

## DEADWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE

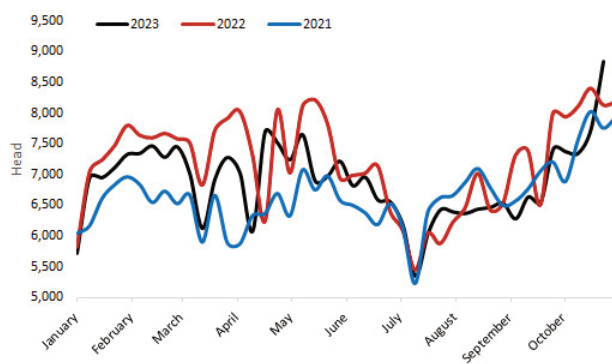
### NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 30/10/23	Next Week 06/11/23
<b>Prime</b>		
U-3	No quotes available due to strike disruptions.	438 - 448p
R-3		432 - 442p
O+3		426 - 436p
P+3		370 - 380p
<b>Cows</b>		
O+3		298 - 320p

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.

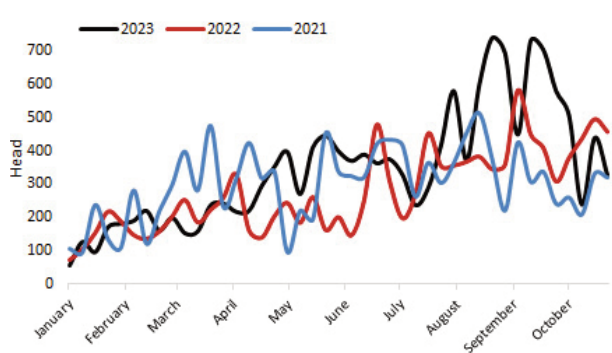
### Prime Cattle Throughput to date 2021-2023

Source: DAERA.



### Prime cattle imports to date 2021-2023

Source: DAERA.



### REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 28/10/23	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	211.1	224.0	236.1	252.9
P2	249.1	259.3	276.4	295.6
P3	255.5	282.4	293.6	301.3
O3	202.0	293.4	313.2	322.7
O4	-	-	313.1	327.6
R3	-	-	-	343.1

### Deadweight Cattle Trade

This week civil service strikes affected veterinary and meat inspection services within Northern Ireland slaughter plants. Normal business within NI abattoirs is planned to resume on Monday 6th November. Base quotes for in-spec U-3 prime cattle early next week are expected to range from 438-448p/kg and quotes O+3 cows will be in the region of 298-320p/kg.

Last week a softer trade for cattle was reported in NI, with strong levels slaughtered as plants undertook production to account for the strike related disruption forecast. The highest weekly prime cattle kill seen in NI for over a decade was recorded last week when 8,835 head were slaughtered. The last time a similar weekly level of prime cattle were slaughtered was during January 2006 when prime throughput totalled 8,834 head. Last week 327 prime cattle were imported from ROI for direct slaughter locally, with 154 cows also imported for slaughter. Meanwhile, last week cow throughput remained at similar levels to the previous week with 2,784 cows slaughtered in local plants. Last week the average price paid for an R3 steer in NI was back 3.0p/kg to 462.5p/kg, R3 young bulls were back by 3.7p/kg to 447.6p/kg on average and O3 cows came back 10.2p/kg to 320.8p/kg. A smaller decline of 1.1p/kg brought the average price for an R3 heifer to 463.2p/kg.

In ROI last week price declines were reported across the majority of grades in euro terms however the only category which reported declines in sterling terms were cows. In sterling terms, R3 steers were up 0.6p/kg to 401.1p/kg, R3 heifers increased 0.8p/kg to 406.1p/kg and R3 young bulls were up 3.0p/kg to 396.3p/kg. Meanwhile, in ROI last week O3 cows were back 2.3p/kg to 329p/kg on average.

