LTO International comparison of producer prices for milk 2014

prezzi di latte • melkprijzen • prix du lait • molkeprizen
milch preise • milk prices • maelke priser • maidon hinnat
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Foreword

The year 2014 will not only be remembered as the last (calendar) year with milk quotas, but also as a year of exceptionally high variation in milk prices and nevertheless a record average milk price.

That the fluctuation in milk prices will increase has been clearly shown over the past year. The difference between the monthly milk prices at the beginning and the end of the year was never as great as in 2014. Between January and December 2014 milk prices decreased on average by 25%. These fluctuations make it more difficult for farmers to estimate the cash flow of their business properly and to plan investments.

The relatively high prices coupled with good weather and conditions of production and the abolition of the EU milk quota have led to an increase in milk production and, in some countries, a very heavy superlevy. The increase in milk production continued in 2015 despite the sharp fall in milk prices at the time of writing.

After the relatively good milk prices in recent years, 2015 will not be a good year. Although the market can change quickly, there are currently few bright spots in prospect or none at all. This underlines the importance for farmers to build up sufficient financial reserves to provide for disappointing milk prices.

While 2014 was the last year of the milk quota system, it was also the last year of the Dutch Dairy Board (Productschap Zuivel, PZ). From 2015, the milk price comparison will be undertaken by ZuivelNL (DairyNL), a recognized Dutch dairy sectorial organization, which was founded at the initiative of LTO Netherlands and the Dutch Dairy Association, NZO.

Kees Romijn
Chairman Dairy Committee Dutch Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture LTO Nederland
1. Introduction and notes for readers

1.1 Introduction

The LTO International Milk Price Comparison is published every month at the request of the Dairy Committee of the Dutch Federation of Agriculture and Horticulture (LTO Nederland) at www.milkprices.nl. This is a comparison of prices paid for milk by large European companies and is done in co-operation with European Dairy Farmers (EDF). EDF collects the milk price data and makes them available. Calculations are undertaken by ZuivelNL.

The method chosen for the calculations shows the price a dairy farmer would receive if milk of specific (standard) composition, quality and quantity were delivered to the different dairy companies.

In this report the following characteristics of the standard milk are taken as a basis:
- 4.2% fat;
- 3.4% protein;
- total bacterial count 24,999 per ml;
- somatic cell count 249,999 per ml;
- annual delivery 500,000 kg.

The prices are exclusive of VAT, ex-farm and inclusive of supplementary payments.

It must be emphasized that there is no comparison of the average milk prices paid. The average price paid by a dairy company for milk is dependent on the actual composition, quality, quantity et cetera of the milk delivered. Furthermore, no conclusions can be drawn about the performance of dairy companies on the basis of the milk prices paid. Many more factors play a role in assessing performance.

After each calendar year has ended, a report is presented with the calculated milk prices paid for that year. This annual report appears when the supplementary payments of the preceding calendar/financial year are known and can, thus, be incorporated into the milk prices. The amount of supplementary payments are corrected for the date of payment based on EURIBOR 3-months deposits interest rate (2014: 0.21%) The present publication comprises the milk prices calculated for the calendar year 2014.

1.2 Notes for readers

Chapter 2 features the calculated milk prices for 2014 (paragraph 2.1), followed by a description of the developments of the dairy market in 2014 (2.2) and latest trends of milk prices and dairy markets in 2015 (paragraph 2.3).

Chapter 3 gives additional information per dairy company.

In chapter 4 a short analysis is made of the consequences for the milk prices when the contents (fat and protein) and annual quantity delivery are changed.

The appendices give an overview of milk prices per dairy company from 2008 to 2014 (Annex I) and the average currency exchange rates in 2014 and 2013 (Annex II).

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1 After the abolition of the Dutch Dairy Board (Dutch: Productschap Zuivel) in 2015 some tasks, like this comparison, are continued by ZuivelNL.
2. Milk prices in 2014

2.1 Milk price comparison

The calculated milk prices for 2014 of 16 EU dairy companies have increased by 1.7% on average to € 38.62 per 100 kg of standard milk. Thus the 2013 record level has been exceeded by € 0.66.

