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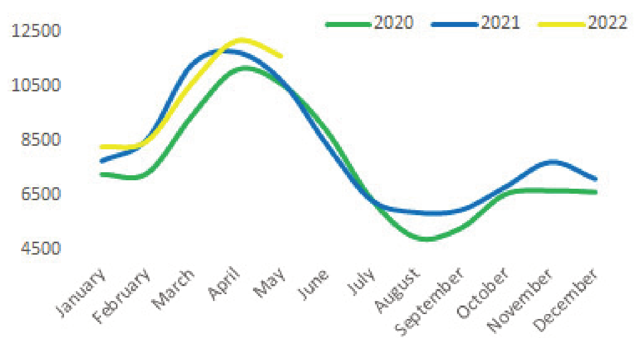
STRONG SUPPLIES OF ABERDEEN ANGUS CATTLE AVAILABLE FOR SLAUGHTER

Strong demand for Aberdeen Angus (AA) cattle and bonuses at point of slaughter in several of the local major processing plants have created a strong demand for these types of cattle at all stages of the beef supply chain. this has meant a steady increase in the number of Aberdeen Angus cattle on farms in Northern Ireland.

AA Calf Registrations

Aberdeen Angus calf registrations in Northern Ireland have been steadily increasing as outlined in **Figure 1**. There were 51,260 AA calves registered from January to the close of May this year, accounting for 26.3 per cent of all beef calf registrations in the region. This was an increase from 50,109 AA registrations recorded during the corresponding 2021 period which also accounted for 26.3 per cent of all beef sired calf registrations. 2022 figures were up by 5,527 head from 2020 when 45,733 AA calf registrations were recorded in NI during the first five months of the year. Most of the increase in AA registrations in Northern Ireland have been to dairy cows attributed to the benefits of a smaller calf size, shorter gestation and a higher value calf at market, all benefitting the dairy producer. There has also however been some growth in the number of AA calves registered to suckler cows.

Figure 1: Aberdeen Angus calf registrations in NI have increased during 2020, 2021, and 2022 to date. Source: APHIS/DAERA.



AA Cattle Slaughter Throughput

The increase in AA calf registrations has resulted in an increase in the number of AA cattle being presented for slaughter in local plants. During the first five months of 2022 there have been 29,733 price reported AA steers and heifers in the prime cattle kill in Northern Ireland, equating to 26.8 per cent of the total price reported steer and heifer kill. This is a notable 22.9 per cent increase from the 24,197 head killed in the same period in 2021. The level of AA cattle in the 2022 slaughter mix equates to a 20.2 per cent increase from the 24,745 head recorded during the relative period in 2020, which was also up 1,961 head, or 8.6 per cent from the year prior when there was 22,784 AA steers and heifers in the slaughter mix from January to May. This is a notable shift in a three year period and reflects how NI beef producers are shaping the production base to supply cattle that are in high demand.

Bonus Scheme Insight

The Aberdeen Angus bonus scheme adds value to our beef industry, in addition to producing quality beef, the rigorous yet extremly simple verification process involving sire identity vertification before registration, followed by DNA sampling in the processing plant lairage, adds value through improved supply chain transparency. Meanwhile monitoring and reporting antibiotic usage per kilo of beef produced, the requirement for the animal to be grass fed for a given period and encouraging use of high genetic merit bulls are driving sustainability advances at farm level, with one NI processor offering semen from high EBV profile bulls.

Use of earlier maturing breeds provides producers with an opportunity to achieve a premium price per kg of beef produced, with the maximum bonus available across the NI plants currently in the region of 30p/kg, equating to an additional £105 on a 350kg steer carcase. However, this system does not suit everyone. Traditional breeds of cattle such as the AA tend to finish at lower carcase weights and ages than continental bred cattle, and therefore the overall value of the finished animal may not necessarily be any higher at point of slaughter despite the bonuses available.

