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NI BEEF INDUSTRY UPDATE JULY 2022

Despite the deadweight cattle trade in Northern Ireland coming under some pressure in recent weeks following record high levels during the first six months of the year, the current peformance of the NI beef market remains well ahead of last year as shown in **Table 1.**

Table 1: NI beef industry key statistics during July 2022 and July 2021, and the year on year change. Source: LMC, DAERA, AHDB & DAFM.

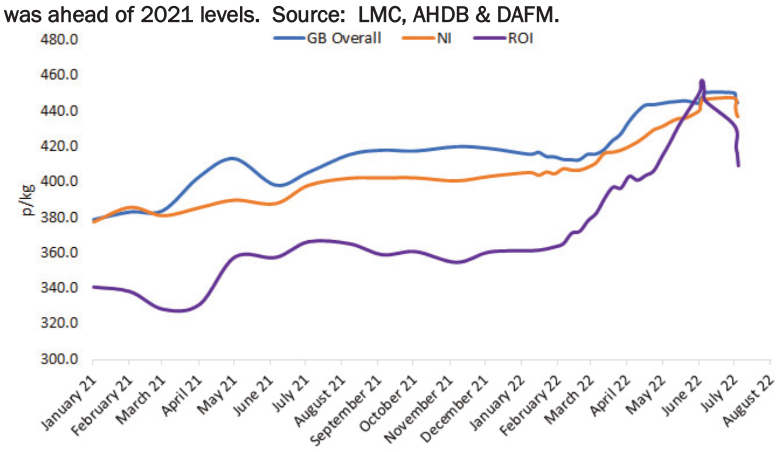
	July 2021	July 2022	% Change
Finished Cattle Prices (p/kg)			
Average Prime Cattle Price	392.6	430.4	+9.6%
Average Cow Price	294.1	353.2	+20.1%
Average R3 Steer Price (NI)	402.3	441.3	+9.7%
Average R3 Steer Price (ROI)	366.8	419.4	+14.3%
Average R3 Steer Price (GB)	409.7	446.9	+9.1%
NI Throughput			
Total Clean Slaughterings (Head)	24,365	23,481	-3.6%
Total Cow Slaughterings (Head)	7,356	8,285	+12.6%
Average Clean Carcase Weight (kg)	347.1	341.8	-1.5%
Average Cow Carcase Weight (kg)	316.8	308.8	-2.5%
Trade (Head)			
Live Imports for Direct Slaughter	1,881	1,729	-8.1%
Live Exports for Direct Slaughter	166	199	+19.9%
Availability (Head)			
No. Cattle on the Ground*	475,761	471,239	-1.0%
Beef Sired	442,137	437,102	-1.1%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	33,624	34,137	+1.5%
Calf Births Registrations (Head)			
Calf Births	31,644	32,329	+2.2%
Beef Sired	28,961	29,997	+3.6%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	2,683	2,332	-13.1%
Euro / Stg Exchange Rate (€ / £)	85.6	85.0	-0.7%
*Aged between 12-30 mths (Beef + Dairy)			
All NI Figures Unless Otherwise Stated			

Prime Cattle Trade

Quotes for in spec U-3 grading prime cattle during the four week period of July ranged from 420-432p/kg. This is well ahead of last year when quotes from local processors during the course of July were in the range of 380-394p/kg. The stronger quotes were reflected in the paid prices of prime cattle with the average R3 steer price peaking at 447.4p/kg during the four week period of July 2022. This was 44.4p/kg ahead of the highest price recorded during the month of July last year which equates to £155.40 on a 350kg carcase.

In recent weeks similar movement in deadweight prime cattle prices has been seen in ROI and GB as shown in **Figure 1**, where during the first half of the year, record prices were reported. Deadweight cattle prices in GB began to come under pressure during July, however remained ahead of 2021 levels. During July 2022 the GB R3 steer price was 446.9p/kg, up 37.2p/kg or 9.1 per cent ahead of the corresponding price recorded in 2021. A similar trend can be observed in ROI. In the 2022 period the average R3 steer price was 419.4p/kg compared to 366.8p/kg in the 2021 period. This was an increase of 52.6p/kg or 14.3 per cent year on year.

Figure 1: Average price of R3 price reported steers in NI, GB and ROI in July 2022 was ahead of 2021 levels. Source: LMC, AHDB & DAFM.



