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NI BEEF INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS OCTOBER 2015

TABLE 1 outlines key performance indicators for the NI beef industry during October 2015 and provides a useful comparison of key market information with year earlier levels.

The average prime cattle price in NI during October 2015 was 313.2p/kg, a seven per cent decline from the 336.7p/kg paid in October 2014. Meanwhile the average deadweight cow price in NI recorded a 4.7 per cent decline to 214.7p/kg in October 2015

During October 2015 the average R3 steer price in NI was 322.1p/kg compared to 346.6p/kg during October 2014. This accounts for a 24.5p/kg decline between the two periods tabulated which is the equivalent of £81 on a 330kg carcase.

Meanwhile in GB the average R3 steer price during October 2015 was 353.3p/kg, back 2.9p/kg from 356.2p/kg in October 2014. The differential in R3 steer prices between NI and GB widened from 9.6p/kg in October 2014 to 31.2p/kg in October 2015. In monetary terms the differential has widened from £32 in October 2014 to £103 in October 2015.

In ROI during October 2015 the R3 steer price was the equivalent of 280.3p/kg, down marginally from October 2014 when the average R3 steer price was the equivalent of 281.7p/kg. The differential in R3 steer prices between ROI and NI narrowed from 64.9p/kg in October 2014 to 41.8p/kg in October 2015. In monetary terms the differential in prices for a 330kg steer carcase narrowed from £214 in October 2014 to £138 in October 2015.

Prime cattle throughput in NI during October 2015 totalled 31,940 head, a 5.4 per cent reduction from year earlier levels when 33,769 prime cattle were killed in NI plants. In the corresponding period in 2013 35,510 prime cattle were slaughtered in NI plants. Cow throughput in NI plants increased from 9,323 head in October 2014 to 10,473 head in October 2015. This accounts for a 12.3 per cent increase year on year.

In October 2015 the average prime cattle carcase weight in NI was 344.2kg, an 11.6kg increase from October 2014 when the average carcase weight was 332.6kg. Meanwhile the average cow carcase weight increased from 301.6kg in October 2014 to 305.7kg in October 2015. This increase by 4.1 kg accounted for a 1.4 per cent increase in average carcase weights between the two periods.

Imports of cattle for direct slaughter in NI plants during October 2015 totalled 3,857 head, a 13 per cent decline from the 4,431 head imported during October 2015. Meanwhile exports of cattle from NI for direct slaughter in ROI and GB totalled 3,404 head in October 2015, a 21.7 per cent increase from the 2,798 head exported in October 2014. This increase in exports was primarily due to an increase in cow exports to ROI for direct slaughter.

The number of cattle intended for beef production aged 12-30 months on NI farms during October 2015 totalled 406,161 head, a 1.6 per cent increase on October 2014 levels. The number of beef sired cattle on NI farms increased by 2.1 per cent to 364,266 head in October 2015 while the number of dairy sired male cattle declined by 2.4 per cent to 41,895 during the same period.

Beef sired calf registrations during October 2015 totalled 19,514 head, a 3.1 per cent increase on October 2014 levels. Meanwhile the number of dairy sired male calf registrations during October 2015 totalled 9,890 head, back by 2.6 per cent from year earlier levels.

The value of euro against sterling declined from €1 = 78.9p in October 2014 to €1 = 73.3p in October 2015. This accounts for a seven per cent decline in the value of euro against sterling between the two periods.

Table 1: NI Beef Industry Key Performance Indicators (October Snapshot)

	Oct-14	Oct-15	% Change
Finished Cattle Prices (p/kg)			
Average Prime Cattle Price	336.7	313.2	-7.0%
Average Cow Price	225.2	214.7	-4.7%
Average R3 Steer Price (NI)	346.6	322.1	-7.1%
Average R3 Steer Price (ROI)	281.7	280.3	-0.5%
Average R3 Steer Price (GB)	356.2	353.3	-0.8%
Slaughterings			
Total Clean Slaughterings (Head)	33,769	31,940	-5.4%
Total Cow Slaughterings (Head)	9,323	10,473	12.3%
Average Clean Carcase Weight (kg)	332.6	344.2	3.5%
Average Cow Carcase Weight (kg)	301.6	305.7	1.4%
Trade (Head)			
Live Imports for Direct Slaughter	4,431	3,857	-13.0%
Live Exports for Direct Slaughter	2,798	3,404	21.7%
Availability (Head)			
No. Cattle on the Ground*	399,726	406,161	1.6%
Beef Sired	356,814	364,266	2.1%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	42,912	41,895	-2.4%
Calf Births Registrations (Head)			
Calf Births	29,081	29,404	1.1%
Beef Sired	18,922	19,514	3.1%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	10,159	9,890	-2.6%
Euro / Stg Exchange Rate (€ / £)	78.9	73.3	-7.1%