Grassland management is vital when finishing these animals as meal costs can quickly deplete the bonus margin. Producers should consult with the procurement staff of individual processing plants before changing their production systems to ensure there is an outlet for the cattle they are finishing, and ensure the AA animals they are finishing comply with the bonus specification.

CATTLE ON THE GROUND MAY 2022

Figure 2: Cattle on local farms for beef production by age category at the end of May 2022, 2021 and 2020. Source: APHIS/DAERA.

Age Category		0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 months	18-24 months	24-30 months	30+ months
Head per year	2020	200,974	145,930	229,687	105,840	124,202	291,330
	2021	231,282	162,548	230,883	119,618	115,370	287,839
	2022	227,234	165,632	230,802	118,306	114,177	288,954

Figure 2 outlines the number of cattle on local farms at the end of May 2022 compared to the same period in 2021 and 2020. The figures include all beef sired cattle and dairy sired males.

At the end of May 2022 there were 118,306 cattle in the 18-24 month age category on local farms. This is a decrease of 1.1 per cent from May 2021 levels. These cattle will provide the bulk of prime cattle throughput during the next six months.

In the 24-30 month age category there were 114,177 cattle at the end of May 2022. This is a one per cent decline from May 2021 levels and a more significant 8.1 per cent decline from 2020 levels.

This brings the total number of cattle between 18-30 months to 232,483 head. This is a decrease of 1.1 per cent or 2,505 head from May 2021 levels.

Despite a significant uplift in the prime cattle kill in the first half of 2022 relative to 2021, figures suggest that cattle availability for slaughter will be slightly tighter in the second half of the year. The number of cattle on the ground between 0-18 months is also marginally back by 0.2 per cent in May 2022 relative to 2021.

The number of cattle in the 12-18 month category has remained steady from May 2021 levels and recorded a marginal increase of 0.5 percent from May 2020 levels.

The number of cattle in both the 6-12 month and 0-6 month age category have recorded increased numbers over the two year period from May 2020 of 13.5 and 13.1 per cent respectively. This increase was driven by the increased numbers of calf registrations during 2021.

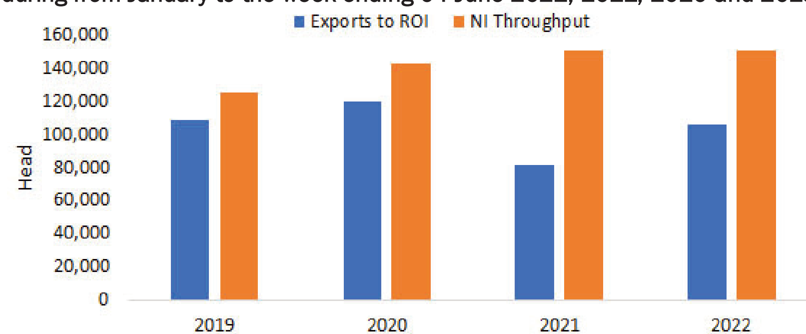
NI LAMB EXPORT NUMBERS EDGE TOWARD PRE-BREXIT LEVELS

Last week 4,132 lambs were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter. This brings the total exports from January to the week ending 04 June 2022 to 106,452 head, a 30.6 per cent increase from the corresponding period last year, and 13,984 head behind 2020. Similar to 2019 levels as shown in **Figure 3.**

These lambs/hoggets exported to ROI for direct slaughter accounted for 41.4 per cent of total lamb output from the NI sheep sector between January to date in 2022. This is up from the same period in 2021 when the 81,501 lambs exported accounted for 35 per cent of total output from the NI sheep flock.

The live export of lambs/hoggets to ROI for direct slaughter provides a valuable outlet for the NI sheep industry however these lambs are equally important to processors in ROI who rely on access to NI origin lambs to help maintain plant throughput. From January until the week ending 04 June 2022 NI origin lambs/hoggets accounted for 10.3 per cent of total lamb/hogget throughput in ROI plants, up slightly from 9.3 per cent in the corresponding period in 2021.

Figure 3: NI lamb/hogget throughput vs NI lambs/hoggets slaughtered in ROI during from January to the week ending 04 June 2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019.



WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 06/06/22	Next Week 13/06/22
Prime		
U-3	424 - 432p	422 - 432p
R-3	418 - 426p	416 - 426p
O+3	412 - 420p	410 - 420p
P+3	356 - 364p	354- 364p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3	280 - 360p	280 - 360p

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 04/06/22	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	446.4	449.5	439.9
R3	441.7	443.4	433.9
O+3	433.8	435.3	423.9

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 04/06/22	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	265.7	281.3	293.6	313.0
P2	285.0	312.2	339.3	349.1
P3	279.5	332.4	345.8	356.7
O3	-	362.5	375.9	378.6
O4	312.0	380.0	374.0	381.4
R3	-	-	-	397.4

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for in-spec U-3 grading steers and heifers ended this week ranging from 422-432p/kg. With a range in the base quotes available producers are encouraged to shop around for the best deal and to use these quotes as a starting point for negotiation. Quotes for O+3 grading cows this week held steady ranging from 280-360p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for all types of cattle early next week.

Last week 6,943 prime cattle were processed in NI beef processing plants back 883 head from the 7,826 prime cattle processed during the previous week. However, this is an increase from the same week last year when 6,581 prime cattle were processed locally. Cow throughput also decreased last week with 1,733 cows processed in local plants. This was back from the 2,165 cows processed during the previous week and up from the 1,649 cows processed in the same week in 2021.

Imports from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants last week consisted of 201 prime cattle and 64 cows and one bull with no cattle imported from GB for direct slaughter locally. Meanwhile exports of cattle out of NI for direct slaughter last week totalled 128 head with four prime cattle, 118 cows and six bulls exported to ROI. No cattle were exported to GB for direct slaughter.

The NI deadweight prime cattle trade last week reported improvements from the previous week across all of the grades. The average NI steer price last week increased by half a penny to 431.3p/kg while the R3 steer price was up by 2.9p/kg to 443.1p/kg. The average NI heifer price and R3 heifer price both increased by 3.7p/kg last week to 436.8p/kg and 444.8p/kg respectively. The average young bull price in NI last week increased by 2.5p/kg to 423.2p/kg while the R3 young bull price was up 3.5p/kg 434p/kg. The NI cow trade also improved last week from the previous week with the average cow price up by 7.4p/kg to 351.7p/kg and the O3 cow price increasing by almost 7p/kg to 378.1p/kg.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in GB seen some improvement last week from the week prior. Last week the average GB steer price was up 1.7p/kg to 440.2p/kg while the average R3 steer price reported an increase of 2.3p/kg to 446.5p/kg. The differential between NI and the GB R3 steer price last week narrowed from the previous week to 3.4p/kg. The average heifer price in GB last week was 441.4p/kg, up 1.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by half a penny from the previous week to 447.1p/kg. This puts the R3 heifer price in GB at 2.3p/kg above NI levels. The average cow price in GB decreased by 1.6p/kg to 360.5p/kg last week, however the O3 cow price in GB increased by 0.3p/kg from the previous week to 381.8p/kg.

In ROI last week the R3 steer price strengthened 5.7p/kg from the previous week to the equivalent of 456.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up by the equivalent of 6.3p/kg to 457.9p/kg. Meanwhile last week the O3 cow price was the equivalent of 405.6p/kg up 8p/kg from the previous week and 27.5p/kg ahead of the same price in NI.