Table 1. Milk prices 2014 and 2013

In € per 100 kg of standard milk (excluding VAT and including supplementary payments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>45.91</td>
<td>45.18</td>
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<td>Granarolo (North)</td>
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<td>FrieslandCampina</td>
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<td>Dairy Crest (Davidstow)</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>39.45</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>8.0% 3.1%</td>
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<td>Arla Foods DK</td>
<td>DK</td>
<td>39.44</td>
<td>38.60</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.84</td>
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<td>Bongrain (Basse Normandie)</td>
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<td>35.93</td>
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<td>DMK</td>
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<td>36.97</td>
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<td>NL</td>
<td>36.56</td>
<td>38.97</td>
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<td>-6.2%</td>
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<td>First Milk (compositional)</td>
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<td>34.00</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>7.4% 2.4%</td>
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<td>Müller (Leppersdorf)</td>
<td>DE</td>
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<td>37.63</td>
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<td>36.15</td>
<td>37.30</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>-3.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
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<td>38.62</td>
<td>37.96</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Emmi</td>
<td>CH</td>
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<td>49.64</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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<td>-20.2%</td>
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<td>USA class III</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>33.28</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>24.7%</td>
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</table>

The record milk price in calendar year 2014 is due to the high milk prices obtained in the first half of the year. After the summer, prices began to fall sharply.

For the third consecutive year the top three rankings for dairy companies in the EU remained unchanged. First is Hämeenlinnan Osuusmeijeri, Finland, followed by Granarolo, Italy, and FrieslandCampina, Netherlands.

However, the rise in milk prices paid by the relatively small dairy cooperative Hämeenlinnan Osuusmeijeri is not representative of Finland. The vast majority (85%) of Finnish milk is processed by Valio. The milk price paid by Valio to its members fell by 5% in 2014, the main reason being the Russian boycott of agricultural products from the EU from August 2014. This meant that Valio had to find an alternative outlet for a significant portion of the milk it processed (butter and powder). For the FrieslandCampina cooperative 2014 was also a difficult year, but aided by good sales of infant foods in China and a once-off benefit, both profit and milk price remained stable.

The relatively large increase in the calculated milk price to € 39.45 (+ 8%) paid by Dairy Crest, United Kingdom, is due in large part to the increase in exchange rate of the British pound against the euro. Expressed in national currency, the price of milk increased by 3.1%.

2 According to www.valio.com the milk price paid in 2014 was 45.4 eurocents per litre (in 2013: 47.5 eurocent per litre).
Because the calculated milk price paid in Denmark by Arla increased slightly more than the average Arla was one place higher in 2014 (5th) than the previous year.

The position of the milk prices paid by the French dairy companies in the ranking (ranging from 6th to 9th) shows again that French milk prices are trailing. Both the surge of European milk prices in the second half of 2013 and the sharp fall after the summer of 2014 appear to be reflected slowly in French milk prices. The result is that the French calculated milk prices increased relatively less than average in calendar year 2013 and relatively more than average in 2014. In 2013 milk prices of French companies were between 12th and 15th in the rankings.

The calculated milk price of the DMK, Germany, fell slightly (-0.6%) in 2014 compared to the previous year.

The calculated milk price of DOC Cheese, Netherlands, fell in 2014 by 6.2%. Only Milcobel, Belgium, fell more (-6.3%). The milk prices of companies Glanbia and Kerry, Ireland, and Müller (Leppersdorf), Germany, fell by 4.2%, 3.1%, and 2.4% respectively.

Without the increase in exchange rate of the British pound the milk price increase of First Milk, UK, would have been 2.4%.

**Figure 1. Average milk prices from 1999 to 2014**

![Average milk prices from 1999 to 2014](image)

The milk price paid by Emmi, Switzerland, is € 51.07, the highest milk price calculated for 2014. Expressed in national currency the Swiss milk price rose by 1.6% or about the same as the milk prices within the EU. Note that the core comparison and the average prices cited relate to dairies within the EU. Outside the EU Emmi milk price is the highest.

After the record milk price in 2013/14, in the 2014/15 season - which runs until May 2015 - dairy farmers in New Zealand are expected to receive a milk price that is about 45% lower. Converted to calendar years the decline in 2014 relative to 2013 is limited to about -20%. The dramatic fall illustrates the strength of dependence on the world market. Because New Zealand disposes of nearly 90% of its milk production on the world market, New Zealand dairy farmers experience the consequences of the worsening world dairy market more directly than those in other countries.

The increase in milk prices in the United States is in stark contrast to the sharp fall in New Zealand. They have risen by almost 25%. This increase comes on top of US milk prices which were already relatively high in recent years. American dairy farmers last year benefitted from a sharp rise in internal demand for dairy products.
2.2 Dairy market 2014

In 2014 there was talk again of a good dairy year, on balance. The dairy market was characterized, albeit general terms, by downward price movements, but had exceptionally high price levels as a starting point. On the one hand the downward trend was mainly due to favourable weather conditions in the leading production regions (Europe, USA and New Zealand) and price levels that were still high at the start, which stimulated growth in supply worldwide. On the other hand there was a weakening or disappearance of demand on several fronts (including China and Russia).