Across all regions of GB last week the deadweight trade for cattle came under pressure, with cows reporting the largest declines from the previous week.

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

W/E 28/10/23		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
		Steers	U3 465.2	411.4	504.3	492.2	488.6	494.6
	R3 462.5	401.1	501.2	488.6	481.7	486.2	488.4	
	R4 459.9	400.1	498.8	490.9	480.7	485.6	492.2	
	O3 453.0	385.6	485.9	473.3	462.0	467.6	469.0	
	AVG 452.4	-	497.1	480.6	467.5	474.9	479.5	
Heifers	U3 469.1	416.6	504.2	494.0	496.4	492.0	497.1	
	R3 463.2	406.1	497.6	485.2	483.3	483.7	486.1	
	R4 460.9	406.7	497.3	490.5	483.0	484.1	491.2	
	O3 453.4	398.6	477.8	466.6	458.4	463.0	463.4	
	AVG 454.5	-	493.9	477.9	464.6	462.4	474.5	
Young Bulls	U3 451.3	404.0	491.1	483.5	486.9	490.9	488.4	
	R3 447.6	396.3	486.0	473.0	478.7	479.3	479.1	
	O3 432.4	382.3	461.9	439.8	443.4	454.2	445.5	
	AVG 438.7	-	482.9	457.1	459.3	465.0	463.9	
Prime Cattle Price Reported		7,297	-	6,301	7,209	8,326	5,181	27,017
Cows	O3 320.8	329.0	357.2	334.0	328.6	332.9	334.0	
	O4 326.9	330.7	365.8	339.4	330.8	332.7	338.7	
	P2 283.4	278.7	306.2	302.0	290.4	302.1	297.3	
	P3 299.0	311.5	328.7	316.5	307.2	313.8	312.1	
	AVG 282.2	-	348.7	314.0	289.2	291.7	301.4	

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=87.12p 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

## LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE

### LATEST LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 28/10/23	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
<b>Finished Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Steers	248	297	267	200	247	220
Friesians	-	-	-	168	170	169
Heifers	250	268	259	200	249	220
Beef Cows	170	216	188	135	169	150
Dairy Cows	112	178	133	40	110	75
<b>Store Cattle (p/kg)</b>						
Bullocks up to 400kg	275	333	295	210	274	235
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	245	309	275	205	240	220
Bullocks over 500kg	245	307	265	172	244	205
Heifers up to 450kg	240	303	265	205	239	220
Heifers over 450kg	220	278	250	160	219	200
<b>Dropped Calves (£/head)</b>						
Continental Bulls	350	400	375	250	345	300
Continental Heifers	250	375	300	145	245	180
Friesian Bulls	140	250	170	40	130	60
Holstein Bulls	105	265	145	5	95	45

## DEADWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

### NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 30/10/23	Next Week 06/11/23
R3 Lambs up to 22kg	No Quotes Available	520p

### REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 14/10/23	W/E 21/10/23	W/E 28/10/23
NI L/W Lambs	475.37	482.9	473.8
NI D/W Lambs	518.6	513.3	518.3
GB D/W Lambs	556.7	570.5	573.1
ROI D/W	532.5	541.1	545.6

### Deadweight Sheep Trade

Next week base quotes in the region of 520p/kg are expected for R3 grade lambs with the majority of plants paying up to 22kg.

Last week a large lamb throughput totalling 11,254 head passed through NI plants, as processors undertook production to reduce the impact of veterinary service strikes on the supply chain. This brings the total kill for October to 45,028 head an increase of 830 head or 1.8 per cent on the 44,198 lambs killed during September. Lamb exports for direct slaughter in ROI last week also increased from the previous week to total 7,602 head. This was an increase of 2,054 head from the previous week. Last week in NI the average deadweight lamb price reported an increase of 5p/kg to 518.3p/kg while the average R3 lamb price also increased 3.6p/kg to 522.6p/kg.

