large move towards unlocking the economy in Scotland as non-essential shops and hospitality started to trade again for the first time since Christmas. This followed similar moves in England on 12th April. This will have an impact on some potato sectors with an increase in the demand for out of home eating inevitable.

The disruptive effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the potato market is expected to be felt again as demand patterns alter to the new circumstances.

Meanwhile, dry weather has allowed planting to continue at pace, with many growers in England nearly complete. Soil conditions are excellent but a very long run of cold and frosty nights throughout GB means that these crops have been planted into colder seedbeds than ideal.

Much will depend on how the spring develops from here, but slow emergence might lead to quality problems down the line.

Currently, packing demand remains mostly flat with contracted material dominating volume through packhouses. Meanwhile, the bag trade is more buoyant, particularly in coastal regions where demand is set to increase as staycations become the norm for 2021.

Scotland

In Scotland, the market for whites is very poor with prices quoted in the range of £30 - £60/t, with some crops being moved in bulk to clear stores. Meanwhile, the high demand for limited stocks of prepack quality Maris Piper has resulted in increased returns to growers with some high-quality stocks reaching £300/t.

Longer term, as the storage season progresses concerns regarding quality and continuity of supply have been expressed by buyers.

England

In the English whites prepacking market, prices are a little better (range £60 - £120/t) with the lower end generally being paid by the discounters. Maris Piper prices range from £250-350/t, again dependent upon quality.

AHDB ballot result

In the potato levy payer ballot, it was reported on 22nd March that 66.4 % had voted 'No' to a statutory potato levy (64.3 % turnout). The result was similar across all sizes of grower and potato buyers. The reasons behind this 'No' vote will be many and varied, but 'poor value for money' is often quoted.

The next step involves the DEFRA Minister (and those from devolved nations) but cannot be made until the Scottish and Welsh elections have taken place.

There is some discussion of 'essential' services that AHDB Potatoes currently provides that might be retained in some form. Currently, the levy remains in place and will presumably be collected for the 2021 season.

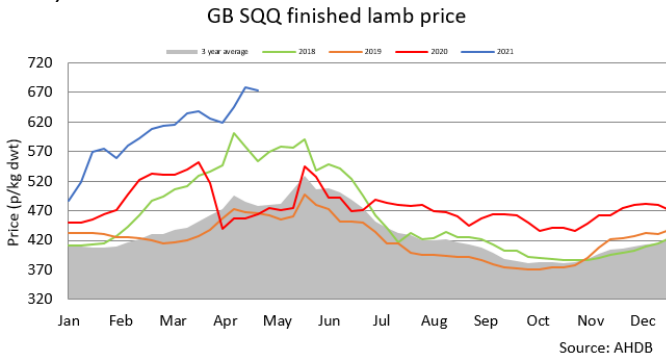
AHDB currently provides much research, knowledge exchange, export support, market intelligence (including data used to compile this report) and marketing to the sector. The future of all these functions is currently uncertain.

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Sheep

Over £40/head premium year on year

The market for prime lamb is still exceptional and well above normal levels. However, it has started to slip slightly. For the week ending 24th April the SQQ was 674.2p/kg, compared to 679.5p/kg the prior week. Reports are proving some abattoirs to be paying £7/kg currently. Looking at figures for 2020 and comparing them to 2021, we are sitting at a massive 210.4p/kg premium on 2020 (+£44.18 on a 21kg R3L).



There is a well-documented reduction in slaughter numbers of ~20% compared to this time last year, with many producers cashing in and marketing for Easter and Ramadan, as well as clearing the decks prior to the new lambing season.

New season lamb has started coming to the marketplace now, slowly. The latest SQQ figures on new season lamb is reported at 693.7p/kg (week ending 17th April). Some abattoirs have changed their pricing grids slightly for the new season lamb, increasing deductions for out of spec lambs.

Live market dipping but at a premium

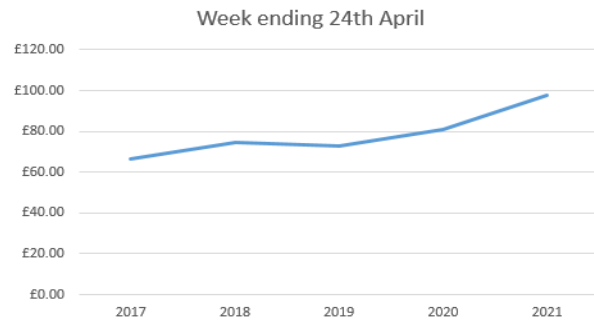
On the live market side, going in line with the dead market, there have also been reductions in price with a deduction of ~10p/kg SQQ (week ending 21st April).