* Aged between 12-30 mths (Beef + Dairy Male Only)

All NI Figures Unless Otherwise Stated

GB AND NI REMAIN TOP OF EU LEAGUE TABLE

THE EU Deadweight Cattle Prices League Table compares farmgate R3 heifer prices across the EU in euro terms and allows a useful comparison to be drawn between deadweight cattle prices across the EU. GB has remained in first position on the EU league table of deadweight R3 heifer prices as outlined in Table 2.

In the week ending 01 November 2015 the R3 heifer price in GB was the equivalent of 487.9c/kg, a 4c/kg increase from the week ending 04 October 2015 when it was the equivalent of 483.9c/kg. This increase widened the differential in R3 heifer prices between GB and the EU average from 90.9c/kg in the week ending 04 October 2015 to 94.1c/kg in the week ending 01 November 2015

Meanwhile in NI the R3 heifer price was the equivalent of 447.7c/kg during the week ending 01 November 2015, a 7c/kg increase from the week ending 04 October 2015 when it was the equivalent of 440.7c/kg. This moved NI up one position on the league table into second position during the week ending 01 November 2015 and widened the differential between NI and the EU average to 53.9c/kg.

In ROI the R3 heifer price during the week ending 01 November 2015 was 394.6c/kg. This is a 1.4c/kg increase from the week ending 04 October 2015 when the R3 heifer price was 393.2c/kg. ROI remains in seventh position on the EU league table. R3 heifer prices in ROI have remained very close to EU average prices in recent weeks.

The most notable changes in R3 heifer prices between the two periods outlined in Table 2 were recorded in Italy and Spain.

During the week ending 01 November 2015 the R3 heifer price in Italy was 397c/kg, a 16.7c/kg reduction from the week ending 04 October 2015 when it was 413.7c/kg. This moved it down two positions from fourth place in the week ending 04 October 2015 to sixth place in the week ending 01 November 2015.

Meanwhile in Spain the R3 heifer price increased from 372.1c/kg in the week ending 04 October 2015 to 382.6c/kg in the week ending 01 November 2015. Despite this increase by 10.5c/kg Spain remained in eighth position in the EU league table as indicated in Table 2.

The average R3 heifer price in the EU during the week ending 01 November 2015 was 393.8c/kg, up marginally from the week ending 04 October 2015 when it was 393c/kg. The value of euro against sterling recorded a decline from €1 = 73.7p in the week ending 04 October 2015 to €1 = 72p/kg in the week ending 01 November 2015.

Table 2: EU Deadweight Cattle Prices - Heifers R3 Equivalent (€ Cents)

Position last Mth	Position this Mth	Country	Price last Mth (w/e 04.10.15)	Price this Mth (w/e 01.11.15)	Change on Mth (cents)
1	1	Great Britain	483.9	487.9	+4.0
3	2	Northern Ireland	440.7	447.7	+7.0
2	3	Sweden	443.2	441.3	-1.8
5	4	France	406.0	402.0	-4.0
6	5	Luxembourg	397.7	398.5	+0.8
4	6	Italy	413.7	397.0	-16.7
7	7	Ireland	393.2	394.6	+1.4
8	8	Spain	372.1	382.6	+10.5
9	9	Denmark	367.7	375.8	+8.1
10	10	Germany	367.7	368.9	+1.2
11	11	Austria	361.0	362.6	+1.7
13	12	Belgium	327.0	326.0	-1.0
12	13	Slovenia	346.5	318.4	-28.0
14	14	Poland	298.5	301.1	+2.6
15	15	Czech Republic	273.0	271.8	-1.2
16	16	Lithuania	265.7	234.3	-31.4
		EU Average	393.0	393.8	+0.8
Euro (€1=)			73.7	72.0	-1.7

