

# DEADWEIGHT LAMB PRICES EASE BACK CLOSER TO 2020 LEVELS

The deadweight lamb trade in Northern Ireland has been well above previous years for the majority of 2021 however the overall downward trend in recent months has narrowed the differential

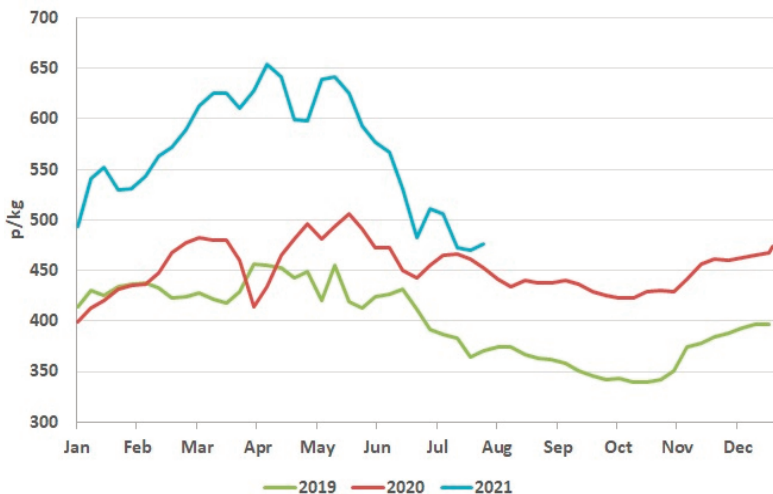
and brings the trade closer to 2020 levels as outlined in **Figure 1**. Last week the deadweight lamb price in NI was 475.9p/kg which is up from the previous week when the price was

469.9p/kg. This brings the differential between last week's deadweight lamb price and the same price last year to 34.8p/kg which equates to an additional £7 on a 21kg lamb carcass.

0.3kg increase from the same period last year when the average carcass weight of lambs in local plants was 20.8kg.

region last week. This was a decrease of 2,866 head from the previous week when 7,801 lambs made the journey to ROI processing plants. This brings lamb exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter during the last six weeks to 34,034 head which have accounted for 36 per cent of total lamb output from the NI sheep flock.

**Figure 1. Weekly average deadweight lamb/hogget price in Northern Ireland 2019-2021. Source: DAERA**



Lamb throughput in local plants during the last six weeks has been behind last years levels during the same period. During the six weeks ending 07 August 2021 lamb processings in NI totalled 60,049 head which is a decline of 3,740 head or 5.9 per cent relative to the same period in 2019 throughput of lambs during the last six weeks has increased by 3.9 per cent.

While there has been a reduction in lamb throughput year on year during the last six weeks, there has been reports of slightly heavier lambs in the slaughter mix. During the last six weeks the average carcass weight of lambs processed in NI was 21.1kg. This is a

ROI continues to act as an important outlet for locally produced lambs with 4,935 lambs exported for direct slaughter to processing plants in the

**Figure 2. Deadweight lamb price in NI during the week ending 07 August and the corresponding period last year. Source: DAERA**



# WHAT PROPORTION OF PRIME CATTLE ARE MEETING GRADING SPECIFICATIONS?

Deadweight cattle price reporting analysis for quarter 2 2021 has indicated that the conformation scores and fat classes awarded to prime cattle in Northern Ireland has remained fairly similar to the same period last year.

**Table 1** and **2** display the conformation scores and fat classes achieved by the

**Table 1. Conformation scores achieved by prime cattle in Northern Ireland during quarter 2 2020 and 2021.**

Source: LMC Deadweight Cattle Price Reporting

		E	U	R	O	P
Steers	2020	0%	17%	36%	38%	8%
	2021	0%	18%	35%	38%	9%
Heifers	2020	0%	16%	43%	36%	6%
	2021	0%	15%	42%	37%	6%
Young Bulls	2020	2%	22%	27%	38%	11%
	2021	2%	25%	31%	33%	9%

**Table 2. Fat classes achieved by prime cattle in Northern Ireland during quarter 2 2020 and 2021.**

Source: LMC Deadweight Cattle Price Reporting

		1	2	3	4	5
Steers	2020	2%	19%	59%	21%	0%
	2021	2%	18%	58%	22%	0%
Heifers	2020	1%	8%	43%	45%	3%
	2021	1%	7%	41%	47%	4%
Young Bulls	2020	4%	45%	46%	4%	0%
	2021	5%	43%	47%	5%	0%

price reported prime cattle during the second quarter of 2021 and 2020.

## Steers

There have been some marginal changes in the proportion of steers meeting the respective conformation scores during quarter 2 relative to the same period in 2020. The majority of

price reported steers met an R or O grade with 35 per cent and 38 per cent awarded these conformation scores respectively. The proportion of steers meeting a U and P grade increased by one per cent during quarter 2 2021 relative to the same period last year, totalling 18 per cent and nine per cent respectively.