### Liveweight Sheep Trade

Smaller numbers of lambs passed through the sales rings last week with challenging weather conditions affecting vendors, and an absence of buyers due to factory closures and exports restrictions. Albeit while sales were smaller due to these disruptions, across the marts the trade was relatively steady on the previous week with the average price paid in Ballymena on Wednesday at 482p/kg, up 4p/kg from the previous week.

## LIVEWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

### LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 28/10/23		Lambs			
To: 02/11/23		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	904	481	524	-
	Swatragh	1050	435	482	-
Monday	Kilrea	800	478	514	-
	Markethill	750	450	491	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	505	482	523	-
Wednesday	Ballymena	1108	465	500	482
	Enniskillen	602	465	502	-
	Armoy	254	466	510	-

## JOE STEWART TO LEAD LMC INTO A NEW ERA

The appointment of Joe Stewart as the new Chair of the Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) - in tandem with a full complement of board members - is fundamentally important for agriculture as a whole in Northern Ireland. At a very fundamental level, it brings a degree of welcome stability back to an organisation that is already playing an important role in determining the response of all the farming sectors to the carbon and sustainability-related challenges that confront the entire industry.

And, of course, LMC will also remain tasked with the job of marketing the beef and lamb produced locally while co-ordinating the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (NIBL FQAS). For obvious reasons, both of these activities fit together like pieces within a jigsaw puzzle.

At a very practical level, the appointment of the new Board team will facilitate the appointment of a substantive LMC chief executive officer.

Joe Stewart has an in-depth understanding and appreciation of the issues impacting farmers and the local agricultural sector. Since the 1890s the Stewart family have farmed in Comber, Co Down. Today Joe runs two breeding flocks on the farm, namely, Suffolk and Texel. He is also an experienced horse breeder, breeding Irish Draft Horses.

He is a trustee of the Suffolk Sheep Society and joined the LMC Board as a member in 2021. Joe has served as Chair of the Commission's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and is currently a Non-Executive Director of the Public Health Agency (including Chair of its Governance and Audit Committee).

He retired following a wide-ranging career including the Engineering Employers Federation, Harland & Wolff, Police Authority of NI, (PANI) and PSNI (non-police role). In 1994, Joe was appointed an OBE for Public Service. He has

significant finance and governance experience in the private and public sectors. He will bring this expertise, coupled with personal experience of farming to the role of LMC Chair.

"I will be speaking to the new Board members on an individual basis over the coming days," Joe explained. "The full Board will meet for the first time in just over a fortnight. The agenda for that meeting will reflect the significant number of important issues, which the Commission must actively address during the period ahead." He added: "My first job will be to explain why there was a delay in confirming and appointing the new LMC board membership."

There was an unfortunate delay in appointing the new LMC Board and according to the new LMC Chair, this issue came about as a direct result of the Stormont Executive's continuing suspension. He explained: "Under normal circumstances, it would have been the role of the Ministerial team at Stormont to confirm that required LMC appointees. "However, given the fact that Stormont is not fully functioning at the present time, a political void arose. The situation was eventually resolved by legislation being introduced which enabled the Secretary of State to make appointments to the Board. Looking forward, I am happy that the legislative gap that had arisen, regarding the appointment of future board members has been addressed. And the situation that we saw arising earlier this year is unlikely to be repeated."

Looking ahead, Joe Stewart sees the development of a new three-year strategic plan for LMC as being the number one priority for the Commission's new team of Board members. He added: "The current plan takes us through to the end of March next year. So the next few months will see an intense series of discussions taking place with all relevant stakeholders to ensure that we have a new plan agreed within the required time frame."

"There must be a seamless transition between the out-working of the current strategic plan and the introduction of the new one. Moreover, LMC must ensure that the detail of the new strategy has the full support of all relevant stakeholder groups. The consultations held with these organisations over the coming months will be critical in determining the priorities identified for the new document." According to Joe Stewart the strategic plan represents the bedrock upon which all the activities taken by LMC are formulated. He continued: "In my opinion, the work of the LMC has never been more important."

