LMC
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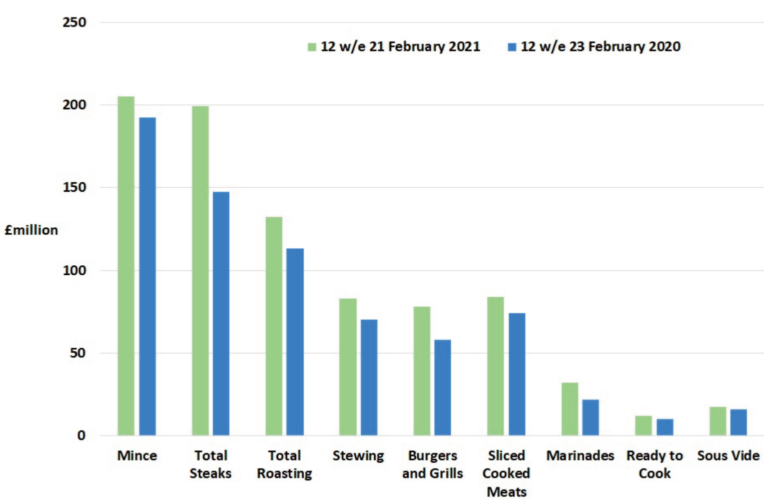
INCREASE IN GB RETAIL BEEF SALES

Retail beef sales in Great Britain have recorded a strong performance in recent weeks as more consumers have been preparing and cooking meals at home due to the major disruption to the foodservice sector from the on-going COVID-19 restrictions which have been in place over the past 12 months.

According to the latest available data from Kantar Worldpanel, spend on beef in GB during the 12 weeks ending 21 February 2021 has increased by 15.8 per cent year on year, totalling £1,152 million. Meanwhile volume sales of beef have grown by 12.7 per cent during this period to total 165,200 tonnes.

During the 12 week period ending 21 February 2021, spend on primary beef has grown 18.5 per cent, totalling £621.6 million. An 18.8 per cent increase in volume sales combined with a marginal decrease in average price contributed to the total increase in spend.

Figure 1: Value sales of GB retail beef by cut category during the 12 w/e 21 February 2021 and the corresponding period in 2020.



Processed beef also recorded growth in terms of both volume and value sales during the 12 week period. The overall value of processed beef sales increased by 22.2 per cent to total £165.9 million. Meanwhile volume sales increased by 20.6 per cent year on year and the average retail price increased by 1.4 per cent to £8.56/kg.

All beef cut categories recorded an increase in terms of value sales during the 12 week period when compared to the corresponding period in the previous year as outlined in **Figure 1**. The beef cut categories which recorded the greatest proportional increase in terms of value sales during the 12 week period were steaks, burgers and grills and marinades.

Steak volume sales in GB increased by 32.1 per cent during the 12 week period ending 21 February 2021. The increase in volume sales alongside a 2.2 per cent increase in average price led to total spend in this cut category to grow by 35 per cent, totalling £199.2 million.

Volume sales of burgers and grills also performed strongly during the 12 week period with retail volume sales totalling 12,300 tonnes. This 27.2 per cent increase in terms of volume combined with a 5.5 per cent increase in the average retail price to £6.32/kg contributed to a 34.2 per cent increase in the value of retail sales to £77.8 million.

Image 1: Total spend on retail beef in GB has increased by 15.8 per cent in the 12 w/e 21 February 2021 year on year.

Retail sales of beef marinades were valued at £32 million during the 12 weeks ending 21 February 2021, up 46.3 per cent from the corresponding period in the previous year. This strong growth was driven by a 25.8 per cent increase in the volume sales to 2,600 tonnes. The average price of marinades during this period increased by 16.2 per cent when compared to the same period last year.

All beef cut categories also recorded an increase in terms of volume sales during the 12 week period with the exception of sous vide beef. This cut category saw a marginal 0.8 per cent reduction to total 2,000 tonnes. However, this decline combined with a 9.6 per cent increase in average price led to an increase of 8.8 per cent in terms of spend in this category.

