

DEADWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 01/07/24	Next Week 08/07/24
Prime		
U-3	454 - 462p	454 - 462p
R-3	448 - 456p	448 - 456p
O+3	442 - 450p	442 - 450p
P+3	386 - 394p	386 - 394p
Cows		
O+3	346 - 360p	346 - 364p

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.

Table 1: NI beef sector summary June 2024 vs June 2023.
Source: DAERA / LMC.

Key Performance Indicators 2024 vs 2023

June	2024	2023	change
Average Prime Cattle Price (p/kg)	468.9	471.0	-0.5%
Average Cow Price (p/kg)	313.3	356.2	-12.0%
Average R3 Steer Price (p/kg)	478.5	483.3	-1.0%
Total Prime Kill (Head)	27,331	26,897	+1.6%
Total Cow Kill (Head)	8,050	8,349	-3.6%
Average Prime Carcase Weight (kg)	337.9	339.2	-0.4%
Average Cow Carcase Weight (kg)	294.7	305.3	-3.5%
Prime Imports Direct Slaughter (Head)	734	1,493	-50.8%
Cow Imports Direct Slaughter (Head)	432	660	-34.5%
Beef Sired Cattle on NI farms (Head)*	490,320	464,880	+5.5%
Total Calf Births (Head)	43,867	49,969	-12.2%
Beef Sired Calf Births (Head)	36,746	45,734	-19.7%

*Beef Sired and Dairy males only aged 12-30 months.

FQAS MART DATES JULY 2024

Kilrea - Wednesday 10th July

Enniskillen - Thursday 18th July

LMC Farm Liaison Officer Terry White will be present at the locations outlined to assist FQAS members with scheme queries and offer advice.

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 29/06/24	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	482.3	483.3	473.2
R3	477.4	477.6	467.6
O+3	467.2	468.6	461.4

*Prices exclude AA, HER, WAG and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 29/06/24	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	243.3	260.9	275.5	294.6
P2	279.6	298.6	313.8	330.8
P3	-	299.5	330.9	340.2
O3	-	356.5	346.4	355.9
O4	285.0	325.0	359.5	356.5
R3	-	-	-	371.4

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for prime cattle remained firm this week at 454 - 462p/kg, while base quotes for cows improved with quotes for good quality O+3 cows reaching 364p/kg.

Cattle throughput in local plants last week declined by 462 head overall. Prime cattle slaughterings were back 606 head on the previous week to a total of 6,488 head, while the local cow kill was up 136 head last week to a total of 2,044 head.

NI processors acted to maintain production last week with direct slaughter cattle imports from ROI increasing. Imports of prime cattle increased 69 head week on week to total 179 head, comprised of steers and heifers. Meanwhile, cow imports from ROI totalled 154 head, up 70 head on the previous week.

Last week in NI the deadweight cattle trade firmed with improvements also reported across GB and ROI. In NI the average price paid for an R3 grading steer was up 2.7p/kg to 480p/kg, while the average price paid for steers strengthened 0.6p/kg to 470.2p/kg. A softer trade was reported for heifers in NI last week, with the category reporting an overall decline of 1.3p/kg to 469.9p/kg. O3 grading heifers reported a decline of 3.1p/kg on average while the R3 heifer price was back by a marginal 0.1p/kg to 478.4p/kg. The deadweight trade for cows remains strong with the average price paid for cows reporting an overall increase of 7.4p/kg last week, with O3 grading cows up 3.7p/kg to 355.1p/kg.

DEADWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 01/07/24	Next Week 08/07/24
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	640 - 650p	580 - 590p

REPORTED NI SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 15/06/24	W/E 22/06/24	W/E 29/06/24
D/W R3 Lambs	745.7	678.5	671.5
D/W Lambs	741.6	676.0	669.1
L/W Lambs	679.9	604.2	591.8

REGIONAL SHEEP PRICES (GB / ROI)

GB D/W Lambs	810.7	780.0	746.7
ROI D/W Lambs	727.6	696.3	679.9

Base quotes for R3 grading lambs ended the week ranging from 590-600p/kg up to 21kg, however there are keener rates available for in-spec lambs and producers should price around the plants when marketing stock. Last week lamb throughput in local plants totalled 7,183 head, an increase of 992 head on the previous week. This brings the NI lamb kill during the half of 2024 to 182,567 head, 15.7 per cent behind 2023 levels. The year to date lamb kill in ROI is also 11.5 per cent behind year earlier levels.

Last week sheep exports to GB for direct slaughter totalled 885 head, a decline of 72 head on the previous week. Meanwhile lamb exports to ROI reported another decline last week, with levels back 747 head on the previous week to total 3,282 head. Ewe exports to ROI are also at low levels with 55 head exported last week. Despite the NI deadweight lamb trade reporting a decline of 6.9p/kg last week to 669.1p/kg on average, the trade remained 57.1p/kg ahead of the price paid during the corresponding week of 2023. This equates to an increase of approximately £12 on the value of a 21kg carcase year on year.