In the first months of the year the market for most products, except butter, still remained relatively buoyant, partly owing to low global stock levels. Thereafter the persistently high global level of production, coupled with the fact that demand from China was clearly weakened by economic slowdown and increased stocks, lead to a downward trend in prices.

From August the Russian boycott put pressure on the (EU internal) market, as many dairy products had to be sold elsewhere, thus creating a situation of oversupply. This meant that the movement towards falling prices that had started previously accelerated and deepened. The European cheese market especially suffered in a direct sense from the situation in Russia. The disappearance of the Russian market and a good start to production in Oceania contributed to a situation of stable lower prices or to further falls in prices in the remaining months.

The market development mentioned above resulted in the average market prices of 2014 ending significantly below those of 2013 (peak year) but otherwise they remained at reasonable levels. The average official Dutch quotations for butter (-15%), whole milk powder (-15%) and skimmed milk powder (-15%) were ultimately significantly below the average level of 2013. In cheese and whey powder, the decline was limited to 1% and 8%, respectively.

2.3 Development of milk prices and dairy markets in the first half of 2015

At the beginning of 2015 there was a positive turnaround in the market place which few people anticipated. The reason was mainly an increased feeling of tightness in the supply because of signs of drought in New Zealand. At the same time there was talk in a number of leading countries of a brake on production within the EU in order to limit overproduction in the last quota season in view of the fact that the level of milk prices had been under pressure for some time. Furthermore the development of demand in the first months of the year was reasonably good. The competitiveness of European suppliers also improved thanks to further weakening of the euro exchange rate.

In particular the expectation that production would grow in the EU after the abolition of the milk quota, which took place on 1 April 2015, determined market sentiment from March/April and pushed the price trend downward. The subdued mood in the market was further fuelled by continued uncertainty about China's demand for imports, both as to level and to timing. There was also little optimism about lifting of the trade restrictions imposed by Russia in the shorter term.

This meant that in the period between late February and May 2015 the price levels of the various products fell sharply again. This was particularly true for the prices of skimmed milk powder for human consumption (-22%) and whey powder (-23%). But even for whole milk powder (-19%) and butter (-14%), the decline in prices was substantial during this period. With the exception of whey powder, all Dutch quotations from late May and early June, moved well below the long term average. For cheese from late April there was also more uncertainty in the market, meaning that in the EU prices for this group of products came under more pressure.

The developments in the dairy market had the effect that milk prices that were already relatively low in early 2015 decreased further. In itself, a decrease in the spring is not unusual. Mostly milk prices fall in the spring to rise again in May. But in 2015 average milk prices are expected to fall slightly more in May and June, which is confirmed by announcements by Arla and FrieslandCampina of further price reductions in the coming months.
In the first four months of 2015 the average milk price was 20% lower than in the same period last year. Given the fall in milk prices over the course of 2014, this difference from last year is expected to be less in the end, but a relatively strong fall in milk prices in 2015 seems evident.
3. Additional information per company

Hämeenlinnan Osuusmeijeri (Finland)
The calculated milk price of Hämeenlinnan Osuusmeijeri increased in 2014 by 1.6% to € 45.91 per 100 kg standard milk, including an additional payment of 2 eurocents per litre or € 1.94 per 100 kg of standard milk.

Granarolo (Italy)
The calculated milk price of Granarolo increased in 2014 by 6.7% to € 44.67 per 100 kg.

FrieslandCampina (The Netherlands)
FrieslandCampina’s calculated milk price of € 41.17 (2013: € 40.95) includes a supplementary payment of € 2.92 (2.91) based on a performance bonus of 4.7% (4.57%) or € 1.81 , issue of registered member bonds of 2.7% (3.10%) or € 1.03 and an adjustment of the guaranteed milk price of € 0.09 per 100 kg.
Dairy farmer members of FrieslandCampina receive for their milk a minimum guaranteed price based on the weighted average of the milk prices of a number of reference companies in Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Belgium. Besides fat and protein milk payment is from 2015 onwards also based on lactose. The prices for protein, fat and lactose vary monthly, but in a fixed ratio 10:5:1. In addition to the monthly milk payment 35% of FrieslandCampina’s net profit was paid to member milk suppliers as a performance bonus and 20% in the form of fixed member bonds, both of these in proportion to the value of the milk delivered. The calculated milk price of FrieslandCampina includes an average meadow premium of € 0.29 per 100 kg (2013:0.31).

