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NI DEADWEIGHT LAMB TRADE EASES BACK AS NUMBERS INCREASE

Base quotes from the three major lamb processing plants in Northern Ireland ranged from 580-590p/kg for R3 grading lambs up to 21kg early this week and came back to 565-570p/kg up to 21kg as the week progressed.

The downward movement in the R3 base quotes is being reflected in the paid prices with last week's NI deadweight lamb price of 576.8p/kg. This is a decline of 16.3p/kg from the previous week when the deadweight lamb price in NI was 593.1p/kg. However while there has been some downward movement in the lamb trade in recent weeks the price still remains well ahead of previous years as outlined in **Figure 2**.

In the corresponding week last year the NI deadweight lamb price was 472.7p/kg, which is 104.1p/kg behind last weeks price. This equates to an additional £22 on a 21kg lamb carcase. Meanwhile last week's deadweight lamb price was 150.2p/kg ahead of the relative week in 2019 equating to an additional £32 on a 21kg carcase.

Supplies of lambs in Northern Ireland for processing have continued to increase in recent weeks with 8,926 lambs killed in local plants last week. This takes total lamb/hogget throughput during the last 12 weeks to 79,812 head which is an increase of 8,125 head or 11.3 per cent from the 71,687 lambs/hoggets processed in local plants during the relative period in 2020.

Figure 1: Average NI deadweight lamb price during the week ending 12 June 2021 and the corresponding weeks in 2020 and 2019. Source: DAERA

Great Britain

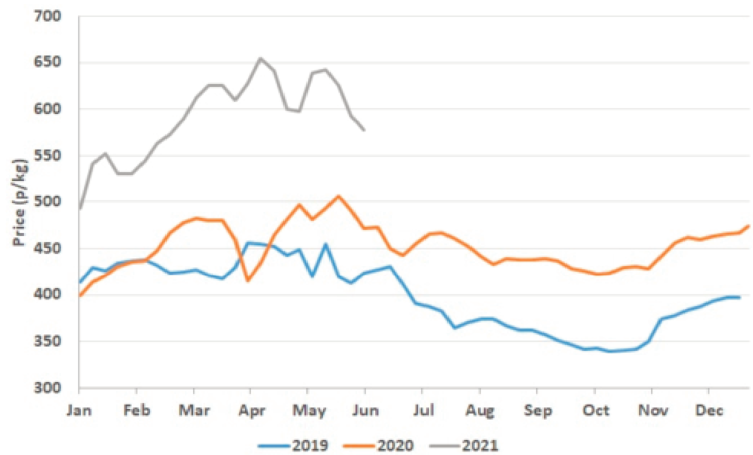
The deadweight lamb trade in GB has also come back from the previous week with last week's deadweight lamb price of 665.2p/kg, down 4.3p/kg from the previous week. This puts last weeks price in GB at 172.5p/kg ahead of the same period last year and 213.7p/kg ahead of the same week in 2019.

Republic of Ireland

Deadweight lamb prices in ROI have come under pressure in recent weeks. Last weeks deadweight lamb price in ROI was the equivalent 620.4p/kg which is back 12.6p/kg from the previous week. Last weeks price was 138p/kg ahead of the same week in 2020 and 160.3p/kg ahead of 2019.

It should be noted that the deadweight lamb prices in NI, GB and ROI are determined by the relative authority in each region. Slightly different methods are used to calculate these prices due to various factors such as EU Commission agreed distinctions for individual member states (and regions of member states). For this reason it is not possible to make direct comparisons between the deadweight lamb prices in the three regions. However the data does provide a key insight into the direction of the trade in each of the three regions.

Figure 2: Weekly average deadweight lamb/hogget price in Northern Ireland 2019-2021. Source: DAERA



INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CATTLE FOR BEEF PRODUCTION EXPECTED

During the 12 weeks ending 12 June 2021 prime cattle throughput in Northern Ireland totalled 78,016 head which is a 4,437 head or six per cent increase year on year. Supplies of prime cattle are expected to remain above 2020 levels with the latest figures made available from APHIS indicating that there will be a greater proportion of slaughter ready cattle to become available as we move into the second half of 2021.