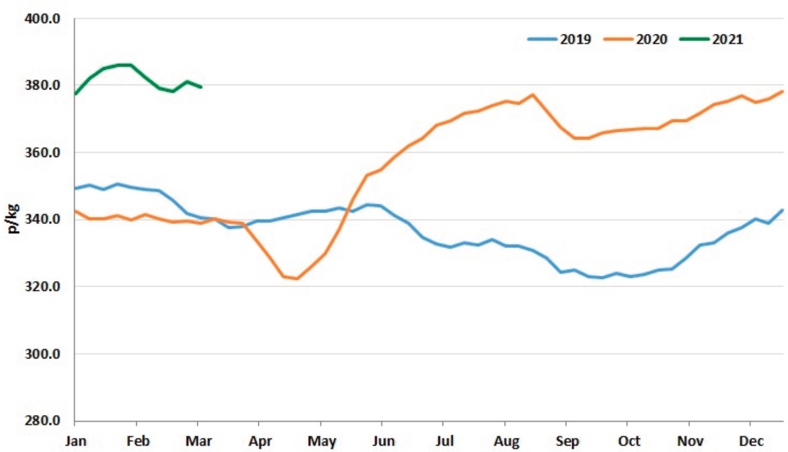
NI DEADWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE UPDATE

The deadweight prime cattle trade in Northern Ireland has held relatively steady in recent weeks. Quotes for in spec U-3 grading prime cattle this week ranged from 362-372p/kg with most of the local processing plants quoting in the range 366-372p/kg. This is well ahead of last year when quotes from local processors were in the range of 324-336p/kg.

The stronger quotes are being reflected in the paid prices of prime cattle with the average R3 steer price last week of 379.4p/kg as outlined in **Figure 2**. This is 39.1p/kg ahead of last year's levels which equates to £137 on a 350kg carcase.

The number of prime cattle passing through local processing plants this week totalled 6,667 head which takes the total throughput for the last six weeks to 40,274 head. This is a 4.9 per cent decrease from 2020 levels during the same period.

Figure 2: R3 steer prices in NI during 2019, 2020 and 2021.
Source: LMC Deadweight Cattle Price Reporting



The deadweight cow trade in NI is also well ahead of 2020 levels with quotes for good quality O+3 grading cows this week ranging from 265-280p/kg. The average O3 cow price last week in NI was 279.2p/kg which is 20.7p/kg ahead of the corresponding week last year and equates to £62 on a 300kg carcase.

Cow throughput in local plants during the last six weeks has totalled 10,857 head, back 852 head or 7.3 per cent from the same period in 2020.

The number of cattle imported to Northern Ireland for direct slaughter last week consisted of 399 prime cattle and 128 cows. This takes the total cattle imports for direct slaughter in local plants over the past six weeks to 1,921 head which is a decline of 152 head or 7.3 per cent from the corresponding period in 2020.

GREATER PROPORTION OF HOGGETS PROCESSED LOCALLY

Last week 7,724 hoggets passed through local processing plants in NI. This takes the total hogget throughput in the last six weeks to 44,126 head. These hoggets account for 64 per cent of the total output in NI during the last six weeks. During the corresponding period last year 36,438 hoggets were killed in local plants and accounted for 51 per cent of the total sheep output from NI.

As the proportion of hoggets killed locally has increased the proportion of hoggets exported from NI to the ROI for direct slaughter has decreased.

In the last six weeks 24,779 hoggets have been exported to the ROI for direct slaughter and accounted for the remaining 36 per cent of the total output in NI. During the same period last year 34,612 hoggets made the journey to processing plants in ROI for direct slaughter and accounted for 49 per cent of total NI output.

Figure 3: Proportion of NI hoggets processed locally in the six w/e 13 March 2021 compared to the corresponding period in 2020. Source: DAERA

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 15/03/21	Next Week 22/03/21
Prime		
U-3	362 - 372p	362 - 374p
R-3	356 - 366p	356 - 368p
O+3	350 - 360p	350 - 362p
P+3	296 - 310p	296 - 312p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3 & better	265 - 280p	265 - 280p
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.