It seems clear that there are two types of live lambs being sold, those who are making a premium by being well fleshed export type prime, and those who are not, due to being more store type lambs that are being cashed in without a finish, which is playing a large part to the price reduction we have seen over the last week. The number of new season lamb being marketed through the live ring is increasing

and, as with the old season lambs, premiums are being achieved with these lambs.

Cull ewes

Moving on to cull ewes, the numbers coming forward to the marketplace is lower than previous years, creating a higher demand for the product. Cull ewes have dipped from the exceptional level they were at, but this still remains high. Looking at the previous five years data demonstrates the premium these ewes are at. But please do bear in mind the various festivals and their timing do make a huge impact on the price, and these tend to change year on year.



Eid al-Fitr

Ramadan will finish in the evening of 12th May, and Eid al-Fitr will start and finish in the evening of 13th May, this is to celebrate the end of the month of fasting. This festival usually includes shopping behaviours of those celebrating to buy large amounts of meat a few days prior to the festival, to then celebrate with friends and family. This may allow for a further price rise of sheep products in the run up to the middle of May.

Breeding Sales

Before we know it, summer will have been and gone, and we will be back into breeding sales. Some have capitalised on the current lamb trade and lack of grass and sold their potential future breeding stock. This may have an effect on the breeding sales in the Autumn, with a stronger demand on these animals.

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Week ending	GB deadweight (p/kg) 16.5 – 21.5kg				Scottish auction (p/kg)				Ewes (£/hd)	
	R3L	Change on week	Diff over R2	Diff over R3H	Med.	Change on week	Diff over stan.	Diff over heavy	Scottish All	Eng&Wal All
10-Apr-21	648.2	23.5	-3.0	0.3	317.20	24.1	17.7	14.8	110.71	110.99
17-Apr-21	683.9	35.7	0.2	2.3	317.00	-0.2	15.5	14.4	99.61	102.93
24-Apr-21	680.3	-3.6	8.3	0.5	302.60	-14.4	12.2	11.3	97.82	96.07

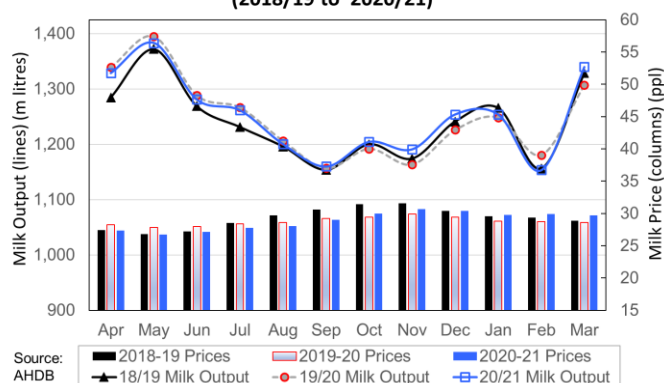
Deadweight prices may be provisional. Auction price reporting week is slightly different to the deadweight week. Source: AHDB and IAAS

UK output for 2020/21 hits 15bn litres

- Milk output for March 2021 increased by 32.91m litres above the March 2020 level. This increase has helped UK annual production to exceed 15bn litres for the 2020/21 milk year.

UK monthly milk output for March 2021 is estimated at 1,339.66m litres (before butterfat adjustment). This is 32.91m higher than March 2020 output when UK production for the month stood at 1,306.75m litres. Cumulative UK milk output for the 2020/21 milk year is estimated at 15,011.78m litres (before butterfat adjustment). This is 43.27m litres higher than at the end of March 2020. The rising level of production that was evident in March 2021 has also continued into the early part of April. However, low temperatures and dry weather conditions have slowed milk output during the second half of April.

UK Milk Output and Average Farmgate Milk Prices (2018/19 to 2020/21)



After a small increase to the UK average milk price for February 2021 to 29.91ppl, the average price level for March 2021 has dropped back to 29.72 (down 0.19ppl).

