

# AA CALF REGISTRATIONS INCREASE

During 2019 there were 82,657 Aberdeen Angus calves registered in Northern Ireland which represented a 7.9 per cent increase from the previous year and a 19.2 per cent increase from 2016 levels.

The notable increase in Aberdeen Angus calf registrations over the past number of years has been well documented, with most of the increase in Aberdeen Angus calf registrations in Northern Ireland originating from the dairy herd.

A number of factors have contributed to the increasing numbers including positive market signals from processors in the forms of bonuses at points of slaughter for animals that meet market specifications. The smaller birth weights, shorter gestations and a higher value young calf are also attractive to dairy producers, particularly now with the increasing effectiveness of sexed semen meaning more cows can be served using a beef sire.

Aberdeen Angus calf registrations have been growing in all regions of the United Kingdom in response to positive market signals

The growth in Aberdeen Angus calf registrations has not just been confined to Northern Ireland, the upward trend in calf registrations can also be observed

in all regions of Great Britain as outlined in **Figure 1**.

During 2016 there were 321,026 Aberdeen Angus calf registrations in Great Britain and this increased to 398,844 registrations during 2019. This accounts for a 24 per cent increase over the time year period with an additional 77,818 Aberdeen Angus calves registered.

During 2016 Aberdeen Angus calves accounted for 17 per cent of all beef sired calf registrations in Great Britain and this proportion has steadily increased to account for 21 per cent in 2019.

The increased numbers of Aberdeen Angus calf registrations is now being reflected in the local slaughter mix. During 2019 20 per cent of the price reported prime cattle kill in Northern Ireland were Aberdeen Angus, up from 14 per cent in 2016. At present this information is not available for the other UK regions but it is expected to have followed the same trend.

### Hereford calf registrations

During 2019 there were 29,095 Hereford calves registered in Northern Ireland. This represents a 2.4 per cent increase from the previous year. While the number of Hereford calves being registered has increased it has not shown the same level of growth as

Aberdeen Angus. Hereford calf registrations have however increased their share of overall beef sired calf registrations at the expense of the continental breeds in Northern Ireland, in particular Charolais and Limousin.

Hereford calf registrations have increased in all regions of the United Kingdom between 2016 and 2019

Hereford calf registrations have also shown an increase in all regions of Great Britain as outlined in **Figure 2**. During 2006 there were 145,676 Hereford calves registered in Great Britain and this increased to 155,737 head by 2019. This increase by 10,061 head accounts for a seven per cent increase over this period. During 2016 Hereford calves accounted for 7.9 per cent of all beef sired calves registered in Great Britain and this increased to 8.3 per cent during 2019.

With Hereford calves accounting for a slightly larger proportion of calf registrations in Northern Ireland over the past few years they are also making up a slightly bigger proportion of the prime cattle kill. Hereford cattle accounted for seven per cent of the price reported prime cattle kill in NI during 2019. This proportion has been steadily increasing from five per cent in 2016.

Figure 1: UK Aberdeen Angus calf registrations by region 2016-2019

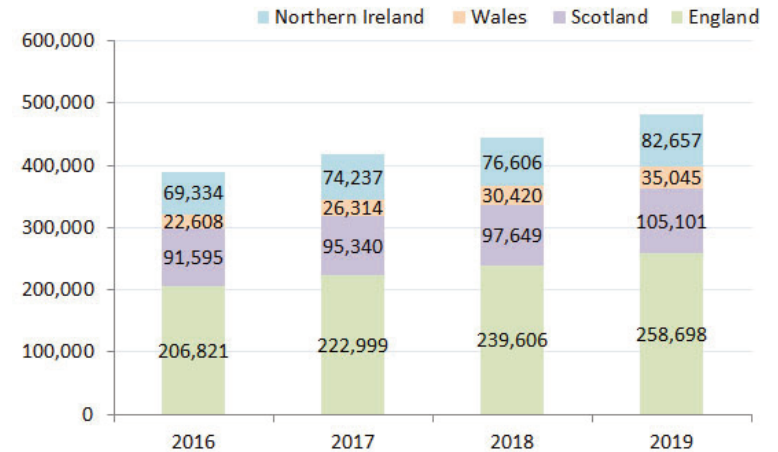
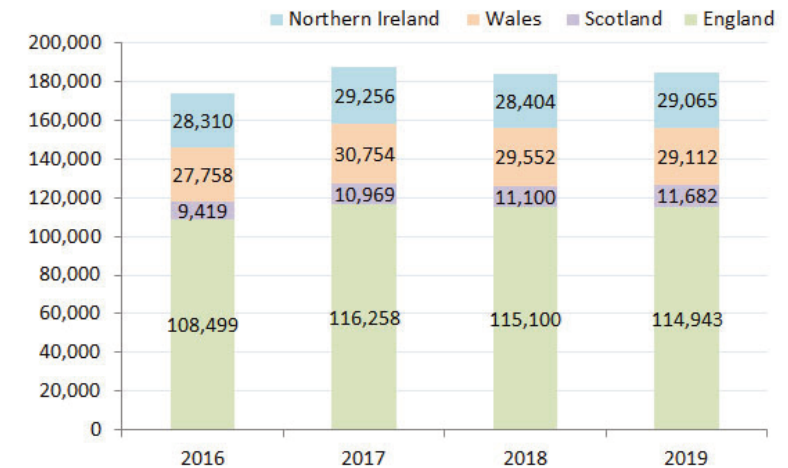