Cow Trade

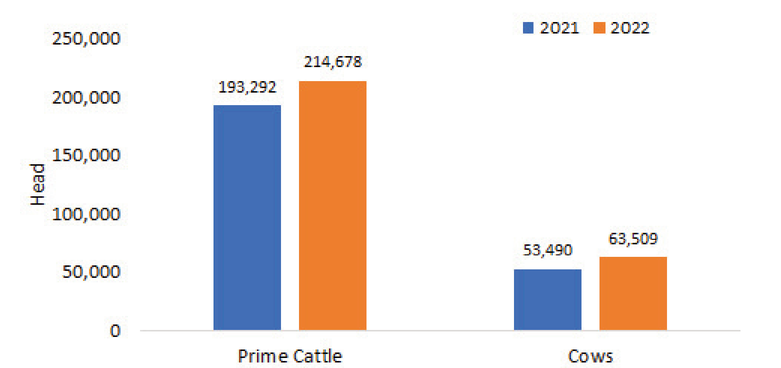
The deadweight cow trade in NI is also well ahead of 2021 levels with quotes for good quality O+3 grading cows during the four weeks of July ranging from 335-376p/kg. In comparison to 2021 when quotes from the local plants ranged from 275-302p/kg. The average cow price during July 2022 in NI was 353.2p/kg which is 59.1p/kg or 20.1 per cent ahead of the corresponding price last year and equates to a difference of £177.30 on a 300kg carcase.

Comparatively, in GB the average cow price during July 2022 was also ahead of 2021 levels by 66.9p/kg or £200.70 on a 300kg carcase.

Throughput

The number of prime cattle passing through local processing plants during the four weeks of July 2022 totalled 23,481 head. This is a 3.6 per cent or 884 head decrease from 2021 levels during the same period. This brings the total prime cattle throughput until the close of July 2022 to 214,678 head. Despite throughput during the month of July being less than year earlier levels, the overall prime cattle kill during 2022 remains notably ahead of last year displayed in **Figure 2.** Prime throughput this year during January to the close of July was up by 21,386 head or 11 per cent, when compared to the 193,292 prime cattle killed during the same period during 2021.

Figure 2: Prime cattle and cow throughput in Northern Irish processing plants during January to 31 July 2022 and the same period of 2021. Source: DAERA.



Cow throughput in local plants during the four weeks of July totalled 8,285 head, up 929 head or 12.6 per cent from the same period in 2021 when 7,356 cows were slaughtered in NI plants. This brings the total cow kill during the first seven months of 2022 to 63,509 head, remaining well ahead of the 53,490 cows slaughtered during the same period of 2021. Which equates to an increase of 18.7 per cent or an additional 10,019 head.

Carcase Weights

In addition to a decrease in cattle throughput during the month of July, year on year in local plants there has also been a decrease in average carcase weights.

The average prime cattle carcase weight during July 2022 was 341.8kg, a 5.3kg kg or 1.5 per cent decrease from the relative period of 2021. This brings the average prime cattle carcase weight during the first seven months of 2022 to 346.2kg, the same as during 2021.

The average carcase weight of cows slaughtered in local processing plants during the month of July was 308.8kg, an 8kg decrease from the same period last year when the average carcase weight was 316.8kg. In the first seven months of 2022 the average carcase weight of cows slaughtered in NI was 308.1kg, a decrease of 6.8kg compared to the corresponding period of 2021 when the average cow carcase weight was 314.9kg. This decrease in cow carcase weight can be explained by the increased numbers of dairy cows passing through local slaughter plants year on year, with dairy producers choosing now to cull cows from the herd and benefit from high culling prices.

Cattle on the Ground

As highlighted in a recent bulletin edition the availability of cattle for slaughter in Northern Ireland is expected to tighten in the coming months. This is evident in the figures for the end of July, with a one per cent reduction in the availability of 12-30 month old cattle or 4,522 fewer head. Beef sired cattle reported a 1.1 per cent decrease or 5,035 head fewer beef animals compared to the corresponding period of 2021. Meanwhile the availability of dairy males was greater this year with an additional 513 head available compared to the same period last year. This increase in dairy males for slaughter will also explain to some degree the decline in average prime carcase weights during the month of July year on year.

Imports

The reduction in the availability of local cattle can be seen to explain the increase in the number of cattle imported to Northern Ireland for direct slaughter in recent weeks.

Cattle imports for direct slaughter in local plants during the four weeks of July 2022 totalled 1,729 head which is a decrease of 152 head or 8.1 per cent from the corresponding period in 2021.