This week GB buyers were absent from NI sheep sales, with a softening trade reported in GB and ROI. The live trade for lambs in turn softened on the previous week with average prices of 548 - 550p/kg paid mid week compared to 600 - 638p/kg last week.

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

W/E 29/06/24	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	483.4	450.3	486.4	495.1	485.2	492.6
	R3	480.0	443.9	486.2	487.0	482.1	485.8
	R4	479.6	447.1	485.3	490.6	478.6	486.6
	O3	469.6	433.7	472.0	473.8	470.3	470.8
AVG	470.2	-	481.9	483.0	474.0	475.7	478.7
Heifers	U3	482.8	461.8	492.9	494.8	491.5	490.3
	R3	478.4	447.0	488.6	489.0	481.5	482.3
	R4	477.8	449.8	490.6	491.0	480.4	483.1
	O3	466.6	440.5	465.1	472.9	464.4	461.9
AVG	469.9	-	485.8	481.7	471.1	468.5	476.2
Young Bulls	U3	473.4	447.9	478.4	482.5	484.0	486.0
	R3	467.2	440.9	473.3	475.1	476.0	475.3
	O3	452.7	422.5	448.0	454.2	453.8	460.0
	AVG	455.8	-	472.6	468.5	470.4	476.0
Prime Cattle Price Reported	5,580	-	5,203	6,730	7,777	4,757	24,467
Cows	O3	355.1	371.1	386.2	391.5	389.2	387.0
	O4	355.8	373.4	393.5	392.7	391.8	388.7
	P2	320.2	343.2	348.5	350.5	342.8	339.9
	P3	337.7	360.7	367.5	366.8	366.8	360.6
AVG	318.4	-	378.5	370.6	357.7	345.5	360.3

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=84.58p 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 29/06/24	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	280	316	295	235	279	257
Friesians	220	234	225	190	216	206
Heifers	270	314	286	215	269	240
Beef Cows	226	290	256	135	225	180
Dairy Cows	150	166	158	88	149	118
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers up to 400kg	330	409	360	230	329	275
Steers 400kg - 500kg	270	363	315	200	269	235
Steers over 500kg	280	404	300	200	279	235
Heifers up to 450kg	300	455	331	210	299	250
Heifers over 450kg	270	326	290	210	269	235
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	420	700	500	270	415	335
Continental Heifers	350	570	420	220	345	275
Friesian Bulls	160	340	260	70	120	98
Holstein Bulls	90	120	105	8	60	38

LIVEWEIGHT SHEEP TRADE

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 29/06/24		Lambs			
To: 04/07/24		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	318	538	586	-
	Swatragh	600	566	659	-
Monday	Kilrea	1350	590	633	-
	Markethill	810	560	621	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	1080	560	626	-
	Rathfriland	780	527	578	550
Wednesday	Ballymena	1651	530	600	548
	Enniskillen	385	500	568	-
	Armoyle	440	575	620	-

LMC WILL BE AT THE HEART OF THE CHANGES FAST-IMPACTING ON AGRICULTURE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

The Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) continues to play a key role at the very heart of agriculture in Northern Ireland.

An excellent example of this is the contribution made by the organisation in helping to inform the debate on the new farm support policies, which will be introduced over the coming months. Stormont was inactive for almost 24-months up to February of this year. However, it was the coming together of stakeholders across the entire spectrum of agriculture and food prior to and during this period, which helped crystallise the Farm Support and Development Programme, a new initiative that will shape the future for farming sectors. And LMC played a central role in ensuring the beef and sheep sectors were supported under the new policies following the production of a research report commissioned by LMC setting out the 'Options for Supporting Suckler Beef and Sheep Sectors in Northern Ireland'. Many of the themes within this report can be seen in the outworking of the new policy design.

The scope of the new, overarching, programme is significant. Included is a new farm sustainability payment, which has been designed to provide a safety net for all farm businesses. It will be accompanied by a number of new initiatives, all designed to enhance future sustainability levels across agriculture.

These measures comprise: a beef sustainability package, a farming with nature programme, a farming with nature package, the soil nutrient health scheme, the ruminant genetics programme, a farming for carbon measure, a farming for the generations' initiative, knowledge and innovation programmes, incentives for horticulture plus capital investment and supply chain measures.

It is also worth noting that agriculture, environment and rural affairs minister, Andrew Muir MLA, has signalled his support for the general direction of travel signalled by the new support measures.

Prior to this year's Balmoral show the minister confirmed to the Stormont Assembly his vision for the time ahead aligns closely to the Farm Support and Development Programme. This new initiative will ensure both economic and environmental sustainability for agriculture in Northern Ireland.

The minister added: "Input from the Agricultural Policy Stakeholder Group, established in June 2021, has been essential to the development of the Programme. "This group brings together representatives across the food, farming, and the environment sectors and ensures that their views are understood and properly considered during the development of the Programme. "This co-design approach provides an exemplary model for policy development that could be applied more generally across all departments."