Figure 2: UK Hereford calf registrations by region 2016-2019



# DEADWEIGHT BEEF TRADE HOLDS STEADY

The deadweight trade for prime cattle began to show signs of recovery in Northern Ireland during the last few months of 2019 and the trade has held relatively steady during the first few weeks of 2020 as outlined in **Figure 4**.

However despite the stability in the beef trade in recent weeks deadweight prices remain below the five year average R3 steer price as outlined in

**Figure 3**. Prices fell below the five year average in early June 2019 and despite a narrowing of the differential in recent months have remained below the five year average line.

It is however worth noting that the five year average R3 steer price includes two years in which beef prices in Northern Ireland were particularly strong for a variety of reasons including

supply and demand issues for beef, global trade and demand for beef by-products along with the influences of currency exchange rates. Current deadweight prices for prime cattle in Northern Ireland are operating at similar levels to late 2016.

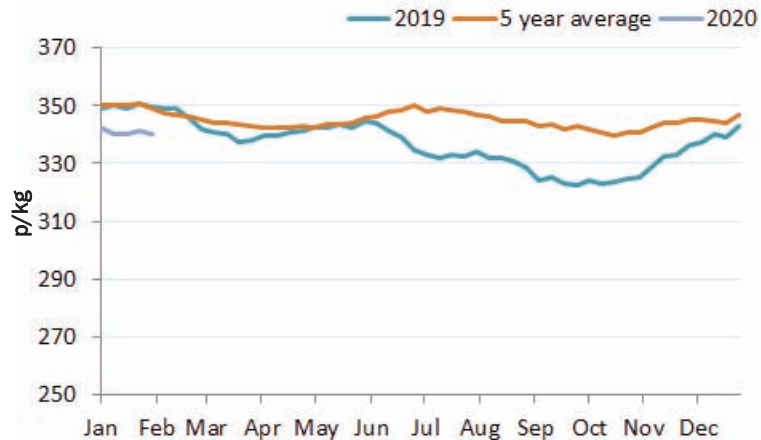
While the beef trade has been under pressure in all parts of the United Kingdom deadweight prices remain

ahead of equivalent prices in the European Union where the trade has come under similar pressure over the last year. The latest EU Deadweight Cattle Prices League Table puts R3 heifer prices in Northern Ireland the third highest in the European Union and 27.6c/kg ahead of the EU average during the w/e 26 January 2020.

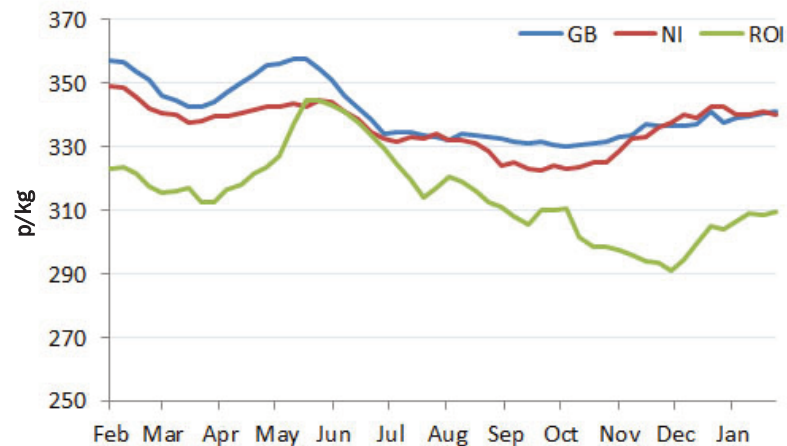
The deadweight cattle trade in Northern

Ireland has been operating at similar levels to Great Britain in recent weeks as outlined in **Figure 4**. At several stages over the past year deadweight prices in Great Britain have been operating ahead of Northern Ireland prices however this differential has been eroded in recent months. The R3 steer price in Northern Ireland last week was 340p/kg, 1.2p/kg behind the 341.2p/kg paid in Great Britain.