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WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

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CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 09/11/15	Next Week 16/11/15
Prime		
U-3	318 - 320p	318 - 320p
R-3	312 - 314p	312 - 314p
O+3	306 - 308p	306 - 308p
P+3	264 - 290p	264 - 290p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3 & better	235 - 245p	235 - 245p
Steakers	140 - 170p	140 - 170p
Blues	120 - 130p	120 - 130p

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 07/11/15	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	321.7	327.2	312.8
R3	318.8	320.8	310.7
O+3	310.6	309.9	304.3

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

w/e 07/11/15	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220-250kg	Wgt 250-280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	136.2	146.8	156.1	165.1
P2	142.5	173.4	190.5	207.7
P3	140.9	195.7	213.8	221.0
O3	180.0	199.2	228.5	239.9
O4	150.0	215.4	230.1	239.7
R3	-	-	246.3	258.8

Deadweight Cattle Trade

QUOTES for in spec U-3 grade prime cattle this week ranged from 318-320p/kg with similar quotes expected for early next week. Quotes for good quality O+3 grade cows ranged from 235-245p/kg with the majority of plants quoting in the region of 240p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for all categories of cattle for early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in NI last week totalled 6,801 head, an increase of 238 head from the previous week. This is the third consecutive week in which prime cattle throughput has increased in NI in line with normal seasonal trends. Cow throughput has remained strong with 2,382 cows killed in NI last week. This was similar to previous week and 294 head higher than the corresponding week in 2014.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 664 head, an increase of 20 head from the previous week and accounting for 10 per cent of total prime cattle throughput. In the corresponding week in 2014 537 prime cattle were imported from ROI for direct slaughter and accounted for 8 per cent of total prime cattle throughput. A total of 132 cows were also imported from ROI for slaughter in NI plants last week while 322 cows were exported from NI for slaughter in ROI. Exports of prime cattle from NI to GB for direct slaughter have continued to slowly increase with 310 head exported last week. This is notably higher than the 159 head exported in the corresponding week last year. A total of 54 cows were also exported from NI for slaughter in GB last week.

The deadweight cattle trade held relatively steady in NI last week with the average steer price up by 1.2p/kg to 311.8 while the R3 steer price was up marginally to 321.7p/kg. The average heifer price was back in the region of 1p/kg to 316.8p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back marginally to 323.9p/kg. The deadweight cow trade in NI has also remained steady with an average cow price last week of 212.4p/kg while the O3 cow price was up by 1.2p/kg 237.3p/kg.

The deadweight cattle trade has also remained steady in GB with an average steer price of 345.3p/kg and an R3 steer price at 352.1p/kg. The differential in R3 steer prices between NI and the GB average last week was 30.4p/kg which is the equivalent of £100 on a 330kg carcase. The average heifer price in GB last week was back by 0.4p/kg to 345.6p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by a similar margin to 352.7p/kg. This puts the differential in R3 heifer prices between NI and the GB average at 28.8p/kg which is the equivalent of £95 on a 330kg carcase.

In ROI last week deadweight prices were relatively steady in euro terms but a weakening in euro against sterling has meant deadweight prices were back in sterling terms. The R3 steer price was the equivalent of 272.5p/kg, back by 3.3p/kg from the previous week while the R3 heifer price was the equivalent of 283.5p/kg, back by 2.3p/kg. Prime cattle throughput increased to 24,967 in ROI last week, the highest weekly throughput of prime cattle since mid-August this year.