Table 1 outlines the number of cattle for beef production on NI farms categorised by age at the end of May 2021 which includes beef sired male and female cattle and dairy sired male cattle. As displayed in the table, at the end of May 2021 there were 115,370 cattle on local farms for beef production aged between 24-30 months. This was a decline of just over seven per cent from 2020 levels and 12.4 per cent from 2019 levels.

Cattle for beef production on local farms aged between 18-24 months totalled 119,618 head at the end of May 2021 which is an increase of 13 per cent relative to 2020 levels during the same period. This takes the total number of cattle for beef production aged between 18-30 months of age on local farms to 234,988 head, up almost 5,000 head or 2.2 per cent from the same period last year. Beef cattle in these two age groups will provide the bulk of prime cattle throughput in local plants during the next six months.

Meanwhile cattle in the 12-18 month age range at the end of May 2021 will provide the bulk of the prime cattle throughput during the end of 2021 and the first half of 2022. At the end of May there were 230,833 prime cattle on the ground in this age range. This is up marginally from May 2020 and May 2019 levels.

At the end of May 2021 there were 162,548 cattle in the 6-12 month age category, up 16,618 head or 11.4 per cent from 2020 levels and over 25,000 head or 18.2 per cent from 2019 levels. Similarly, cattle for beef production in the 0-6 month age bracket have increased 15.1 per cent when compared to figures from the end of May 2020 and almost 17 per cent relative to May 2019.

Table 1: Number of cattle for beef production on NI farms at the end of May 2021, 2020 and 2019. Source: APHIS

Age (months)	2019	2020	2021	2020/2021 % change	2019/2021 % change
0-6	197,849	200,974	231,282	+15.1%	+16.9%
6-12	137,537	145,930	162,548	+11.4%	+18.2%
12-18	229,909	229,687	230,883	+0.5%	+0.4%
18-24	107,054	105,840	119,618	+13.0%	+11.7%
24-30	131,745	124,202	115,370	-7.1%	-12.4%
30 +	292,891	291,330	287,839	-1.2%	-1.7%

REDUCTION IN GB PRIME CATTLE SLAUGHTERINGS

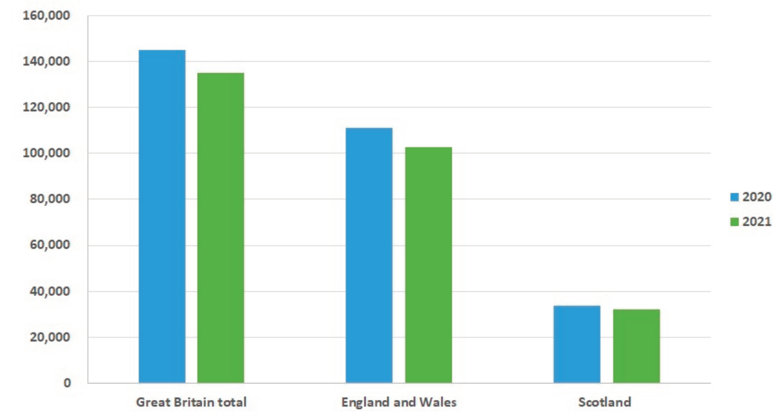
Prime cattle throughput in Great Britain during May 2021 totalled 134,819 head according to the latest available figures from DEFRA. This is back over 10,000 head or seven per cent relative to May 2020 when 144,834 prime cattle were processed in this region.

This takes the total prime cattle throughput in Great Britain to 690,479 head during January to May of this year. This equates to a 3.3 per cent reduction in prime cattle slaughterings year on year.

The number of prime cattle processed during May 2021 in the regions of Scotland and England and Wales decreased when compared to the same period in 2020 as outlined in **Figure 3**.

Prime cattle throughput in Scotland totalled 31,982 head during May 2021 which is back 1,732 head or just over five per cent from May 2020. Meanwhile the number of prime called processed in England and Wales totalled 102,837 head during May 2021, back 7.4 per cent year on year.

