

By Peter Crichton

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“Falling Down” – Duran Duran

Prices have continued to drift lower with the SPP dropping by a further .28p to 147.77p and the influential German producer price continues to head south losing another 4 cents today to stand at 1.400 EUR compared with 1.55 EUR four weeks ago which in sterling terms represents a reduction of 13p/kg dead weight.

Weekly contribution prices are also tending to ease with most now in the 133-140p bracket and the spot market remains very quiet with bids to match in the 140p region for one off loads, although regular sellers have generally been able to achieve 4-6p above this.

On the currency front, at least the euro has managed to hold at generally similar values worth 89.3p but despite this cull sow quotes have dropped another 3p following on from falling pig meat prices in mainland Europe. Cull sow quotes have tended to be in the 66-68p range which still provides a very low return for producers looking to re-stock or clear out their herds.

Weaner prices are reflecting falling finished pigs returns and high feed costs with the latest AHDB 30kg price taking quite a knock dropping by £2.78 to £50.98 and 7kg prices following a similar pattern, down by £2.73 to £35.01.

A shortage of space especially for Red Tractor weaners is continuing to unsettle the market and coupled with the high price of straw it is hard to find homes for Red Tractor weaners although a reported “hole” in pigs weaned during the heatwave last summer could help to put some sort of bottom in the market.....we shall see but at the moment the trough seems to have a hole in it!

There are some signs of hope that recent cereal price rises might be levelling out or even easing back with the latest UK spot feed wheat ex farm quote £3/t easier and averaging £167.80/t with London feed wheat futures prices also a shade easier with November quoted at £175.80/t and March next year at £179.65/t.

UK protein prices have also remained at generally similar levels with 48% soya quoted at £329/t and 34% rape seed at £220/t.

Recent reports are however indicating that there is a greater than 65% chance of a weak El Nino weather event indicating this winter which could put yields under pressure and another problem for us to worry about!

And finally the effects of the recent Belgian ASF outbreak are beginning to hit home with reports of 10 confirmed cases in Belgium but all from the same small region. As a result, 13 countries are banning pork exports from Belgium including South Korea and China who are major players in the pig meat market.

Some UK producers are also questioning why the UK is not banning Belgian pork and a close eye will have to be kept on any wild boar shooting parties from Belgium visiting this country.