Dairy Crest (United Kingdom)
The calculated milk price of Dairy Crest suppliers for the Davidstow cheese factory increased in 2014 by 8% to € 39.45 per 100 kg.

Arla (Denmark)
The calculated Danish milk price of Arla is € 39.44. In addition to the monthly advance milk payment farmer members receive an additional payment, in part in cash and in part in membership certificates. For 2014, the additional payment was 4.05% (2013: 5.5%) of the so-called basic value. This basic value is the monthly payment for fat and protein minus the costs per kg of milk and plus the quality premiums paid. The calculated additional payment is 15.2 DKK (of which 4.1 DKK in membership certificates) or € 1.53 (2013: € 2.01) per 100 kg of standard milk.

Retrospectively the calculated milk price for Arla of 2013 has been corrected from € 38.34 to € 38.60 per 100 kg, because of a bonus of € 0.26 for independent collection at any time of the day.

Bongrain, Danone, Lactalis and Sodiaal (France)
Since 2013 in France the development of milk prices is the subject of agreements reached in consultation at company level with (recognized) producer organizations. In this way use is made of market indicators and the differences between French and German milk prices published by CNIEL. As these indicators are based on previous periods there seems to be a time lag between de milk price developments in France compared to the other milk prices.
At the regional level there are inter-professional agreements on payment for composition (fat and protein), quality and seasonal differentiation. Accordingly in this milk price comparison for the French companies it is indicated from which region the milk price data originate.

Just like the year before also in 2014 the differences in milk prices between the French dairies are small as also can be seen in the rankings of French dairies (2014: 6 to 9, 2013 12 to 15). The increase in French milk prices in 2013 was less (7 to 8% compared to the average of 11.9%) and in 2014 more than average (6 to 7%, average 1.7%).
Danone and Sodiaal operate a dual pricing system in which an A-price is paid for a certain maximum amount of milk and a B-price for the remaining amount. The B-price is based on prices obtained for butter and skimmed milk powder. The calculated milk prices are based on the A-prices.

DMK (Germany)
DMK has made an additional payment of € 1.50 per 100 kg for December 2014 delivery with the milk payment in January 2015. This additional payment is included retroactively in the December milk price. No further supplementary payment is expected in relation to 2014. Because the member farmers receive a market-based dividend for their capital invested in DMK, the calculated milk price has not been corrected.

DOC Cheese (Netherlands)
In 2014 DOC Cheese has made an additional payment of 1% or € 0.35 per 100 kg (2013: 4.5%) plus a deposit of € 0.68 per 100 kg to the members’ accounts in addition to the advance payment (excluding quality and quantity premiums). The calculated additional payment is € 1.03 (2.31) per 100 kg of milk. The annual milk price is € 36.57 per 100 kg milk (-6.2%).

First Milk (United Kingdom)
The UK dairy companies use different payment systems for farm milk depending on the final product and/or the requirements of customers (supermarkets). First Milk makes a distinction between milk that is processed into liquid milk for consumption and that destined for other products. The calculated milk price of First Milk covers the pool price of milk which is processed into other dairy products (manufacturing milk).

Milk prices of First milk are not reduced with the capital retention as members receive a dividend on their capital invested in the cooperative in addition to payment for milk delivered. The calculated milk price of First milk increase with 7.4% to € 36.52 per 100 kg milk.

Müller (Leppersdorf) (Germany)
The calculated milk price of Müller of € 36.46 per 100 kg (-2.4%) refers to dairy farmers who supply the dairy factory in Leppersdorf.

Glanbia Ingredients Ireland Limited (GIIL) Kerry (Ireland)
Glanbia’s calculated milk price of € 36.24 per 100 kg includes a seasonal supplement of 4.75 eurocents per litre (February), 1.5 eurocents (October) and 3.7 eurocents (November), but does not include the bonus paid out of the so called price stability fund of the coop. This payment of 2 cent per litre for August 2014 delivery was to compensate the milk price decrease by GIIL. As these compensation is not based on milk returns, but paid out of capital it is not included in the calculated milk price.

Milcobel (Belgium)
The calculated milk price of Milcobel decreased with 6.3% to € 36.23 per 100 kg. Milcobel has made no additional payment to its member dairy farmers for the quantities delivered in 2014. In 2013 the supplementary payment was of € 0.1281 per kg of fat and protein or € 1.00 per 100 kg of standard milk.