**Figure 3: R3 steer prices in NI during 2019 and 2020 against the 5 year average**



**Figure 4: R3 steer prices in NI, GB and ROI during the 52 w/e 01 Feb 2020**



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# WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

## CATTLE TRADE

### NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 03/02/20	Next Week 10/02/20
<b>Prime</b>		
U-3	324 - 334p	324 - 334p
R-3	318 - 328p	318 - 328p
O+3	312 - 322p	312 - 322p
P+3	264 - 276p	264 - 276p
Including bonus where applicable		
<b>Cows</b>		
O+3 & better	240 - 250p	240 - 250p
Steakers	140 - 170p	140 - 170p
Blues	120 - 130p	120 - 130p

Cow quotes vary depending on weight and grade.  
Pricing policies vary from plant to plant. Producers are advised to check pricing policies before presenting cattle for slaughter.

### Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for in spec U-3 grade prime cattle ranged from 324-334p/kg this week with the majority of plants quoting 332-334p/kg for steers and heifers. Quotes from the plants for good quality O+3 grading cows this week ranged from 240-250p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for all types of cattle early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in local plants totalled 7,076 head last week which was similar to the previous week. This brings total throughput of prime cattle for January 2020 to 33,334 head which is marginally lower than the 33,421 prime cattle slaughtered in local plants during January 2019. Cow throughput in local plants totalled 2,014 head last week, again similar to the previous week. Throughput for cows in January 2020 has totalled 9,761 head up 7.5 per cent from the 9,081 cows slaughtered in January 2019.

Cattle imports for direct slaughter from ROI last week consisted of 229 prime cattle and 64 cows with a further 3 steers and 92 cows imported from GB. During January 2020 a total of 1,349 prime cattle were imported to NI from GB and ROI compared to 1,596 prime cattle imported from the same regions in January last year. Meanwhile exports out of NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week consisted of 12 prime cattle, 53 cows and nine bulls, with no cattle exported to plants in GB.

The average steer price in NI last week increased by 0.6p/kg to 333.2p/kg however the R3 steer price was back by 1.3p/kg to 340p/kg. The average heifer price reported an increase of just over a penny last week to 336.4p/kg with the R3 heifer price up by 1.4p/kg to 342.5p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week was 314.9p/kg, back 0.6p/kg while the R3 young bull price was back by a penny to 325.9p/kg. The average cow price in NI last week increased by 0.9p/kg to 238.4p/kg however the O3 cow price decreased by 2.4p/kg to 254.8p/kg.

In GB last week the average steer price held steady at 332.7p/kg with the R3 steer price up by 0.8p/kg to 341.2p/kg. Across the regions declines in R3 steer prices were reported in Scotland (-0.3p/kg) and Southern England (-1.6p/kg) with increases reported in Midlands (+0.5p/kg) and Northern England (+3.9p/kg). The overall average heifer price in GB increased by 0.8p/kg to 333.4p/kg with the R3 heifer price up by a similar margin to 340p/kg. The R3 heifer price came back in all regions except in Northern England where it was up 5.9p/kg to 341.4p/kg. In GB last week the cow trade firmed with the average O3 cow price increasing by 3.5p/kg to 252p/kg which was 2.8p/kg lower than the O3 cow price in NI.

In ROI last week the R3 steer price was up by the equivalent of 0.7p/kg to 309.4p/kg with the R3 heifer price holding steady at 313.8p/kg. This puts the ROI R3 steer price at 30.6p/kg below the equivalent NI price with the ROI R3 heifer price at 28.7p/kg below the same price in NI. The O3 cow price in ROI increased by 2.1p/kg last week to the equivalent of 242p/kg.

