

SCHOOLS COMPETITION FURTHER CEMENTS LINK BETWEEN LIVESTOCK FARMING AND YOUNG PEOPLE

LMC chief executive Ian Stevenson has hailed the continuing success of the Meat4Schools competition as a further example of the commitment made by his organisation to communicating the dietary benefits of beef and lamb to young people.

The initiative first saw the light of day as a pilot project back in September 2019. But such was its popularity with both teachers and students that the competition has taken on a life of its own in the intervening period.

“Meat4Schools totally complements the cookery demonstrations that are hosted by the Commission in schools across Northern Ireland on an annual basis,” Ian confirmed

“This year, a total of 375 demonstrations have been requested by teachers. Given the resources available and the ongoing challenges of Covid-19, this is the maximum number of school visits that we can facilitate.”

He added: One key benefit of Meat4Schools is the fact that it gives equal prominence to both beef and lamb. And I am happy to confirm that both meats have been very well represented in the recipe ideas that we received from those taking part in the 2021/22 competition.

“Lamb is often portrayed as a meat that is more suited to older people. Obviously, this is not the case. LMC is totally committed to promoting lamb as a meat to be enjoyed by people of all ages.

Those taking part in Meat4Schools are invited to profile the significance of Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured (NIFQA) beef and lamb to our local industry and as part of a healthy balanced diet.

LMC Education and Consumer Promotions Manager Sarah Toland explained: “One of the key drivers for the competition was to encourage the use of NIFQA beef and lamb in schools, and to complement our existing schools programme.

With this in mind we specifically targeted Food and Nutrition teachers and their students when drawing up the criteria for the project.”

The winning Meat4Schools participants in 2021/22 are: De La Salle High School, Downpatrick, Down High School, Downpatrick and Loreto Convent Grammar School, Omagh.

Image 1: Photograph of one of the winning schools, Loreto Convent Grammar School, Omagh



The winning schools each received £100 of NIFQA beef and lamb, kindly sponsored by ABP Food Group. A selection of cuts were chosen with the aim of encouraging students and teachers to experience the versatility of beef and lamb and be encouraged to cook with it inside and outside the classroom.

The winning schools also received educational goody bags with recipes and resources to aid students in their studies. Sarah is hopeful that the recipe books will provide some helpful tips for pupils keen to cook up a storm.

She added, “Many students choose to cook with beef and lamb as part of their practical examinations, and we hope that we can encourage them to take these recipes home and tell others about the benefits of NIFQA beef and lamb.”

FARM QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME CELEBRATES THIRTY YEARS OF SUCCESS

This year will see Northern Ireland's Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (NIBLFQAS) celebrating 30 years of growth and development. Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) chief executive Ian Stevenson confirmed that Northern Ireland was the first of the four UK nations to develop a quality assurance scheme that made a real difference for farmers and the other stakeholder groups within the red meat sector.

He explained: "Initially, the scheme was envisaged to meet the export needs of our beef and lamb sectors. The work was carried out, very much in tandem, with the development of the Greenfields brand. "This initiative saw beef from Northern Ireland sold in a wide array of European supermarkets. "Scotland quickly followed suit with its own scheme. Subsequently, England and Wales completed the UK quality assurance network for beef and lamb."

Ian continued: "Today, we also have the 'Red Tractor' quality assurance scheme and red tractor logo that guarantees consumers throughout the UK access to home produced beef and lamb that is produced to a uniquely high standard and independently accredited as such." While all of the accredited beef and lamb quality assurance schemes in the UK are now able to use the red tractor logo on their beef and lamb products, Ian is quick to point to the autonomy that each UK nation enjoys reflecting the unique qualities that characterises ruminant livestock production in the four regions.

He further explained: Locally produced, farm

quality assured beef and lamb can be sold in the rest of the UK with the red tractor logo. "As a result, these high quality meats will secure the best possible price in retail outlets and the food service sector throughout GB.

"However, Northern Ireland's farm quality assurance scheme for beef and lamb has been, and will continue to be, developed in ways that best reflect the unique heritage and qualities of our local cattle and sheep industries." He added: "For example, APHIS is Northern Ireland's unique animal identification and traceability system. For many years it has been recognised internationally as being a world leader in delivering real time information on livestock from farm to fork.

"Naturally, APHIS has been used as a cornerstone in the development of Northern Ireland's farm quality assurance scheme for beef and lamb. "It has been used to help develop many export markets for Northern Ireland's red meat sector. And, no doubt, the system and its proposed successor will continue to play a key role in this regard." Another unique feature of the beef and lamb farm quality assurance scheme that is operated here in Northern Ireland is the full interaction with the Food Fortress initiative.