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 13/03/21	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	380.7	384.1	372.0
R3	377.6	378.0	365.6
O+3	366.2	368.4	362.4

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 13/03/21	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	174.8	189.9	204.3	206.9
P2	199.4	221.1	243.1	256.3
P3	231.3	243.4	260.2	266.5
O3	-	-	273.5	279.5
O4	190.0	-	272.8	281.3
R3	-	-	-	298.0

Deadweight Cattle Trade

The deadweight trade for prime cattle slightly improved at the upper end this week with base quotes ranging from 362-372p/kg for in spec U-3 grading steers and heifers. With the range of quotes available producers are encouraged to shop around to get the best possible deal. Quotes for good quality O+3 grading cows have remained steady this week at 265-280p/kg with similar quotes expected on Monday.

The NI plants have reported steady supplies of prime cattle coming forward for slaughter with throughput last week totalling 6,667 head. This was up by just over 140 head from the previous week and back 486 head compared to the same week last year when 7,153 prime cattle were processed in local plants. Cow throughput decreased last week with 1,751 cows processed locally. This was back just over 200 cows compared to the same week last year when 1,953 cows were processed locally.

Imports for direct slaughter from ROI last week increased to 399 prime cattle and 128 cows with no cattle imported from GB for direct slaughter in local plants. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week included two clean cattle and 46 cows with no cattle exported from NI to GB last week for direct slaughter.

Last week the average steer price in NI was slightly back from the previous week at 370.6p/kg with the R3 steer price back by 1.8p/kg to 379.4p/kg. Meanwhile last week the average heifer price and R3 heifer price in NI were both marginally up from the previous week to 369.7p/kg and 378.1p/kg respectively. The average young bull price was 356.5p/kg, up 1.6p/kg from the previous week with the R3 young bull price up by almost 4p/kg to 367.3p/kg. The deadweight cow trade in NI came under pressure last week with the average NI cow price back 8p/kg to 255.3p/kg and the O3 cow price back 5.3p/kg from the previous week to 279.2p/kg.

In GB last week the prime cattle trade reported improvements from the previous week across the majority of grades. The average steer price in GB last week increased by 4.2p/kg to 382.2p/kg with the R3 steer price increasing by a similar margin to 387.9p/kg. This increase in the average GB R3 steer price has widened the differential between NI and GB to 8.5p/kg last week. The average heifer price in GB last week improved by 3.2p/kg to 380.5p/kg with the R3 heifer price up by just over 3p/kg to 387.3p/kg. This puts the differential in R3 heifers prices between the regions at 9.2p/kg last week. The deadweight cow trade in GB also recorded a strengthening in prices last week with the average cow price up by 2.8p/kg to 262.4p/kg and the O3 cow price up by 3.2p/kg to 283p/kg. This places it at 3.8p/kg above the O3 cow price in NI.

Deadweight prime cattle prices in ROI strengthened in euro terms last week however a weakening euro against sterling resulted in steer and heifer prices generally decreasing in sterling terms. The R3 steer price was back by 0.8p/kg last week to 327.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price decreased by 1.6p/kg to 330.5p/kg. Prime cattle throughput in ROI last week totalled 24,250 head, back 12 per cent from 27,580 head processed in the same week last year.