### LAST WEEK'S DEADWEIGHT CATTLE PRICES (UK / ROI)

	W/E 01/02/20	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	341.4	316.5	351.3	341.5	342.9	340.2	344.2
	R3	340.0	309.4	353.2	341.2	336.9	333.2	341.2
	R4	338.1	310.6	351.8	344.7	337.1	333.9	343.1
	O3	331.5	295.6	332.1	316.2	314.4	312.0	318.7
	AVG	333.2	-	347.9	331.5	327.0	323.1	332.7
Heifers	U3	346.6	324.3	355.4	346.0	347.3	340.7	348.2
	R3	342.5	313.8	348.9	341.4	336.2	334.6	340.0
	R4	340.9	313.7	352.1	342.0	337.5	337.3	342.5
	O3	333.2	300.2	328.4	317.7	321.2	305.8	318.2
Young Bulls	AVG	336.4	-	349.6	332.9	328.3	320.8	333.4
	U3	328.5	296.9	342.3	328.7	329.4	340.0	332.2
	R3	325.9	287.6	330.6	327.6	324.9	295.7	326.1
	O3	312.2	275.4	294.7	283.5	298.5	289.7	292.6
	AVG	314.9	-	305.3	302.4	309.5	300.3	306.1
Prime Cattle Price Reported	6,115	-	6,932	7,379	7,870	4,913	27,094	
Cows	O3	254.8	242.0	251.7	254.7	251.9	248.3	252.0
	O4	258.3	242.5	251.8	251.7	252.9	245.5	251.1
	P2	221.9	220.3	208.8	213.9	205.5	204.9	207.0
	P3	239.5	233.7	224.4	223.9	224.8	220.2	223.7
	AVG	238.4	-	245.9	237.9	226.7	218.2	230.1

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=84.38p Stg  
(ii) Shading indicates a lower price than the previous week.  
(iii) AVG is the average of all grades in the category, not just those listed

### REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 01/02/20	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	339.9	346.0	328.3
R3	336.3	340.2	327.2
O+3	328.2	331.1	321.6

\*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

### REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 01/02/20	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	157.6	167.3	176.5	186.8
P2	172.9	195.7	222.0	232.5
P3	203.3	214.6	234.0	242.4
O3	-	-	243.5	255.6
O4	-	-	244.2	258.6
R3	-	-	-	279.8

### LATEST LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 01/02/20	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
<b>Finished Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Steers	203	215	207	170	202	190
Friesians	163	171	167	130	159	149
Heifers	200	208	204	170	199	185
Beef Cows	140	185	152	115	139	125
Dairy Cows	113	132	118	75	112	95
<b>Store Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Bullocks up to 400kg	220	267	238	190	219	212
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	210	242	220	180	209	195
Bullocks over 500kg	205	222	212	170	204	190
Heifers up to 450kg	220	270	240	175	219	195
Heifers over 450kg	205	223	212	170	204	190
<b>Dropped Calves (£/head)</b>						
Continental Bulls	325	440	380	220	320	270
Continental Heifers	240	370	300	130	235	185
Friesian Bulls	165	255	180	100	160	130
Holstein Bulls	100	160	120	5	95	50

# SHEEP TRADE

## NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 03/02/20	Next Week 10/02/20
Hoggets up to 22kgs	430-445p	430-445p

## REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 18/01/20	W/E 25/01/20	W/E 01/02/20
NI L/W Hoggets	400.1	413.5	412.5
NI D/W Hoggets	420.7	431.2	435.0
GB D/W Hoggets	454.7	463.4	471.0
ROI D/W	429.4	439.1	431.0

## Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes from the major processors for R3 grading hoggets this week ranged from 430-445p/kg up to 22kg with similar quotes expected early next week. There were 7,174 hoggets killed in local plants last week, back 912 head from the previous week. This brings total throughput for hoggets in January 2020 to 39,234 head, up 28.6 per cent when compared to the 30,512 hoggets killed in January 2019. Last week 6,529 hoggets were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter taking the total for January 2020 to 36,144 head. This was a 4.2 per cent decrease from the 37,723 hoggets exported to the region in January 2019. The deadweight hogget price in NI last week was 435p/kg, up 3.8p/kg from the previous week. In the same week last year the NI deadweight hogget price was 436.9p/kg.

## This week's marts

Steady numbers of hoggets along with a steady trade have been reported across the local marts this week. In Omagh last Saturday 803 hoggets sold from 414-462p/kg while in Swatragh 710 hoggets sold from 385-443p/kg. In Saintfield this week a similar trade to last week was reported with 620 hoggets selling from 400-440p/kg. On Wednesday in Ballymena 1,410 hoggets sold from 385-464p/kg (avg 410p/kg) compared to 1,760 hoggets last week selling from 390-460p/kg (avg 410p/kg). In Arroy this week 364 hoggets sold from 408-458p/kg compared to 346 hoggets last week selling from 394-445p/kg. Good numbers of ewes passed through the marts this week with top reported prices ranging from £100-149.

## LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 31/01/20		Hoggets			
To: 06/02/20		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	190	375	461	-
Saturday	Swatragh	710	385	443	-
	Omagh	803	414	462	-
Monday	Massereene	726	410	454	-
	Kilrea	450	410	469	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	620	400	440	-
	Rathfriland	557	395	444	413
Wednesday	Ballymena	1410	385	464	410
	Enniskillen	689	400	453	-
	Arroy	364	408	458	-
	Markethill	950	400	460	-

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