"Food Fortress delivers world leading assurance of safety within our livestock feed sector," confirmed Ian Stevenson. "Again, Northern Ireland is unique in being able to deliver this level of guarantee, where our livestock feeding systems are concerned.

"And, again, it is obvious that the work of the

Food Fortress project should be reflected in the standards set for farm quality assurance. "The high technical standards that we uphold allows LMC to communicate the benefit of locally produced Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb to consumers and in Northern Ireland at the present time local consumers are seeing our high profile advertising campaign focussed on the sustainability and dietary benefits of Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb.

Image 2: Farm Quality Assurance Logo



The LMC chief executive believes that the autonomy, which Northern Ireland's farm quality assurance scheme for beef and lamb enjoys within Red Tractor, is a unique strength. Moreover this can be built on for the future.

He commented: "This is in contrast to some of the other Red Tractor schemes, for example dairy, which operates on the basis of a universal set of standards, which are implemented equally across all the regions of the UK." Ian also confirmed that local livestock farmers and

processors have ownership of Northern Ireland's beef and lamb farm quality assurance scheme. "This is another benefit that is being delivered, courtesy of the LMC management of the FQAS on behalf of industry," he said.

"LMC stakeholders have ownership of the standards and rules of the scheme. Farm inspections are carried out under the auspices of Northern Ireland Food Chain Certification. "This is an independently accredited certification body, established by the Northern Ireland agri-food sector as a non-profit making service provider to the industry." The LMC representative believes that Northern Ireland's beef and lamb farm quality assurance schemes will play an even bigger role in securing a sustainable future for cattle and sheep farmers in Northern Ireland.

He explained: "Quality assurance will be at the very heart of the case made for Northern Ireland to be included within the proposed PGI for Irish Grass Fed Beef, which is being considered by the European Union.

"Inclusion within the PGI would open up a range of new and exciting export opportunities for the local beef sector. Ian concluded: "But PGI apart, our renowned farm quality assurance scheme will help Northern Ireland's beef and sheep industries to secure new export markets around the world in their own right. "Eighty per cent of the beef and lamb produced in Northern Ireland is exported. Ensuring that we get the best possible return from these exports is critically important."

FQAS Helpline

If you have had a recent inspection and need help and advice to rectify any non-conformances, contact the FQAS helpline:
Tel: 028 9263 3024

Answerphone Service

Factory base quotes & Mart results
Updated 5pm Daily
Tel: 028 9263 3011

Text Service

Free weekly base quotes sent to your mobile phone
Email: bulletin@lmcni.com
Tel: 028 9263 3000

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes from the plants this week for U-3 grading prime cattle continued to range from 388-394p/kg with similar quotes expected early next week. In the corresponding week in 2021 the plants were quoting 366-378p/kg for in spec U-3 grade steers and heifers. Quotes for 0+3 grade cows are ranging from 260-290p/kg with similar quotes expected for next week.

Throughput of prime cattle in local plants improved last week with 7,048 head processed, up 1,221 head from the 5,827 head processed the previous week. This is also an increase of 881 head from the 6,167 head processed in local plants during the same week last year. Cow throughput in NI last week increased by 646 head to total 2,301 head. In the same week last year cow throughput totalled 1,952 head.

Imports from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants last week increased for the previous week to 104 prime cattle and 60 cows with no cattle imported from GB for direct slaughter in local plants. Meanwhile exports from NI to ROI last week consisted of 36 cows with no exports from NI to GB for direct slaughter.

Deadweight prime cattle prices in NI last week reported a mixed performance. The average NI steer price in NI last week decreased by 0.4p/kg to 396p/kg with the R3 steer price back 1.6p/kg to 403.9p/kg. In the same week in 2021 the R3 steer price was 382.1p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week was 397.9p/kg, up 0.4p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up 1.3p/kg to 405.7p/kg. In the corresponding week last year the R3 heifer price in NI was 384.2p/kg, 21.5p/kg behind current levels. The deadweight cow trade in NI last week strengthened with the average cow price up 5.2p/kg to 276.5p/kg, while the O3 cow price increased by 3p/kg to 301.8p/kg.