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

W/E 13/03/21		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	381.1	338.2	391.6	390.5	395.7	393.1	392.8
	R3	379.4	327.5	391.7	387.4	388.2	384.6	387.9
	R4	377.5	327.5	393.1	389.9	387.8	383.2	390.1
	O3	368.0	313.6	375.1	370.4	363.8	361.3	366.5
	AVG	370.6	-	390.1	382.0	379.7	374.5	382.2
Heifers	U3	382.5	342.6	399.6	396.4	400.1	398.6	398.6
	R3	378.1	330.5	392.7	386.6	387.9	384.2	387.3
	R4	375.1	331.6	394.6	386.8	387.4	382.1	389.2
	O3	368.3	320.1	378.4	368.2	362.2	360.1	364.9
	AVG	369.7	-	391.7	379.7	377.0	371.4	380.5
Young Bulls	U3	370.2	322.9	384.5	386.7	383.2	379.6	384.0
	R3	367.3	312.1	379.3	381.2	379.9	370.1	378.9
	O3	352.7	297.9	345.6	370.9	349.0	335.2	357.1
	AVG	356.5	-	362.8	369.2	362.0	366.1	364.5
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5226	-	6772	6642	7545	4625	25584
Cows	O3	279.2	261.9	280.8	284.8	285.1	275.8	283.0
	O4	280.4	261.7	286.0	290.4	283.3	276.8	284.5
	P2	243.7	235.5	245.5	236.5	238.4	237.7	238.4
	P3	263.5	251.3	253.4	260.7	259.8	255.5	258.2
	AVG	255.3	-	277.2	275.3	257.7	249.6	262.4

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.72p 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

LATEST LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 13/03/21	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	226	245	233	200	225	212
Friesians	174	191	180	160	173	166
Heifers	216	233	224	200	214	207
Beef Cows	153	210	170	125	152	138
Dairy Cows	120	146	126	100	119	112
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	252	290	268	210	250	225
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	225	252	240	200	224	215
Bullocks over 500kg	215	241	225	180	214	203
Heifers up to 450kg	245	300	265	215	244	228
Heifers over 450kg	225	261	235	195	224	210
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls under 2mths	400	490	430	300	395	350
Continental Heifers under 2mths	335	425	375	230	330	280
Friesian Bulls under 3mths	190	255	225	125	185	155
Holstein Bulls under 3mths	125	180	155	20	120	70

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 15/03/21	Next Week 22/03/21
R3 Hoggets up to 22kg (with one processor paying up to 23kg)	600 - 610p	600 - 610p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 27/02/21	W/E 06/03/21	W/E 13/03/21
NI L/W Hoggets	539.9	561.0	563.1
NI D/W Hoggets	572.3	589.7	612.7
GB D/W Hoggets	613.9	615.3	634.1
ROI D/W	567.1	588.7	592.3

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Base quotes from the plants for R3 grading hoggets increased at the start of this week ranging from 600-610p/kg up to 22kg with one processor paying up to 23kg. The NI plants are reporting steady numbers of hoggets to meet demand with 7,724 hoggets processed last week. This was a similar throughput from the 7,743 processed locally during the previous week. Exports to ROI for direct slaughter decreased by 137 head to 3,741 hoggets exported last week. This was well back from 5,009 hoggets exported in the same week last year. The deadweight hogget price in NI last week reported a record price of 612.7p/kg an increase of 23p/kg from the previous week. The NI deadweight hogget price has increased by 119p/kg from the beginning of January 2021, which equates to over £26 on a 22kg carcase.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Smaller numbers of hoggets passed through many of the marts this week with trade remaining firm. In Swaragh last Saturday 700 hoggets sold from 521-646p/kg compared to 700 hoggets the previous week selling from 493-629p/kg. In Massereene on Monday 428 hoggets sold from 560-615p/kg compared to 658 hoggets last week selling from 550-609p/kg. In Rathfriland this week 300 hoggets sold from 580-656p/kg (avg 590p/kg) compared to 411 hoggets last week selling from 540-629p/kg (avg 571p/kg). In Markethill this week 550 hoggets sold from 560-614p/kg compared to 710 hoggets last week selling from 550-636p/kg. Good numbers of cull ewes passed through the marts with a strong trade of top prices ranging from £137-£195.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 13/03/21		Hoggets			
To: 18/03/21		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	616	574	641	-
	Swatragh	700	521	646	-
Monday	Massereene	428	560	615	-
	Kilrea	400	582	641	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	285	550	635	-
	Rathfriland	300	580	656	590
Wednesday	Ballymena	1255	550	651	566
	Enniskillen	829	555	683	-
	Armoy	284	558	655	-
	Markethill	550	560	614	-

Strict Covid - 19 restrictions are in place across all of the livestock marts

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