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3 Glanbia Cooperative Society holds 41% of the shares of Glanbia plc and this capital originates from the sales of shares and dividend.
Kerry (Ireland)
Kerry’s calculated milk price of € 36.15 per 100 kg (- 3.1%) includes a retroactively paid supplement to the monthly milk prices of 0.22 eurocents per litre. Dairy farmers have received this additional amount with the February 2015 payment covering the milk delivered in January to December 2014. The milk price 2013 of Kerry has been corrected with minus € 0.03 as a result of correcting for VAT (milk prices are exclusive of VAT).

Emmi (Switzerland)
The payment system of the Swiss Emmi comprises A-, B- and C-milk prices. In the marketing year 2013/14 70% of the milk delivered was paid at the (top) A-milk price and 30% at the lower B-price. From April 2014 until September 2014 these percentages were 70% A, 20% B and 10% C and from October onwards 65% A, 25% B and 10% C.

Figure 3. Emmi milk prices 2010 to 2014
(CHF per 100 kg)

Fonterra (New Zealand)
Fonterra’s calculated milk price for the calendar year 2014 is € 28.67 per 100 kg standard milk. This is based on their most recent forecast for the year 2014/15 of 4.65 New Zealand dollar (NZD) which refers to a milk price of 4.40 plus an expected dividend of NZD 0.25 per kg milk solids (fat and protein). For the new milk price year 2015/16 - starting in June 2015 - Fonterra has announced an opening milk price of NZD 5.25 per kg of fat and protein. For 2014/15 this opening price was 7.00 NZD per kg milk solids.

After the record level in 2013/14 of 8.50 NZD per kg fat and protein, the milk price for 2014/15 will decrease with about 45%.
United States of America

The calculated milk price - based on the class III milk price - for the United States in 2013 was €41.46 (2013: 33.18) per 100 kg standard milk. An increase of 25%, not only expressed in euros but also in national currency, resulting in an all-time high milk price for American dairy farmers.

Figure 5. USA Class III prices
($ per hundredweight (cwt{\textsuperscript{4}})\)
4. Payment for composition and quantity of milk delivered

The main factors determining the level of the milk price paid are the composition (fat and protein content), quality and quantity of milk. This section is a brief analysis of how the various companies pay for fat and protein and quantity of milk delivered.

4.1 Fat and protein

Until 2013 all dairy companies maintained a fixed ratio between the prices paid for fat and protein, except for Arla and FrieslandCampina. Hämeenlinnan Osuusmeijeri, German and French companies, as well as Granarolo, even applied fixed prices for fat and protein, thus not only fixing the ratio between the two.

The following graphs show the effect of a 0.1% increase in protein and fat content, respectively, to 3.5% protein and 4.3% fat on the level of the calculated milk price.

Figure 6. Milk price adjustment (€/100 kg) + 0.1% protein

From figure 6 can be deduced that the calculated milk price of Bongrain, France, in 2014 would rise by € 0.85 per 100 kg of milk on the basis of a protein content of 3.5% instead of 3.4%. In other words, Bongrain would pay € 8.50 per kg of extra protein delivered. The British dairy farmers who supply Dairy Crest were those in EU who gained the least benefit from supplying milk with higher levels of protein (€ 0.41 per 100 kg extra). Fonterra, New Zealand, paid comparatively the least for fat and protein. Incidentally, Fonterra pays the same price for fat as for protein (milk solids).
Arla pays relatively more for fat (€ 0.48 per additional 0.1%) and Emmi, the least (€ 0.16 per additional 0.1%).

4.2 Annual quantity of milk delivered

Nine of the sixteen EU dairy companies pay a bonus in proportion as more milk is delivered in a year. In addition to this volume or quantity bonus, larger suppliers also benefit from deductions from fixed cost charges, relating to the quantity delivered. Thus the milk price per kg increases as these fixed costs can be spread over the greater volume of milk delivered.

Figure 7. Milk price adjustment (€/100 kg) + 0.1% fat

Figure 8 shows the extent to which the calculated milk price changes on a basis of a year’s delivery of 1.5 million kg instead of the standard amount of 500 000 kg. With this volume the milk price of First Milk increases the most, by € 1.35, followed by DOC Kaas (+ € 1.01) and FrieslandCampina (+ € 0.73).
## Annex I  
### Milk prices 2008 to 2014

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## Annex II  
### Average currency exchange rates 2014 and 2013

#### Exchange rate of the euro

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