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

W/E 04/06/22		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	447.1	463.9	446.5	450.8	451.6	453.8	450.3
	R3	443.1	456.5	446.0	450.5	445.7	444.1	446.5
	R4	440.8	459.1	445.4	449.7	445.0	445.8	446.6
	O3	428.9	449.6	434.9	432.9	428.0	423.7	428.8
	AVG	431.3	-	442.4	444.0	438.6	435.0	440.2
Heifers	U3	449.1	468.3	455.4	455.7	455.5	454.2	455.3
	R3	444.8	457.9	450.6	450.2	446.5	442.5	447.1
	R4	441.8	460.3	450.2	450.6	446.5	442.8	448.6
	O3	431.4	455.7	433.5	436.2	424.5	423.6	427.6
	AVG	436.8	-	448.8	445.8	437.1	432.2	441.4
Young Bulls	U3	440.3	455.7	442.7	443.4	449.2	434.8	443.6
	R3	434.0	448.6	438.6	441.4	442.7	441.6	440.9
	O3	416.1	431.6	410.1	421.9	413.1	399.2	415.1
	AVG	423.2	-	436.8	434.7	432.7	426.0	433.8
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5,836	-	5,485	5,297	6,308	3,875	20,965
Cows	O3	378.1	405.6	386.3	382.5	379.4	383.7	381.8
	O4	380.7	405.7	389.2	385.8	382.1	380.7	383.6
	P2	334.8	379.8	337.8	343.0	341.5	338.3	340.5
	P3	351.4	398.0	363.0	359.7	361.6	357.0	360.1
	AVG	351.7	-	384.6	372.2	353.1	356.0	360.5

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.21p 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 04/06/22	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	275	290	282	225	274	249
Friesians	200	228	214	185	199	192
Heifers	250	289	269	215	249	232
Beef Cows	240	272	256	200	239	219
Dairy Cows	165	203	184	120	164	142
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	222	245	233	206	221	213
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	233	280	256	200	231	215
Bullocks over 500kg	238	283	260	178	237	207
Heifers up to 450kg	244	267	255	207	243	225
Heifers over 450kg	221	260	240	185	220	202
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	395	475	435	230	390	310
Continental Heifers	310	405	355	200	305	250
Friesian Bulls	200	245	220	80	195	135
Holstein Bulls	90	220	155	1	85	40

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 06/06/22	Next Week 13/06/22
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	640-650p	655-660p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 21/05/22	W/E 28/05/22	W/E 04/06/22
NI L/W Lambs	601.5	607.8	614.8
NI D/W Lambs	618.8	623.7	629.1
GB D/W Lambs	672.0	661.5	684.7
ROI D/W	648.6	658.4	666.4

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes from the plants for R3 grading lambs ended this week ranging from 655-660p/kg up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in NI plants last week totalled 6,273 head. This is a decrease of 838 head from the previous week and a decline from the same week in 2021 when 8,532 lambs were processed locally. A further 4,132 lambs were exported to ROI for direct slaughter last week, up 1,101 head from the previous week. In the same week last year 2,122 lambs were exported to ROI for direct slaughter. Last week the average NI deadweight lamb price increased by 5.4p/kg to 629.1p/kg. In the corresponding week last year the deadweight lamb price was 593.1p/kg. In ROI last week the average lamb price was the equivalent of 666.4p/kg, up 8p/kg from the previous week.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

This week a good trade was reported across the marts with steady numbers passing through many of the sale rings. On Monday in Kilrea 450 lambs sold from 608-637p/kg compared to 350 lambs last week selling from 591-668p/kg. On Tuesday in Saintfield 555 lambs sold from 615-650p/kg compared to 640 lambs selling from 610-655p/kg last week. In Rathfriland this week 456 lambs sold from 610-650p/kg (avg 624p/kg) compared to 555 lambs last week selling from 590-615p/kg (avg 600p/kg). On Wednesday in Markethill 720 lambs sold from 620-667p/kg compared to 820 lambs selling from 610-660p/kg last week. The strong trade continues for well fleshed cull ewes with top reported prices this week ranging from £170-£286.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 04/06/22		Lambs			
To: 08/06/22		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Swatragh	580	560	700	-
	Omagh	415	584	623	-
Monday	Kilrea	450	608	637	-
	Massereene	393	600	631	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	555	615	650	-
	Rathfriland	456	610	650	624
Wednesday	Ballymena	1102	600	669	630
	Enniskillen	384	602	661	-
	Armoy	312	600	658	-
	Markethill	720	620	667	-

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