

DEADWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 29/01/24	Next Week 05/02/24
Prime		
U-3	460 - 466p	460 - 466p
R-3	454 - 460p	454 - 460p
O+3	448 - 454p	448 - 454p
P+3	392 - 398p	392 - 398p
Cows		
O+3	324 - 325p	324 - 328p

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.

FQAS MART CLINICS FEBRUARY 2024

LMC Farm Liaison Officer, Terry White, runs Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) advice sessions at a range of Livestock Marts across Northern Ireland. Terry is present to assist members of FQAS with non-conformances, general scheme queries and any issues prior to or following an inspection.



Any farmers who wish to join the scheme can also do so through their local FQAS mart clinic. Terry will be available at the livestock marts listed in the table below.

For further information call (028) 9263 3024.

Mart	Date
Omagh	Monday 5th February
Ballymena	Friday 9th February
Markethill	Tuesday 13th February

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 27/01/24	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	485.4	484.4	465.3
R3	479.4	478.2	466.2
O+3	472.9	469.6	452.5

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 27/01/24	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	220.2	233.9	250.2	266.3
P2	248.8	268.8	287.4	307.6
P3	219.5	316.0	305.3	316.3
O3	0.0	331.0	317.3	333.2
O4	0.0	292.0	326.8	336.9
R3	0.0	0.0	328.0	352.7

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for U-3 prime cattle were in the region of 460-466p/kg and O+3 cows ended the week ranging from 324-328p/kg. Base quotes for all types of cattle are expected to be similar early next week.

Cattle throughput increased last week with 7,222 head of prime cattle and 2,539 head of cows processed in the local NI plants. Cattle imports remained steady with 120 head of prime cattle imported from ROI and 147 cows imported to NI from ROI. Meanwhile, there were no prime cattle exported from NI however, 31 cows were exported to ROI last week from NI. Cattle trade remained steady last week with R3 grading prime cattle strengthening across the board. R3 steers were up 1.3p/kg to a price of 481.4p/kg, R3 grading heifers were up 2.5p/kg to a price of 481.3p/kg and R3 grading young bulls were up 3.1p/kg to a price of 464p/kg. NI recorded the largest increase of 7.3p/kg for O3 cows last week which were paid an average price of 332.4p/kg.

ROI cattle trade strengthened across the board in euro terms however, ROI did record two minor declines in sterling terms for R4 steers and P2 cows. In ROI last week, R3 steers were up 0.1p/kg, R3 heifers were up 0.4p/kg, R3 young bulls were up 1.5p/kg and lastly, O3 grading cows increase by 2.3p/kg. Scotland reported many declines in cattle trade last week. However, in GB, R3 steers increased by 0.7p/kg, R3 heifers increased 1p/kg, R3 young bulls increased 2.6p/kg and lastly, O3 cows were up by 2.7p/kg last week.

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

W/E 27/01/24	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	485.0	451.0	501.9	506.2	504.7	505.1
	R3	481.4	443.2	501.4	499.9	501.0	500.4
	R4	481.6	445.3	503.1	506.0	496.7	502.2
	O3	469.5	437.3	488.2	487.5	479.5	480.7
AVG	471.7	-	499.4	497.2	489.2	489.1	493.8
Heifers	U3	484.3	457.8	508.0	505.8	510.4	508.4
	R3	481.3	448.2	501.3	498.8	499.1	499.3
	R4	478.7	452.1	501.9	500.0	496.4	499.9
	O3	467.8	443.6	486.9	477.8	476.2	477.2
AVG	470.8	-	499.7	492.3	486.1	483.0	490.3
Young Bulls	U3	466.2	441.3	494.1	496.0	491.9	494.0
	R3	464.0	433.0	484.0	488.6	487.2	487.3
	O3	450.9	421.5	456.0	460.9	456.3	471.1
	AVG	453.5	-	474.5	480.5	467.7	477.4
Prime Cattle Price Reported	6,109	-	6,093	6,724	7,793	5,012	25,622
Cows	O3	332.4	358.2	362.8	360.3	363.6	363.1
	O4	336.3	359.1	364.8	366.3	363.5	369.1
	P2	292.1	327.6	310.9	321.0	316.4	325.2
	P3	313.8	341.3	326.0	340.0	337.8	343.3
AVG	301.9	-	356.6	349.0	337.4	335.6	341.9

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.5p 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 27/01/24	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	280	309	290	215	279	245
Friesians	220	250	226	160	219	190
Heifers	260	322	275	215	259	228
Beef Cows	215	265	240	150	214	190
Dairy Cows	130	185	155	85	129	112
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	305	390	330	225	300	260
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	300	357	315	220	299	250
Bullocks over 500kg	260	321	285	190	259	225
Heifers up to 450kg	300	486	325	230	299	260
Heifers over 450kg	270	328	290	210	269	235
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	415	530	460	300	410	340
Continental Heifers	350	510	395	225	345	280
Friesian Bulls	110	190	145	50	105	75
Holstein Bulls	80	180	120	10	75	40

DEADWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 29/01/24	Next Week 05/02/24
R3 Hoggets up to 22kg & 22.5kg	560p	565 - 575p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

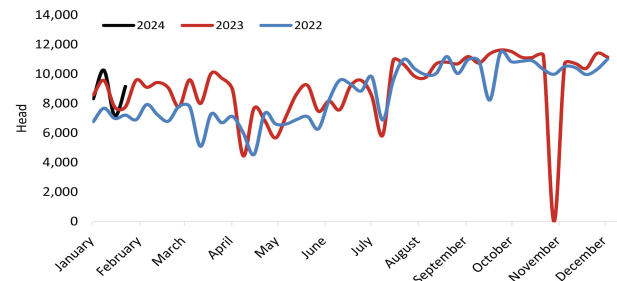
(P/KG)	W/E 13/01/24	W/E 20/01/24	W/E 27/01/24
NI L/W Hoggets	497.3	514.0	522.9
NI D/W Hoggets	525.4	543.9	560.3
GB D/W Hoggets	605.5	608.2	631.8
ROI D/W	570.1	573.4	578.9

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Base quotes from the major NI processors for R3 grading hoggets increased to 560-575p/kg mid week with stronger quotes of 565-575p/kg expected early next week. Hogget slaughterings increased last week with 9,153 hoggets processed by the major NI plants, an increase of 1,998 head from the week previous. Deadweight sheep trade strengthened across the board last week as NI hogget prices were up by 16.4p/kg, GB hogget prices surged 23.6p/kg and lastly, ROI hogget prices increased by 5.5p/kg. Liveweight sheep trade also strengthened in NI last week with an increase of 8.9p/kg.

Hogget/Lamb Throughput to date 2022-2024

Source: DAERA



LIVEWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 27/01/24		Lambs			
To: 01/02/24		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	671	521	582	-
	Swatragh	700	494	542	-
Monday	Kilrea	1,050	506	566	-
	Markethill	750	520	556	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	990	505	560	-
	Rathfriland	455	512	570	535
Wednesday	Ballymena	2,503	510	571	533
	Enniskillen	542	490	550	-
	Armoey	440	500	570	-

FARMERS ENCOURAGED TO TAKE PART IN BTB PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) is strongly advising farmers to have their say in the current debate, centred on future bovine tuberculosis (bTB) compensation values.

Recent proposals from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, if accepted, would see annual bTB compensation cut by 25% over a two-year period.

Views are being sought on whether the amount of compensation payable should be reduced on a phased basis, with a reduction to 90% of the bovine animal's market value in the first year of implementation with a further reduction to 75% of the animal's market value a year later.

A public consultation process, designed to seek the widest possible range of views on this matter, is ongoing. LMC's interim chief executive, Colin Smith commented, "The issue of bTB compensation values is critically important for those farming businesses impacted directly by the disease. So, it really is a case of farmers taking the decision to express their views on what is a fundamentally important issue for Northern Ireland's entire livestock industry."

The public consultation takes place against the backdrop of rising bTB reactor rates with up to 10% of Northern Ireland's herds now under restrictions, directly linked to the disease, at any particular time.

At present, government pays 100 percent market value to the owner of any animal removed under the Programme. The cost to the public purse of delivering the bTB programme in Northern Ireland has increased significantly over the last number of years.

Colin Smith again, "Bovine tuberculosis continues to be one of the most concerning

diseases impacting the beef and dairy cattle sectors in Northern Ireland. The disease has a very negative impact across agriculture as a whole. The stress caused by the disease within farming families is substantial. And the follow-on impact on animal performance, following the upheaval caused by a herd test is more than significant."

Beef sales from Northern Ireland to the rest of the UK and other markets are currently valued at £1.7 billion per annum. However, it is widely recognised that export opportunities could be enhanced significantly on the back of a successful bTB eradication campaign here.

The DAERA-led public consultation will last for eight weeks, ending on 08 March 2024. Participation in the online survey is straightforward.

Colin Smith concluded, "Bovine tuberculosis represents the most significant animal health challenge confronting agriculture in Northern Ireland. The LMC believes it is important for farmers to register their views on the matter of reactor compensation, an issue that underpins the delivery of the current eradication measures."

Maximising our animal health standards

Commenting on the importance of high animal health standards more broadly the Commission representative commented, "bTB eradication has been an ongoing challenge in NI for decades. Farmers' ability to eradicate the disease from their herds is hampered by the ability to deal with all sources of the disease including wildlife. In stark contrast eradication of Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) continues apace."

LMC is highlighting the steps taken to eradicate Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) in Northern Ireland

as a role model for what can be achieved directly by farmers in delivering better animal health standards across agriculture as a whole.

The latest official figures – collated by Animal Health and Welfare NI – confirm a total of 21 BVD positive animals alive within the total cattle population as of 02 January 2024. There were 21,399 herds actively involved with the eradication programme at the end of last year.