During the four week period of July 2022, 1,276 head of imports for direct slaughter from ROI were prime cattle. These animals accounted for 5.4 per cent of total NI prime cattle throughput during July, and ROI prime cattle imports accounted for 3.1 per cent of the total NI prime cattle throughput during the first seven months of the year. During the corresponding period in 2021 prime cattle imports from ROI accounted for 4.4 per cent of the local kill.

Exports

Cattle exports during the four weeks of July this year totalled 199 head. In the same four week period in 2021 166 prime cattle were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter and these accounted for less than one per cent of total cattle output from the NI herd.

With strong domestic prices and demand for cattle during the first six months of the year local processors have not been required to source cattle elsewhere. However as mentioned this may change in the coming months with fewer cattle coming forward for slaughter on local farms following a high slaughter level during the first half of 2022.

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 08/08/22	Next Week 15/08/22
Prime		
U-3	410 - 424p	412 - 434p
R-3	404 - 418p	406 - 428p
O+3	398 - 412p	400 - 422p
P+3	342 - 356p	344 - 366p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3	330 - 374p	330 - 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 06/08/22	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	442.8	442.7	433.2
R3	434.6	436.0	429.0
O+3	426.5	427.0	416.8

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 06/08/22	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	262.6	279.2	291.5	303.6
P2	279.9	309.4	332.5	345.3
P3	298.9	331.9	346.1	357.4
O3	-	338.7	369.7	372.6
O4	-	346.5	367.3	374.8
R3	-	-	380.0	390.6

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes from the local processors for in spec U-3 grading steers and heifers held steady this week at 410-424p/kg. Quotes for next week are expected to be stronger and range from 412-434p/kg. Quotes for good quality O+3 grading cows also held steady and ranged from 330-374p/kg in NI this week, with quotes expected to be back early next week and range from 330-360p/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.

Prime cattle throughput last week totalled 6,223 head, up 342 head from the previous week. In the corresponding week in 2021, 6,659 prime cattle were slaughtered in local plants. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 2,369 head, up 84 head from the previous week when the NI cow kill totalled 2,285 head.

Imports of prime cattle for direct slaughter last week in local plants from ROI included 356 prime cattle and 136 cows with no cattle imported from GB. Meanwhile two prime cattle and 16 cows were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter while for the fourth consecutive week no cattle made the journey to GB for direct slaughter.

The NI deadweight trade for prime cattle was largely backward last week with the average steer price up by just 0.2p/kg to 425.8p/kg. The R3 steer price in NI last week was 436.4p/kg back by 0.6p/kg. Last week the average heifer price in NI was back by just under 2p/kg to 428.2p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back 3.8p/kg to 435.8p/kg. The average cow price in NI last week remained steady from the previous week at 343.9p/kg while the O3 cow price was back by 1.8p/kg to 371.7p/kg. In the same week last year the O3 cow price in NI was 317.6p/kg.

In GB last week there was also considerable pressure on the deadweight cattle trade reported across the regions. The average steer price was back by 3.6p/kg to 435.8p/kg while the R3 steer price was back just under 2p/kg to 442.7p/kg. Meanwhile the average heifer price in GB last week was back 3.4p/kg to 435.6p/kg with the R3 heifer price back by 3.7p/kg to 440.9p/kg. Across the regions R3 heifer prices were back in Southern England (-1.7p/kg), Scotland (-2.9p/kg) and the Midlands and Wales (-1.9p/kg) while the largest decline of 7.4p/kg was reported in the Northern England. The cow trade came under pressure in all of the GB regions with the average cow price back by 3.8p/kg to 350.6p/kg. The largest declines in the average cow price were recorded in Southern England (-9.1p/kg) and Northern England (-7.5p/kg). Meanwhile the O3 cow price in GB was back by 1.9p/kg to 377.8p/kg, which was 6.1p/kg higher than the average O3 cow price in NI last week.

In ROI the deadweight trade for prime cattle was back across all reported grades for the second consecutive week. The R3 steer price last week was back by the equivalent of 3.2p/kg to 406.2p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 3.4p/kg to 410.2p/kg. The O3 cow price in ROI last week decreased by 0.8p/kg to 367.9p/kg. Last week the prime cattle kill in ROI was back by 952 head from the previous week to total 25,256 head.