To assist in the delivery against the strategic plan the LMC Board recognise the need to appoint a substantive Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the organisation. "This process begins immediately," confirmed Joe Stewart. "I would like to pay tribute to the tremendous work put in by our previous CEO, Ian Stevenson, over so many years. He was ably assisted by a tremendous staff team. I have never come across a group of people who are so dedicated to the work that they do. No challenge is too big for them. Moreover, they are totally dedicated to helping secure the aims and objectives set for the Commission."

"LMC's breadth of business activity is significant. Management of NIBL FQAS is one of our core programmes, providing the foundation for our marketing and communications activities. A case in point is the invaluable input that we have with schools, communicating the valuable role of beef and lamb in a balanced diet to so many young people, right across Northern Ireland."

"One of the most significant out workings of this activity is the tremendous recognition on the part of school teachers to the effect that LMC is a totally trusted source of information, where this critically important issue is concerned. Meanwhile the activity of those groups whose sole aim is to distort the facts regarding the balanced role of red meat in the diet continues to gather momentum. And, obviously, this makes the work carried out by LMC even more important as we look to the future."

Furthermore, the Commission's market information services are highly valued within the industry. The service supports producers and processors with their decision making, by making available accurate and timely information that creates a better understanding of the trade.

Joe Stewart also recognises the challenge posed by climate change and the need to put Northern Ireland's beef and lamb sectors on a more sustainable footing. He explained: "LMC will have a key role to play in this context. Northern Ireland's beef and lamb producers are amongst the most efficient of their kind in the world. Our ability to make such efficient use of grazed grass makes us unique. But saying this is no longer good enough. We have to have the figures to support all of these claims."

The new LMC Chair is also mindful of the fact that Northern Ireland's climate legislation will be fully implemented over the coming years. At a very

**Image 2: Joe Stewart pictured presenting rosettes to sheep young handlers, Shannon and Zara Smyth at Balmoral Show 2022. Source: LMC.**



basic level, this will include the setting of carbon targets for the farming and food sectors during the period leading up to 2050. Hand-in-hand with this will be a re-setting of the support measures available to local farmers in line with the new sustainability targets that have been laid down.

Joe Stewart again: "Agriculture, as a whole, needs the data to confirm that it is meeting these objectives. The role of LMC's Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme in securing this information in the most effective way possible has been, quite rightly, identified. It was for this reason that LMC agreed to deliver a pilot scheme on behalf of the Carbon Steering Group to test the concept of this proposed data collection methodology."

"The industry must come up with a plan to assimilate the information required from individual farm businesses to confirm that reductions in carbon footprint are being achieved across all the sectors. This work must include the establishment of an accurate base line measure. Moreover, this work that must be undertaken in ways that ensure its delivery in the most cost efficient manner. LMC is happy that the use of the Farm Quality Assurance Scheme in such a way meets this requirement."

Joe Stewart concluded: "I am very aware that many farmers want to be re-assured that information gathered from their businesses will be maintained in strictest confidence. I can confirm that such measures have been put in place to protect individual farm data. "But the bottom line is this: government, and supply chain partners, need to evidence their sustainability targets into the future and aggregated anonymised data is required to deliver this. Production agriculture must play its role when it comes to meeting this requirement. The days are over when we simply say that agriculture in Northern Ireland has a great story to tell. These claims must be fully supported with the required data."

"The upside of all this will be reflected in the tremendous market opportunities that open up for our beef and lamb sectors on foot of meeting these requirements. This in turn must enable our farmers to be rewarded for the high quality beef and lamb produced locally, thereby ensuring the long-term sustainability of this critically important sector."

**Image 1: Joe Stewart, newly appointed Chairman of LMC is pictured presenting the beef interbreed champion of champions reserve rosette to Mark, William and Saoirse Smith. The picture was taken in May this year when Joe was an LMC Board Member. Source: LMC.**



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