These statistics indicate that the eradication of BVD is within touching distance – a position that has been secured by the active participation of farmers. When the Stormont executive returns, a move to enact the legislation needed to finally eradicate the disease will be welcomed by all stakeholders.

The complete eradication of BVD is a critically important objective for Northern Ireland's cattle sector. The benefits of such an approach include decreased costs of production – a combination of reduced costs in tackling the disease and fewer losses – a reduced need for the use of antimicrobials plus an increased resilience to other diseases and improved cattle welfare.

Significantly, LMC has also intervened directly to ensure the success of the current BVD eradication programme. This has included the decision to suspend Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assurance membership of farmers retaining Persistently Infected (PI) animals.

Vigilance is Critical

The importance of high animal health standards are clear especially against the backdrop of a further small number of Bluetongue cases identified in parts of England over recent weeks following discovery of the disease there last Autumn.

"We need to achieve two key objectives," explained the Commission's active Chief Executive, Colin Smith. "Keep new diseases out while eradicating those already impacting on our livestock sectors. He continued, "Farmers have a large degree of control when it comes to maintaining the health of their herds and flocks. "Isolating all bought-in animals for a period of time to assess their actual disease status is a case in point. Minimising risk will always be an option for farmers, carefully considering the need to import animals, if permitted, from areas where specific diseases are an issue in the first place."

Colin Smith concluded, "A key element in driving productivity improvement and enhancing sustainability in beef and lamb supply chains is to reduce the negative impacts of animal disease and sub-optimal animal welfare. LMC will continue to work strategically with AHWNI on key initiatives to reduce the impact of production diseases on livestock farms. The Commission will also work with stakeholders to promote good biosecurity and veterinary informed animal health planning at farm level."



NIBL FQAS INSPECTION PROTOCOLS AND TIMESCALES

Join NIBL FQAS

New applications to join the Scheme are welcomed, with interested producers encouraged to request an application pack from the Livestock and Meat Commission, Northern Ireland Food Chain Certification or apply online via the Commission's website or by following the link:

[Click here to join NIBL FQA](#)

Applications to join the Scheme should be accompanied by payment and submitted to Northern Ireland Food Chain Certification (NIFCC, the independent contracted certification body for NIBL FQAS). Once the application is processed, an inspection will be arranged, taking place approximately within one month of receipt of the application.

NIBL FQAS Inspection

All producers must undergo an inspection. The person responsible for the day-to-day stock management must be available to accompany the inspector to show records and answer questions so that the inspector can be assured that conformance can be maintained between inspections. If the application is for both beef and

lamb certification then the inspector must see both species during the inspection.

If the inspector identifies any areas that do not conform to the Product Standard, the applicant will be informed of these at the time. At the end of the inspection, the inspector will list these areas of non-conformance on a report which will be left with the applicant.

NIBL FQAS Certification Process

Following an inspection, a report will be submitted to the NIFCC office which will help determine eligibility for certification. If the applicant has no non-conformances they will receive a letter confirming approval and certificate within approximately 14 days of the inspection. The producer's herd/flock status will be updated to reflect their Farm Quality Assured status on the Northern Ireland Food Animal Information System (NIFAIS).

On the other hand, should an inspector report that an applicant does not conform to all requirements of the Standard, NIFCC make a decision as to certification based on the degree of non-conformance. An applicant with non-

conformances will be notified in writing of the decision in relation to certification within approximately 14 days of the inspection. Should a producer have non-conformances, to obtain/retain Approved Producer status, remedial action must be taken within the timeframe specified. This will involve the submission of documentary evidence or a re-inspection to verify that non-conformances have been rectified.

Routine Surveillance & Spot Checks

All approved producers are eligible for routine surveillance and spot check inspections, which involves full inspection against all the requirements of the Product Standard. NIFCC will annually spot check up to 5% of approved producers. As with routine inspections, inspection reports will be reviewed by NIFCC. Producers will receive a letter confirming continuation of certification, or outlining non-conformances, normally within 28 days.

Non-conformances must be rectified within the specified timescale, with a final reminder letter following the initial letter issued to the producer if

timely remedial action has not been taken. If non-conformances are still not rectified after this final reminder, the approved producer will be suspended and FQ status will be removed from the producer's herd/flock on NIFAIS. This suspension will be lifted if the producer notifies NIFCC office within 14 days that the non-conformances are rectified, by providing satisfactory documentary evidence. A further revocation reminder will then be sent and if a suspended non-conforming producer does not make contact with NIFCC within a further 14 days his/her registration and certification may be revoked. A fresh application will then be needed if the producer wishes to re-join the scheme.

Reapplication to the Scheme results in completing the full application process again with payment and an inspection. Producers who are in receipt of non-conformances and wish to retain their FQ status are politely reminded that remedial action to rectify non-conformances negates this requirement and therefore, it may be seen as more beneficial to the producer to remain a participant of FQAS as opposed to leaving and re-joining.



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