Farmgate prices rise: May & June 2021

There are several farmgate price increases to report this month. With the spring flush upon us, milk buyers now have a more accurate picture of peak volumes being processed and are better placed to assess the balance in supply v demand. Milk price increases are also being driven by higher feed costs which are now being reflected through some aligned milk contracts containing formula-based pricing. Price announcements for May/June 2021 include:

- First Milk – FM has confirmed a 0.50ppl price increase from 1st May 2021. See milk price table, right – showing May 2021 prices. FM has also confirmed a further increase of 0.50ppl from 1st June 2021.
- Coop – The Co-operative Dairy Group (CDG) milk price is set to increase by 0.51ppl from 1st May 2021. This takes the liquid standard litre price for Müller members of the group up from 29.88ppl to 30.39ppl.
- Arla Foods amba – Arla has confirmed a 1.50 eurocents/kg price increase for May 2021 (this

follows the same price increase awarded in April). This equates to a rise of 1.36ppl and takes the manufacturing standard litre price up to an impressive 32.79ppl. The liquid standard litre price increases by 1.31ppl to 31.55ppl.

- Arla organic supplies – Arla's organic milk prices also will also increase by the same level as conventional supplies, with the manufacturing price for May 2021 rising to 41.15ppl and the organic liquid standard litre rising to 39.59ppl.
- Arla Direct - suppliers will receive a 0.75ppl price increase from 1st May 2021. This takes the manufacturing standard litre price up (0.79ppl) to 28.37ppl, whilst the liquid standard litre price increases to 27.25ppl.
- Waitrose – Müller suppliers aligned with Waitrose will receive a 1.00ppl increase from 1st May 2021. This takes the liquid standard litre price up from 32.35ppl to 33.35ppl.
- Tesco – The milk price for the Tesco Sustainable Dairy Group (TSDG) is set to increase by 0.86ppl from 1st May 2021. Details as reported in the April 2021 edition of *Agribusiness News*.
- Müller Direct – Müller has confirmed a 1.00ppl price increase from 1st June 2021. This takes the liquid standard litre up from 27.25ppl to 28.25ppl. Suppliers in Scotland will receive 28.00ppl, after allowing for 0.25ppl additional haulage charge.
- Yew Tree Dairy - Producers supplying the liquid pool will receive a 2.00ppl price increase on all A litres from 1st June 2021. This takes the liquid standard litre up from 27.10ppl to 29.10ppl.

Annual Average milk price estimates for May 2021 (ppl)

Milk Buyers – Scotland	Standard Ltr*
Lactalis (No profile or seasonality) ¹	27.75
First Milk Liquid ^{1, 2}	28.48
First Milk Manufacturing (4.2% Butterfat & 3.4% Protein) ²	29.43
Müller - Müller Direct - Scotland ^{1, 3}	27.00

¹ Liquid standard litre – annual av. milk price based on supplying 1m litres at 4.0% butterfat, 3.3% protein, bactoscan = 30, SCC = 200 unless stated otherwise.

² The FM member premium is set to remain at 0.50ppl from April 2021.

³ No monthly supplementary payment included in the price estimate. Includes 1.00ppl Müller Direct Premium and additional 0.25ppl haulage charge for Scottish suppliers.

Dairy product prices remain firm

Dairy wholesale prices have once again held firm during the last month with only a small reduction to bulk cream prices being evident.

UK dairy commodity prices (£/ tonne)	Apr 2021	Mar 2021	Oct 2020
Butter	3,450	3,430	3,140
SMP	2,150	2,100	1,980
Bulk Cream	1,405	1,471	1,540
Mild Cheddar	2,980	2,960	2,920
UK milk price equivalents (ppl)	Apr 2021	Mar 2021	Oct 2020
AMPE (2020) *	33.11	32.54	29.75
MCVE (2020) *	33.45	32.96	31.64

Source: AHDB

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Management Matters

Mental Wellbeing

Mental Health

The World Health Organisation defines Mental Health as:

“A state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community”.

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. Thus, it is not surprising that the Covid pandemic, like almost every area of our lives, has had an impact on our mental health - from concern or fear about catching the virus, and what impact it could have on our own, or a family member's physical health; financial worries; feeling anxious or isolated due to lockdown restrictions, through to the trauma and grief associated with losing someone close, made more distressing by not being able to attend their funeral.

For many people, the stress, economic hardship, and social isolation has built with each lockdown, with negative feelings being intensified over the winter due to adverse weather and lack of daylight. This may affect psychological well-being and can exacerbate underlying mental health or neurological conditions, including common conditions such as depression and anxiety, and potentially increase the risk of accelerating cognitive decline and/or of suicide.

No one should ever feel embarrassed that their mental health is below par. No man or woman is an island, we can all suffer from mental health issues as we journey through life. The most important step is to recognise that all is not as it should be and what we can do to help ourselves. And, while we may recognise mental health issues in other people – family, friends, or colleagues, and want to help, the hardest step is for them to accept that they need help.