Figure 3: Prime cattle throughput in Great Britain by region during May 2021 and May 2020. Source: DEFRA



WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 14/06/21	Next Week 21/06/21
Prime		
U-3	362 - 382p	370 - 382p
R-3	356 - 376p	364 - 376p
O+3	350 - 370p	358 - 370p
P+3	296 - 320p	304 - 320p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3	265 - 290p	270 - 290p

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 12/06/21	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	393.0	393.6	385.5
R3	386.6	390.7	382.3
O+3	377.1	382.9	367.9

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 12/06/21	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	188.1	203.0	214.6	236.2
P2	215.6	237.3	257.3	266.6
P3	245.0	266.8	274.6	279.4
O3	-	-	290.3	298.5
O4	-	-	292.2	300.2
R3	-	-	-	316.4

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Quotes for in-spec U-3 grade prime cattle ended this week ranging from 362-382p/kg with the majority of plants quoting in the region of 372-382p/kg. Quotes of 370-382p/kg are expected for early next week however with reports of higher prices available producers should use these base quotes as a starting point for negotiation. Quotes this week from the plants for good quality O+3 remained steady at 265-290p/kg.

Throughput of prime cattle in NI last week totalled 6,501 head. This was back slightly from the previous week and back 232 head from the 6,733 prime cattle processed locally during the corresponding week in 2020. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 1,705 head, marginally up from the previous week and 390 head lower than the 2,095 cows processed in the same week in 2020.

Prime cattle imports from ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 325 head and accounted for five per cent of the total NI prime cattle kill. In the corresponding week last year 522 prime cattle were imported from ROI for direct slaughter in NI and accounted for 7.8 per cent of the total NI prime cattle kill. A further 66 cows were imported last week from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants. Meanwhile exports from NI to ROI last week consisted of 19 prime cattle, 14 cows and four bulls while a further 10 prime cattle and one cow made the journey to GB for direct slaughter.

The NI deadweight trade for cattle continued to improve last week with the majority of grades generally increasing in the region of 1 to 3p/kg from the previous week. The average NI steer price slightly increased to 379.7p/kg while the R3 steer price was up by 0.3p/kg to 388.3p/kg. Last week the average NI heifer price reported an increase of just over 2p/kg to 383.7p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by 1.4p/kg to 391.8p/kg. The average NI young bull price last week held steady at 370p/kg while the R3 young bull price increased by 3.3p/kg to 381.9p/kg. Meanwhile the cow trade in NI came under pressure last week with the average cow price back by 6.8p/kg from the previous week to 273.7p/kg with the O3 cow price back by 2.2p/kg to 298.1p/kg.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle continued to come under pressure in GB last week. The average steer price decreased by 1.6p/kg to 390.8p/kg with the R3 steer price back by 2.8p/kg to 395.3p/kg. The differential in the R3 steer price between NI and GB narrowed from the previous week by just over 3p/kg to 7p/kg last week. The average heifer price in GB last week was back by 1.7p/kg to 390.3p/kg while the R3 heifer price decreased by 2.8p/kg to 395.1p/kg. The differential in R3 heifer prices between NI and GB last week narrowed by 4.2p/kg to 3.3p/kg when compared to the previous week.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in ROI strengthened last week when compared to the previous week. The R3 steer price last week increased by the equivalent of 1.4p/kg to 359p/kg with the R3 heifer price up by 0.8p/kg to the equivalent of 361.6p/kg, 30.2p/kg less than the same price in NI. The O3 cow price in ROI was up by 1.6p/kg to the equivalent of 285.2p/kg, almost 13p/kg below the O3 cow price in NI.