Similarly the fat class achieved by steers in local plants have remained similar to last years figures during quarter 2. The proportion of steers meeting a fat class 2 and 3 marginally decreased to 18 per cent and 58 per cent respectively. Steers meeting a fat class 4 increased slightly to 22 per cent while steers meeting a fat class 1 and 5 remained very low.

## Heifers

Similar to steers, the majority of price reported heifers in NI were awarded an R or O grade during the second quarter of 2021. The proportion of heifers meeting an R grade was 42 per cent while 37 per cent met an O grade. Meanwhile the proportion meeting a U grade declined marginally from 2020 to total 15 per cent and the proportion meeting a P grade remained steady at six per cent.

The proportion of price reported heifers meeting a fat class 2 and 3 decreased slightly to seven per cent and 41 per cent respectively. Heifers meeting a fat class 4 increased by two per cent to 47 per cent. Meanwhile heifers meeting a fat class 1 and 5 remained low at one per cent and four per cent respectively.

## Young Bulls

There has been some improvement in the conformation scores achieved by young bulls during the second quarter

of 2021 when compared to the same period in last year. The proportion of young bulls achieving a U grade increased by three per cent to 25 per cent and the proportion meeting an R grade increased by a greater four per cent to 31 per cent. The proportion of young bulls meeting an O grade decreased from the second quarter of 2020 with 33 per cent of price reported young bulls meeting this grade. Meanwhile the proportion of young bulls meeting a P grade declined from 11 per cent in the second quarter 2020 to nine per cent during the same period in 2021.

The proportion of price reported young bulls meeting a fat class 1 increased slightly to five per cent while the proportion meeting fat class two decreased to 43 per cent during the second quarter of 2021. The proportion meeting a fat class 3 and 4 increased to 47 per cent and five per cent respectively.

## Source of Prime Cattle Kill

During quarter two 2021 suckler origin cattle accounted for 56 per cent of total prime cattle kill which is a marginal decline from the same period in 2020. While the proportion of prime cattle from a beef cross origin increased slightly to 31 per cent and the remaining 12 per cent were dairy sired origin which was unchanged from the second quarter of 2020.

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# WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



## CATTLE TRADE

### NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 09/08/21	Next Week 16/08/21
<b>Prime</b>		
U-3	384 - 394p	384 - 394p
R-3	378 - 388p	378 - 388p
O+3	372 - 382p	372 - 382p
P+3	318 - 332p	318 - 332p
	Including bonus where applicable	
<b>Cows</b>		
O+3	280 - 302p	290 - 302p

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.

### Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for in spec U-3 grade steers and heifers remained steady this week ranging from 384-394p/kg across the major NI processing plants. Quotes for good quality O+3 grade cows ranged from 280-302p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in NI plants last week totalled 6,509 which was a decrease of 113 head from the previous week. Meanwhile cow throughput in NI plants last week was similar to the previous week when 2,023 cows were processed in local plants. This is also similar to the 2,104 cows processed during the corresponding week last year.

Prime cattle imports from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants last week totalled 364 head which was an increase of 62 head compared to the previous week. Cow exports from ROI totalled 171 head last week which was up 35 head from the previous week. Meanwhile no cattle were imported from GB for direct slaughter. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter remained low with two prime cattle and 83 cows exported last week while no cattle were exported from NI to GB for processing.

The NI deadweight trade for prime cattle came under pressure last week with the majority of grades decreasing from the previous week. The average NI steer price was back 0.8p/kg to 392.5p/kg while the R3 steer price was back by a similar margin to 402.3p/kg. Last week the average NI heifer price reported a decrease of 1.6p/kg to 393.7p/kg while the R3 heifer price held steady at 401.9p/kg. The average NI young bull price last week increased by 2p/kg to 385.1p/kg while the R3 young bull price decreased by 2p/kg to 393.3p/kg. Meanwhile the cow trade in NI improved last week with the average cow price up just over 1p/kg from the previous week to 290p/kg with the O3 cow price increasing by 2p/kg to 317.6p/kg.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle continued to improve in GB last week. The average steer price increased by 2.6p/kg to 409p/kg with the R3 steer price up by almost 2p/kg to 415.3p/kg. The differential in the R3 steer price between NI and GB widened from the previous week to 13p/kg. The average heifer price in GB last week was up by 1.9p/kg to 407.1p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by 0.6p/kg to 413.9p/kg. The differential in R3 heifer price between NI and GB last week widened from the previous week to 12p/kg. The deadweight cow trade also improved in GB last week with the average cow price up by 1.9p/kg from the previous week to 294.3p/kg and the O3 cow price increasing by 0.3p/kg to 319.5p/kg.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in ROI came under pressure this week across the majority of grades when compared to the previous week. The R3 steer price last week decreased by the equivalent of 0.9p/kg to 365.3p/kg bringing the R3 steer price differential between NI and ROI to 37p/kg. The R3 heifer price was back by 1.7p/kg to the equivalent of 367.5p/kg which takes the R3 heifer price differential between NI and ROI to 34.4p/kg. The O3 cow price in ROI decreased by 1.8p/kg to the equivalent of 299.9p/kg, 17.7p/kg below the O3 cow price in NI.