Last week, I attended a virtual mental health awareness meeting run by Sandy MacLean, College Development Network (CDN), where she drew a very good analogy between dental and mental health. Unless you have a phobia of dentists, you would not dream of neglecting your dental health, so why not afford your mental health the same courtesy? For some, good mental health can simply be a case of ensuring they get enough sleep, eating well, getting plenty of fresh air and exercise. For others, it is much more complex, requiring professional counselling and/or medication.

Depression

Depression affects ~20% of the adult population and is not simply about feeling down from time to time, it is a recognised illness.

To get an understanding of how living with an illness like depression can be; and how those around them can be affected too, please take the time to click on the links below.

[I had a black dog. His name was depression.](#)



Written and illustrated by Matthew Johnstone.

[Living with a black dog](#) - How to take care of someone with depression while looking after yourself. Written by Matthew Johnstone and his wife Ainsley Johnstone.

Where to go for help & information:

An important point to make is that no-one needs to be alone when it comes to struggles with mental health, in addition to NHS health professionals, there are many organisations that can help including:

- [RSABI](#) - Helpline 0300 111 4166
- [Rural Mental Health Forum](#)
- [NFUS](#) – Jim Hume Blog on mental health
- [The Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs \(SAYFC\) Are Ewe Okay?](#)
- [The Samaritans](#) – Call 116 123
- [The Resilient Farmer: Weathering the Challenges of Life and the Land](#) – Doug Avery
- Lantra – [Mental Health in Agriculture course](#)

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Tourism

While you find yourself nodding along in agreement to John K Walton's, (Professor of Contemporary History, University of the Basque Country, Bilbao, Spain) definition of tourism, which originates back to the 17th century, as being:

"The act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of services." His view that tourists are "generally insulated from difficulty, danger, and embarrassment," does make you wonder what kind of holidays he has been on!

While the last 14 months have been very challenging for the hospitality sector; the easing of [Scottish lockdown restrictions](#) on 26th of April and the extensive list of countries still on the travel 'red' list, means that Agri-tourism businesses have an opportunity again this year, to capitalise on staycations.

Wild Camping

While before the Covid pandemic, luxury camping or glamping holidays were increasing in their appeal to families seeking a staycation; wild camping is now very much in vogue, with individuals, couples, families and groups all seeking opportunities to enjoy the great outdoors/connect with nature/have a bit of an adventure or simply to finally escape from their own lockdown situations.

As part of Scotland's access legislation, the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 states that - while wild campers are allowed to camp on most unenclosed land; they are not allowed to camp in enclosed fields or close to buildings and housing unless they have the prior permission of the landowner. The main exception is the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park, which has its own [wild camping byelaws](#), which only permit camping within designated campsites or with a camping permit.

Given that wild campers out with the LL & T National park can legally camp in any unenclosed space, the National Access Forum, Scotland has updated its [Guidance for land and recreation managers](#) to help land managers/owners to manage the camping-with-tents that takes place outside managed campsites, particularly in accessible roadside settings.

The document includes guidance for dealing with common problems associated with wild campers such as litter and anti-social behaviour and distinguishing between irresponsible and criminal behaviour.

A new Agri-tourism opportunity?

Given that wild campers are keen to seek out remote, unique or simply just safe and secluded places to camp, many farms, crofts and estates can turn this into a business opportunity by simply advertising their 'uniqueness' whether it be beautiful mountain views, a waterside location or simply along a key tourist route like the A9 or the North Coast Route 500.

Normally, under the Permitted Development Rights (PDR), landowners are permitted to operate a tent-campsite for a maximum of 28 days in any calendar year without having to apply for full planning permission. Last year, to help rural businesses recoup income lost during the Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, the 28-day rule was increased to 56 days for the whole of the UK. While the English & Welsh Governments have announced that the 56-day rule has been extended until 31st December 2021, at the time of writing, no extension announcements have been made for Scotland, and Northern Ireland for 2021 camping season. Although in January 2021, the Scottish Government and Northern Ireland's chief planner stated that they did not expect Local Authorities to enforce 28-day rule limits against any reasonable temporary outdoor uses where a longer period would be appropriate and helpful to businesses.

From a business perspective, the key to capitalising on the growth in interest in wild camping, even for just 28 days is to advertise on a popular camping site like Pitchup. Fees start at ~ £20 per person per night. Toilets can be provided by either hiring toilets from an events company (fees from ~ £50/2 weeks) or by making or purchasing a dry composting toilet. Additional revenue can be earned by providing picnic benches, barbecues, fire pits and offering pre-paid 'arrival packs' containing basic food items and/or breakfast & dinner packs. These are especially welcome where campers arrive on foot or by bike.