The average steer price in GB decreased by 0.6p/kg to 408.4p/kg while the R3 steer price increased by 1.2p/kg to 416.7p/kg. This places the R3 steer price in GB at 12.8p/kg higher than the same price in NI. The average heifer price in GB last week remained steady at 407.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by 0.6p/kg to 415.6p/kg. The average young bull price in GB decreased by 3p/kg to 389.4p/kg with the R3 young bull price back 1.1p/kg to 405.4p/kg. Meanwhile the cow trade in GB firmed last week with the average cow price up 1.1p/kg to 267.3p/kg and the O3 cow price up 2.5p/kg to 290.2p/kg.

In ROI last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle generally improved from the previous week. The R3 steer price was up 0.3p/kg to the equivalent of 361.7p/kg, 42.2p/kg behind the same price in NI. The R3 heifer price in ROI decreased marginally to the equivalent of 365p/kg, which places it at 40.7p/kg behind the corresponding price in NI. The O3 cow price in ROI held firm at 298.6p/kg, this is an increase of 31.5p/kg from the price recorded in the corresponding week in 2021.

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

| (P/KG DW) | This Week 17/01/22 | Next Week 24/01/22 |
|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Prime | | |
| U-3 | 388 - 394p | 388 - 394p |
| R-3 | 382 - 388p | 382 - 388p |
| O+3 | 376 - 382p | 376 - 382p |
| P+3 | 320 - 332p | 320 - 332p |
| | Including bonus where applicable | |
| Cows | | |
| O+3 | 260 - 290p | 260 - 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 15/01/22 | Steers | Heifers | Young Bulls |
|-----------------|--------|---------|----------------|
| U3 | 407.2 | 410.0 | 395.9 |
| R3 | 401.3 | 403.9 | 394.0 |
| O+3 | 393.8 | 394.9 | 385.3 |

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

| W/E 15/01/22 | Weight Bands | | | |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--------|
| | <220kg | 220-250kg | 250-280kg | >280kg |
| P1 | 202.6 | 214.4 | 223.4 | 237.4 |
| P2 | 215.3 | 240.4 | 264.2 | 276.0 |
| P3 | 221.0 | 261.8 | 278.6 | 285.4 |
| O3 | - | - | 297.5 | 301.9 |
| O4 | - | - | 299.9 | 302.4 |
| R3 | - | - | - | 321.2 |

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

| W/E 15/01/22 | Northern Ireland | Rep of Ireland | Scotland | Northern England | Midlands & Wales | Southern England | GB |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|----------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------|
| Steers | U3 | 407.4 | 367.5 | 409.0 | 417.9 | 423.8 | 419.5 |
| | R3 | 403.9 | 361.7 | 415.9 | 420.7 | 416.9 | 413.3 |
| | R4 | 402.3 | 363.5 | 414.3 | 423.0 | 413.4 | 417.7 |
| | O3 | 392.6 | 350.9 | 405.7 | 401.5 | 394.2 | 393.3 |
| AVG | 396.0 | - | 411.1 | 412.4 | 404.9 | 404.1 | 408.4 |
| Heifers | U3 | 410.2 | 375.0 | 419.2 | 420.9 | 428.2 | 421.3 |
| | R3 | 405.7 | 365.0 | 416.5 | 416.0 | 417.8 | 411.6 |
| | R4 | 402.6 | 367.2 | 414.8 | 420.0 | 415.5 | 413.9 |
| | O3 | 395.5 | 358.5 | 398.8 | 401.3 | 386.9 | 393.2 |
| AVG | 397.9 | - | 412.7 | 411.4 | 403.6 | 401.1 | 407.5 |
| Young Bulls | U3 | 394.6 | 352.5 | 399.2 | 413.6 | 422.0 | 399.0 |
| | R3 | 391.6 | 343.7 | 398.7 | 403.7 | 412.5 | 401.9 |
| | O3 | 376.2 | 334.1 | 371.2 | 380.7 | 381.7 | 368.0 |
| | AVG | 374.0 | - | 385.7 | 391.9 | 392.3 | 379.8 |
| Prime Cattle Price Reported | 5,828 | - | 6,555 | 6,294 | 7,019 | 4,645 | 24,513 |
| Cows | O3 | 301.8 | 298.6 | 291.3 | 289.1 | 291.4 | 288.5 |
| | O4 | 302.3 | 297.8 | 293.0 | 291.3 | 289.9 | 286.7 |
| | P2 | 264.2 | 273.3 | 244.9 | 239.8 | 247.2 | 247.7 |
| | P3 | 282.8 | 286.6 | 259.5 | 263.1 | 267.5 | 266.0 |
| AVG | 276.5 | - | 286.3 | 270.2 | 264.3 | 259.5 | 267.3 |