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

	W/E 07/08/21	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	405.2	373.4	422.2	416.7	418.2	420.7	419.8
	R3	402.3	365.3	420.4	413.9	414.2	413.9	415.3
	R4	403.0	366.1	423.2	414.3	411.0	414.0	417.6
	AVG	390.8	352.6	409.1	405.5	391.1	391.0	397.2
Heifers	U3	406.9	378.4	428.3	418.0	424.3	419.8	423.2
	R3	401.9	367.5	421.7	413.0	412.2	410.2	413.9
	R4	398.7	367.9	424.1	414.0	413.4	411.7	417.1
	AVG	391.5	360.3	407.4	405.8	390.5	387.8	395.6
Young Bulls	U3	398.2	359.5	416.9	415.2	417.8	409.3	416.5
	R3	393.3	349.6	411.1	403.1	406.8	408.3	408.1
	O3	374.9	336.4	386.6	381.1	372.4	382.7	379.3
	AVG	385.1	-	407.8	397.9	398.8	388.8	400.3
Prime Cattle Price Reported	5077	-	6102	6517	7212	4372	24203	
Cows	O3	317.6	299.9	325.8	316.4	319.9	317.4	319.5
	O4	319.6	300.4	332.6	318.7	320.1	319.4	322.0
	P2	278.1	277.6	279.5	268.3	282.2	282.8	280.6
	P3	298.7	291.5	291.5	293.5	296.8	300.4	297.1
AVG	290.0	-	318.3	298.0	289.2	287.8	294.3	

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.20p 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 07/08/21	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
<b>Finished Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Steers	245	263	253	210	244	227
Friesians	185	214	190	168	184	175
Heifers	232	250	241	205	231	215
Beef Cows	183	236	193	140	182	158
Dairy Cows	133	155	138	110	132	120
<b>Store Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Bullocks up to 400kg	255	292	272	220	254	235
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	240	283	255	200	239	220
Bullocks over 500kg	220	250	230	180	219	200
Heifers up to 450kg	225	306	250	190	224	210
Heifers over 450kg	215	241	228	180	214	200
<b>Dropped Calves (£/head)</b>						
Continental Bulls	400	605	465	300	395	350
Continental Heifers	350	590	420	225	345	285
Friesian Bulls	210	300	235	100	205	135
Holstein Bulls	160	380	270	25	155	90

### REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 07/08/21	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	404.0	406.4	398.1
R3	399.0	401.3	394.9
O+3	391.3	390.7	375.3

\*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

### REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 07/08/21	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	209.7	222.9	227.3	245.8
P2	230.6	249.8	272.3	289.8
P3	270.0	285.8	292.3	300.1
O3	285.0	287.3	310.2	318.8
O4	-	308.8	318.4	319.9
R3	-	-	-	332.2

# SHEEP TRADE

## NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 09/08/21	Next Week 16/08/21
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	480-485p	480 - 485p

## REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 24/07/21	W/E 31/07/21	W/E 07/08/21
NI L/W Lambs	421.6	439.3	437.4
NI D/W Lambs	472.8	469.9	475.9
GB D/W Lambs	560.5	565.5	528.8
ROI D/W	529.6	516.3	515.3

## Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes for R3 grade lambs ended this week ranging 480-485p/kg up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in local NI plants totalled 10,211 head, up by 149 lambs from the previous week. However, this is back 1,150 head when compared to the 11,361 lambs processed in the same week last year. A further 4,935 lambs were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week, back 2,866 head from the previous week. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 475.9p/kg which was an increase of 6p/kg from the previous week. The average ROI lamb price last week was back the equivalent of 1p/kg from the previous week to 515.3p/kg.

## Liveweight Sheep Trade

Good numbers of lambs passed through the marts this week. In Omagh last Saturday 1,073 lambs sold from 438-484p/kg compared to 892 lambs the previous week selling from 447-478p/kg. In Kilrea 520 lambs were sold from 428-467p/kg compared to 420 lambs last week at 430-455p/kg. On Tuesday in Saintfield 655 lambs sold from 425-465p/kg compared to 575 sold from 430-475p/kg last week. In Markethill on Wednesday 1,425 lambs sold from 430-473p/kg compared to 1,710 lambs last week selling from 420-453p/kg. Top reported prices for good quality ewes ranged from £132-£194 across the marts

## LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 07/08/21		Lambs			
To: 12/08/21		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	1073	438	484	-
	Swatragh	1150	423	453	-
Monday	Kilrea	520	428	467	-
	Massereene	811	430	462	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	655	425	465	-
	Rathfriland	909	422	545	440
Wednesday	Ballymena	2003	420	492	442
	Enniskillen	898	418	502	-
	Armoyn	482	424	482	-
	Markethill	1425	430	473	-

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