As a quick guide: 2 tents, 2 people per tent, 28 nights = £2,100 net of toilet hire rising to ~ £4,220 for 56 nights.

Useful Links:

- Visit Scotland – [wild camping](#)
- Loch Lomond National Park – [wild camping](#)
- [The Scottish Outdoor Access Code](#)
- Pitchup – [How to start your own campsite](#)
- Local toilet hire – [Checktrade.com](#)

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Feed Update

Farmers that have been on winter contracts for complete feeds are likely to see around a £40/t+ rise on their feed prices for the summer compared to October prices last year. There may be a modest decrease for May compared to April's spot prices for complete feeds.

The feed market is having a challenging time with cereals expensive and scarce. Imported maize following suit of the wheat price and is also looking dear. Bread waste is very limited in availability and is normally tied up with a handful of regular customers. Biscuit meal looks good value as an energy and starch source (care should be taken if fed though as it is cooked starch – high powered stuff!).

There are lots of potatoes in stores and price is very favourable against barley, hence lots being shifted into finishing cattle and the price will likely drop again in the coming weeks.

Soya hulls are looking good value against sugar beet pulp as a digestible fibre source. British sugar beet pulp crops suffered from virus yellows however, seed treatments against the virus will hopefully make this year's crops more robust.

Dark grains are very variable pricewise with big variations reported around the country depending on what is in stores with some suppliers. Imported U.S. ethanol distillers did not produce as much as expected, impacting on the amount available for U.K. use. Ensus bioethanol plant is running sporadically and there are reports of the Vivergo ethanol plant being recommissioned again later this year/early 2022. This would make a great difference to dark grain availability. The plant was decommissioned due to lack of demand for ethanol. However, with the government moving from 5% to 10%, renewable ethanol in fuel this has reignited the demand. When both plants were active, the dark grain price would sit around £15-20/t below rapemeal, and we are not seeing this currently.

For farmers that have been well covered for straights over the winter months, buying on the spot market for May/June/July is perhaps advisable until prices settle as stocks are replenished. August onwards looks better value and would be a time to think about contracts again.

Feed	£/tonne full loads delivered*	Comments
Barley	£170-178	Very scarce
Wheat	£208-210	Very scarce
Oats	£148-164	No more than £140/t ex farm
Maize	£240	Same price for the summer £26t less for Nov-April
Sugar Beet Pulp	£230-235	Limited British supplies, 8mm imported SBP is £8/t less
Bread Waste	£155	Very limited availability – sells very fast to regular buyers
Biscuit Meal	£193	May-October price, looks value against barley/wheat
Soya Hulls	£187	£11/t less from June-October
Wheatfeed	£165	May-October
Pot Ale Syrup	£90/ sold out	Scarce, some full loads available
Druff	£30	
Peas	n/a	
Beans	£230	Stocks available (unprocessed price)
Wheat dark grains	£270-290	Price varies with suppliers, lower August-October
Maize Dark Grains	£230-280	Variation in price depending on type and supplier
Maize Gluten	£228-255	Lower end for June-October
Hi pro soya	£370-380	Scope to fall over the summer. Currently £5/t less for Nov-April
Rapemeal	£270-290	Less £30/t for August-October with new crop
Potatoes	£25	Plenty in stores, may get cheaper yet
Carrots	£20	Odds load available
Fodder Beet	£35	Plenty available, surplus from digesters
Turnips	£25	
Silage	£15-20**	
Hay	£20-25**	

*Please note that prices vary depending on location and suppliers. This is only intended as a guide; prices will also vary on a daily basis. Time of writing 21st April 2021.

**price per round bale.

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Key Economic Data

General Indicators		Price indices for February 2021 (Defra 2015 = 100)			
		Output Prices		Input Prices	
Base interest rate	0.1% (0.75% Mar '20)	Wheat	170.2	Seeds (all)	117.9
ECB interest rate	0.00% (0.00% Sep '18)	Barley	141.9	Energy	114.7
UK (CPI) inflation rate	0.7% (target 2%)	Oats	125.6	Fertiliser	105.9
UK GDP growth rate	1.3% (Q4 '20)	Potatoes	117.3	Agro-chemicals (all)	143.7
FTSE 100	6,947 (27 Apr '21)	Cattle and Calves	113.6	Feedstuffs	126.8
		Pigs	105.0	Machinery R&M	114.7
		Sheep and Lambs	154.1	Building R&M	118.8
		Milk	122.2	Veterinary services	115.7

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