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=83.45p 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 LIVELWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

| W/E 15/01/22 | 1st QUALITY | | | 2nd QUALITY | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|-----|-----|-------------|-----|-----|
| | From | To | Avg | From | To | Avg |
| Finished Cattle (p/kg) | | | | | | |
| Steers | 244 | 262 | 250 | 210 | 243 | 225 |
| Friesians | 185 | 203 | 191 | 166 | 184 | 179 |
| Heifers | 228 | 255 | 235 | 185 | 227 | 205 |
| Beef Cows | 189 | 223 | 194 | 145 | 188 | 165 |
| Dairy Cows | 130 | 165 | 136 | 100 | 129 | 115 |
| Store Cattle (p/kg) | | | | | | |
| Bullocks up to 400kg | 265 | 333 | 285 | 220 | 264 | 235 |
| Bullocks 400kg - 500kg | 250 | 298 | 260 | 215 | 249 | 228 |
| Bullocks over 500kg | 225 | 255 | 230 | 190 | 224 | 205 |
| Heifers up to 450kg | 235 | 270 | 250 | 185 | 234 | 210 |
| Heifers over 450kg | 225 | 249 | 235 | 180 | 224 | 200 |
| Dropped Calves (£/head) | | | | | | |
| Continental Bulls up to 2 mths | 380 | 500 | 420 | 260 | 375 | 315 |
| Continental Heifers up to 2 mths | 330 | 430 | 365 | 200 | 325 | 250 |
| Friesian Bulls up to 3 mths | 130 | 200 | 165 | 60 | 125 | 95 |
| Holstein Bulls up to 3 mths | 80 | 135 | 110 | 2 | 75 | 40 |

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

| (P/Kg DW) | This Week 17/01/22 | Next Week 24/01/22 |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| R3 Hoggets up to 22kg | 555 - 560p/kg | 535 - 540p/kg |

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

| (P/KG) | W/E 01/01/22 | W/E 08/01/22 | W/E 15/01/22 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| NI L/W Hoggets/Lambs | 525.6 | 514.5 | 503.0 |
| NI D/W Hoggets/Lambs | 545.2 | 557.3 | 550.1 |
| GB D/W Hoggets/Lambs | 616.5 | 614.2 | 601.1 |
| ROI D/W | 591.2 | 588.0 | 578.7 |

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes for R3 grading hoggets ranged from 555-560p/kg up to 22kg this week with quotes of 535-540p/kg expected for early next week. Supplies of hoggets improved last week with hogget throughput up 908 head to 7,678 hoggets from the previous week. This was a similar throughput to the 7,810 hoggets processed locally in the corresponding week last year. Hogget exports to ROI last week for direct slaughter totalled 5,773, an increase of 1,646 from the previous week. The deadweight hogget price in NI last week was back 7.2p/kg to 550.1p/kg. Meanwhile the ROI deadweight hogget price reported a decrease of 9.3p/kg to the equivalent of 578.7p/kg.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Smaller numbers of hoggets passed through most of the sale rings this week. In Omagh on Saturday 400 hoggets sold from 478-525p/kg compared to 710 hoggets sold from 486-536p/kg last week. On Monday in Kilrea 350 hoggets sold from 500-523p/kg compared to 620 hoggets sold from 502-556 the previous week. In Ballymena on Wednesday 1002 hoggets sold from 480-542p/kg (avg 500p/kg) compared to 2101 hoggets sold from 500-543p/kg (avg 511p/kg) last week. In Armooy on Thursday 306 hoggets sold from 480-522p/kg compared to 485 hoggets sold from 490-540p/kg the previous week. Top reported prices for culled ewes this week ranged from £141-£228.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

| From: 15/01/22 | | Hoggets | | | |
|----------------|-------------|---------|------|-----|-----|
| To: 20/01/22 | | No | From | To | Avg |
| Saturday | Omagh | 400 | 478 | 525 | - |
| | Swatragh | 660 | 435 | 517 | - |
| Monday | Kilrea | 350 | 500 | 523 | - |
| | Massereene | 642 | 490 | 522 | - |
| Tuesday | Saintfield | 505 | 475 | 554 | - |
| | Rathfriland | 300 | 475 | 551 | 505 |
| Wednesday | Ballymena | 1002 | 480 | 542 | 500 |
| | Enniskillen | 302 | 470 | 495 | - |
| | Armooy | 306 | 480 | 522 | - |
| | Markethill | 600 | 500 | 540 | - |

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