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

W/E 06/08/22		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	444.1	413.9	444.3	447.4	446.1	447.8	446.0
	R3	436.4	406.2	447.0	445.6	439.1	440.6	442.7
	R4	437.8	408.7	448.0	448.3	437.7	440.3	445.5
	O3	423.5	394.6	434.8	426.1	421.2	418.6	423.5
	AVG	425.8	-	443.4	439.0	430.2	429.6	435.8
Heifers	U3	442.2	421.1	450.8	454.1	450.0	446.6	450.8
	R3	435.8	410.2	447.1	442.5	439.3	436.2	440.9
	R4	435.2	412.1	451.0	447.3	439.3	438.4	446.0
	O3	425.0	401.4	435.0	432.2	420.7	411.7	422.0
	AVG	428.2	-	448.4	441.5	428.8	421.7	435.6
Young Bulls	U3	433.6	408.2	440.1	441.6	443.3	444.7	441.6
	R3	427.8	397.7	434.4	433.7	433.5	432.1	433.7
	O3	409.5	376.5	406.2	408.9	406.7	418.5	408.4
	AVG	419.7	-	434.7	430.3	425.1	417.2	428.3
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5,029	-	6,047	6,238	7,176	4,396	23,857
Cows	O3	371.7	367.9	378.7	376.5	380.9	371.9	377.8
	O4	374.2	366.7	384.4	379.4	383.0	370.5	379.8
	P2	332.9	337.6	339.8	329.2	342.1	331.8	337.0
	P3	354.0	356.7	351.1	350.4	358.0	344.8	352.3
	AVG	343.9	-	377.2	352.9	349.7	334.6	350.6

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=83.90p 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 06/08/22	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	250	281	265	205	249	230
Friesians	180	211	191	168	179	176
Heifers	235	268	250	200	234	215
Beef Cows	210	258	230	150	209	180
Dairy Cows	150	179	162	105	149	127
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	260	336	280	200	259	228
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	250	292	268	210	249	228
Bullocks over 500kg	232	281	242	200	229	212
Heifers up to 450kg	230	272	260	191	229	210
Heifers over 450kg	230	266	246	180	227	208
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	400	485	440	295	395	330
Continental Heifers	355	490	415	200	350	275
Friesian Bulls	130	200	150	50	125	85
Holstein Bulls	100	185	135	1	95	50

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES		
(P/Kg DW)	This Week 08/08/22	Next Week 15/08/22
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	500p	505 - 510p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES			
(P/KG)	W/E 23/07/22	W/E 30/07/22	W/E 06/08/22
NI L/W Lambs	495.8	469.2	444.6
NI D/W Lambs	546.7	523.0	488.4
GB D/W Lambs	622.5	574.5	525.6
ROI D/W	582.3	557.2	530.9

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Base quotes from the major processors for R3 grading lambs strengthened mid week to range from 505-510p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for early next week with all plants paying up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in local plants last week totalled 10,355 head which was back 649 head from the previous week. Meanwhile exports of lambs from NI for direct slaughter in ROI were back 1,171 head from last week to 4,598 head. Ewe and ram exports to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 759 head with 543 ewes and rams slaughtered locally. The average deadweight lamb price in NI last week was back by 34.6p/kg to 488.4p/kg while the average lamb price in ROI came back by the equivalent of 26.3p/kg to 530.9p/kg.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Strong numbers passed through the marts this week with an improved trade reported across many of the marts. In Omagh last Saturday an entry of 462 lambs sold from 441-498p/kg compared to 546 lambs the previous week selling from 429-486p/kg. In Kilrea on Monday 630 lambs sold from 440-481p/kg, compared to last week when 400 lambs sold from 435-475p/kg. In Saintfield this week 860 lambs sold from 465- 513p/kg compared to 760 lambs last week selling from 435-500p/kg. In Ballymena on Wednesday 1,844 lambs sold from 450-513p/kg (avg 470p/kg) compared to last week in Ballymena when 1,276 lambs sold from 430-482p/kg (avg 454p/kg). Cull ewe numbers have also increased in many of the marts with top prices ranging from £132-182.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)					
From: 06/08/22		Lambs			
To: 11/08/22		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Swatragh	1135	455	505	-
	Omagh	462	441	498	-
Monday	Kilrea	630	440	481	-
	Massereene	685	441	492	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	860	465	513	-
	Rathfriland	1152	445	512	471
Wednesday	Ballymena	1844	450	513	470
	Enniskillen	582	438	492	-
	Armoy	592	470	504	-
	Markethill	1100	460	502	-

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