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

W/E 07/11/2015		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	322.3	280.4	371.3	357.4	354.4	356.3	360.3
	R3	321.7	272.5	366.0	350.2	345.5	343.5	352.1
	R4	319.3	271.9	367.7	361.4	346.0	341.4	357.1
	O3	310.2	259.3	343.6	326.7	317.7	321.0	328.1
	AVG	311.8	-	363.3	347.8	333.0	329.8	345.3
Heifers	U3	327.5	293.0	373.9	360.5	362.5	361.0	365.0
	R3	323.9	283.5	368.0	347.7	346.5	343.4	352.7
	R4	320.7	282.4	366.3	355.1	346.2	343.4	355.0
	O3	313.2	271.3	348.7	321.8	316.0	317.6	327.7
	AVG	316.8	-	363.0	347.4	332.9	326.7	345.6
Young Bulls	U3	313.2	278.0	363.4	339.8	350.3	354.3	349.3
	R3	311.4	272.7	361.8	327.2	335.3	343.3	336.7
	O3	298.1	261.8	313.5	290.2	309.6	324.5	310.7
	AVG	300.5	-	326.1	315.1	323.2	324.2	321.5
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5579	-	6924	7349	6412	4547	25232
Cows	O3	237.3	234.1	242.9	228.0	226.9	218.8	230.7
	O4	238.3	235.1	243.9	230.0	230.7	221.4	232.7
	P2	194.8	209.1	188.2	199.0	184.2	170.9	186.0
	P3	218.5	227.0	194.0	200.4	198.8	195.1	196.9
	AVG	212.4	-	229.8	207.8	188.0	186.7	204.7

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=71.32p 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

	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
W/E 07/11/15	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	186	199	192	160	185	172
Friesians	130	142	135	120	128	124
Heifers	180	193	188	160	179	170
Beef Cows	133	169	149	110	132	121
Dairy Cows	100	118	104	60	99	80
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	195	206	200	140	187	165
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	202	213	205	150	200	175
Bullocks over 500kg	196	208	200	160	195	178
Heifers up to 450kg	191	212	199	160	190	175
Heifers over 450kg	185	202	190	155	184	170
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	305	350	325	200	300	250
Continental Heifers	255	370	285	150	250	200
Friesian Bulls	70	132	100	20	68	45
Holstein Bulls	50	125	80	5	48	25

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP QUOTES		
(P/Kg DW)	This Week 09/11/15	Next Week 16/11/15
Lambs	315p > 21kg 310-315p > 22kg	315p > 21kg 315p > 22kg

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES			
(P/KG)	W/E 24/10/15	W/E 31/10/15	W/E 07/11/15
NI Lambs L/W	281.9	279.5	284.3
NI Lambs D/W	309.9	307.7	308.1
GB Lambs D/W	333.4	333.2	333.4
ROI D/W	317.9	309.2	308.3

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants this week for R3 grade lambs were 310-315p/kg to 22kg in some plants while others are quoting 315p/kg to 21kg. Lamb throughput has remained strong with 11,611 lambs killed in NI plants last week. This is notably higher than the 9,401 lambs killed in NI in the corresponding week last year. Exports of lambs from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week were similar to the previous week at 6,679 head. In the same week last year 7,351 lambs were exported from NI for direct slaughter in ROI. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was similar to the previous week at 308.1p/kg. In ROI last week the deadweight lamb price was the equivalent of 308.3p/kg.

This week's marts

SOME of the marts have been reporting a slightly sharper trade this week with some marts indicating a tightening in the numbers passing through the sale rings. In Massereene on Monday 840 lambs sold from 280-310p/kg compared to 864 lambs last Monday selling from 265-304p/kg. In Saintfield this week 597 lambs sold from 277-340p/kg compared to 570 lambs last week selling from 250-315p/kg. In Ballymena on Wednesday 1,705 lambs sold from 278-319p/kg (avg 287p/kg) compared to 1,525 lambs last week selling from 260-316p/kg (avg 276p/kg). In Armoy this week a small entry of 312 fat lambs sold from 280-310p/kg compared to 364 fat lambs last week selling from 270-300p/kg.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS					
From: 06/11/15		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
To: 12/11/15		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	513	260	300	-
Saturday	Omagh	978	289	378	-
	Swatragh	925	268	330	-
Monday	Massereene	840	280	310	-
	Kilrea	385	285	313	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	597	277	340	-
	Rathfriland	980	280	355	298
Wednesday	Ballymena	1705	278	319	287
	Enniskillen	698	285	314	290
	Markethill	900	280	311	294
	Armoy	312	280	310	292

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