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

W/E 12/06/21		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	391.4	369.3	407.4	399.6	398.8	400.2	402.1
	R3	388.3	359.0	410.6	394.8	390.0	388.8	395.3
	R4	385.1	359.7	410.5	400.3	389.6	387.5	401.1
	O3	376.7	345.1	393.6	379.5	370.4	369.4	376.0
	AVG	379.7	-	406.0	390.8	382.1	380.6	390.8
Heifers	U3	393.4	373.8	419.5	409.2	403.4	405.8	409.9
	R3	391.8	361.6	410.2	395.2	392.3	387.6	395.1
	R4	387.7	362.4	411.9	397.1	392.4	387.6	400.4
	O3	380.5	351.4	387.1	375.2	370.8	364.6	372.4
	AVG	383.7	-	408.5	390.4	382.4	376.4	390.3
Young Bulls	U3	385.3	357.5	403.2	392.2	394.7	391.8	398.4
	R3	381.9	347.8	401.1	386.2	386.9	382.3	390.7
	O3	363.1	329.8	371.6	351.9	362.8	362.3	362.4
	AVG	370.0	-	395.3	376.3	377.5	380.8	383.8
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5282	-	6675	6754	6705	4404	24538
Cows	O3	298.1	285.2	304.6	305.2	302.4	300.7	303.4
	O4	300.0	285.8	307.3	306.4	304.1	300.0	304.7
	P2	255.9	263.6	260.6	257.4	262.1	262.4	261.4
	P3	277.7	277.0	278.2	277.8	278.7	278.1	278.4
	AVG	273.7	-	303.9	291.4	279.3	273.6	284.8

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=86.00p 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 12/06/21	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	240	255	246	205	239	222
Friesians	184	203	189	149	183	166
Heifers	220	248	230	200	219	208
Beef Cows	183	236	195	144	182	163
Dairy Cows	128	163	136	105	127	115
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	240	294	265	210	239	222
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	230	273	240	200	229	215
Bullocks over 500kg	208	222	215	175	207	190
Heifers up to 450kg	235	294	245	205	234	218
Heifers over 450kg	227	239	233	208	226	217
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls up to 3 months	420	620	465	325	415	375
Continental Heifers up to 3 months	375	510	425	250	370	300
Friesian Bulls up to 2 months	160	220	180	100	155	125
Holstein Bulls up to 3 months	120	180	145	10	115	65

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 14/06/21	Next Week 21/06/21
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	580 - 590p	565 - 570p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 29/05/21	W/E 05/06/21	W/E 12/06/21
NI L/W Lambs	591.1	546.4	544.2
NI D/W Lambs	624.8	593.1	576.8
GB D/W Lambs	663.7	669.5	665.2
ROI D/W	654.4	633.0	620.4

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes from the local processors for R3 grading lambs came back 15-20p/kg mid week and ended this week ranging from 565-570p/kg up to 21kg. Similar quotes are expected early next week. Lamb supplies increased last week with 8,926 lambs processed in local plants, up 394 lambs from the previous week. This is the highest weekly throughput of lambs/hoggets to date in 2021. In the same week last year 9,831 lambs were processed locally. A further 3,496 lambs were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week, an increase of 1,374 lambs from the previous week. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 576.8p/kg, a decrease of 16.3p/kg from the previous week. The average ROI lamb price last week was back the equivalent of 12.6p/kg from the previous week to 620.4p/kg.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

The numbers of lambs presented for sale across many of the marts this week generally increased with trade back from last week. In Omagh last weekend 370 lambs sold from 513-554p/kg compared to 557 lambs the previous week selling from 539-582p/kg. On Monday in Massereene 612 lambs sold from 535-566p/kg compared to 517 lambs last week selling from 550-595p/kg. In Ballymena this week a good entry of 1,401 lambs sold from 510-566p/kg (avg 530p/kg) compared to 950 lambs last week selling from 540-604p/kg (avg 559p/kg). In Enniskillen on Wednesday 402 lambs sold from 512-576p/kg compared to 384 lambs last week selling from 538-590p/kg. Top reported prices for first quality fat ewes ranged from £136-£196 across the marts.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 12/06/21		Lambs			
To: 17/06/21		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	370	513	554	-
	Swatragh	750	521	596	-
Monday	Kilrea	400	544	581	-
	Massereene	612	535	566	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	675	525	590	-
	Rathfriland	617	510	570	538
Wednesday	Ballymena	1401	510	566	530
	Enniskillen	402	512	576	-
	Armoy	314	530	570	-
	Markethill	820	510	539	-

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