According to Minister Muir, the stakeholder group has provided, and continues to provide, a key forum for discussion at each stage of the policy development process.

Of the range of proposed schemes and programmes, LMC hopes to provide a central role in the delivery of DAERA's Carbon Footprinting Project. Further details on the project will become available in due course and the first step in the process has been completed with members of Stormont's AERA Committee scrutinising the proposals in recent weeks. LMC looks forward to working on the detail of the project delivery in the near future.

Image 1: Left to Right: Joe Stewart (LMC Chairman) Minister Andrew Muir (NI Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs) and Colin Smith (CEO LMC) at Balmoral show 2024.



Sheep Industry Taskforce

Where the sheep industry is concerned, LMC is a member of the Sheep Industry Taskforce established to secure a bespoke support programme for the industry.

The grouping has developed a vision for the development of the sheep sector in Northern Ireland. It centres on the creation of a resilient, vibrant, and sustainable industry that uses leading edge technologies to deliver safe high-quality meat and wool through increased productivity.

In tandem with these objectives, the sheep industry must also add value by increasing carbon sequestration, reducing greenhouse gas intensity, and enhancing landscape biodiversity. Significantly, Minister Muir has recognised the work carried out by the taskforce up to this point. Again, speaking in the Stormont Assembly, he confirmed that DAERA officials are now working to develop a support scheme that meets the needs of sheep farmers. It will be designed to allow the sector to play an important role in developing a sustainable future for farming in Northern Ireland as a whole.

The evidence of the last two years and more clearly shows that the approach of involving all industry stakeholder groups in designing strategic policies that impact across local agriculture is critically important. It means that the real needs of farmers can be clearly voiced from the very outset. The alternative approach of the industry simply responding to initial proposals put forward by DAERA severely limits the role of primary producers in having a real say in their futures.

LMC LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Agriculture in Northern Ireland is set to undergo significant change during the period ahead. The beef and sheep sectors will be centre stage within this process. This reality is already apparent given the support changes already in the system for beef and those that the sheep industry taskforce would like to see agreed for sheep down the track. So how will these evolving processes impact on the future policy and operational priorities of the Commission?

LMC Chief Executive, Colin Smith, explained: "Our first priority is to agree a new, three-year plan for the Commission. And work to this end is fast progressing. "LMC board members and staff fully recognise the importance of delivering optimum value for money when it comes to the levies paid by beef local beef and sheep producers." He added: "The Commission has a very strong record in delivering on this core principle and this will not be deviated from into the future."

The LMC's three-year plan sets the fundamental parameters within which the organisation will operate for a period of time that will allow sustained benefits to be generated on behalf of Northern Ireland's beef and sheep sectors.

Specifically, this plan identifies the roles that LMC can undertake in its own right. But, perhaps more importantly, it also sets out the opportunities for the Commission to work closely with other stakeholder organisations. It is by taking a collaborative approach that LMC can 'add value' to its own funding streams. And, again, this is a good news' story for beef and sheep farmers across Northern Ireland.

Colin Smith continued "In addition to the ongoing work carried out by LMC we are fortunate that there are a number of organisations we are able to call upon to help farmers respond to the challenges ahead. Industry partners, the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE), Animal Health and Welfare Northern Ireland (AHWNI), AgriSearch and the Agri-Food and Biosciences

Image 2: Left to Right: David Garrett (acting CEO NIGTA), Clarence Calderwood (General Manager, United Feeds), Professor Elizabeth Magowan (AFBI) and Colin Smith (CEO LMC).



Institute (AFBI) are helping farmers to proactively respond to the roll out of evolving farm support measures and are keeping them abreast of the wider changes taking place within our industry at various levels."

In June AFBI hosted two very successful 'Farming for the Future' open days, providing farmers and the wider industry with the latest updates on research to further enhance the sustainability of dairy, beef and sheep systems.

Reflecting on the well supported beef and sheep event Colin Smith said: "The open day brought farmers and industry together to hear more about how science and innovation will be critical to delivering the production efficiencies required for farms to continue on an economically and environmentally sustainable footing going forward. Alongside efficiency improvements the event touched on the adoption of new ways of working and innovations to reduce emissions and maximise carbon capture within the landscape."

The beef and sheep event provided insight to three key areas: suckler herd fertility, beef nutrition to achieve slaughter and first calving at 24 months, and the impact of genetics on sheep sustainability. Speakers included AFBI scientists and internationally renowned invited experts.

Colin continued "Scientific and industry expert presentations provided a useful insight to current trends and emerging opportunities. The key message is that there are already steps that can be taken to assist farmers with production efficiencies and help is at hand through CAFRE to implement the science and technologies currently available.

"It is important that farmers and industry are properly equipped with knowledge and support to help collectively move our industry forward for future generations. LMC will continue to take every opportunity to work collaboratively with industry partners to ensure the best outcome for our levy payers going forward."



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