LMC BULLETIN
WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF THE LIVESTOCK AND MEAT COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Saturday 19 September 2015
Issue No. 2386

CATTLE IMPORTS AND EXPORTS FOR BREEDING AND PRODUCTION

DURING August 2015 a total of 943 cattle (excluding calves) were exported from NI to GB for further breeding and production. This was an increase from August 2014 levels when 660 cattle were exported. The level of export however was well below August 2013 levels when 1,223 cattle were exported from NI to GB for further production.

During August 2015 645 of the cattle exported from NI to GB were male store cattle which will have been predominantly for beef production on GB farms. This was an increase from August 2014 levels when 525 male cattle were exported from NI for further breeding and production in GB. This increase in exports for further production has occurred despite tighter cattle availability in NI during 2015 when compared to previous years.

Figure 1 outlines the monthly exports of male cattle from NI to GB for breeding and production from January 2013 to August 2015. As indicated in the chart the monthly level of export during 2015 has been higher than the corresponding period in 2014 since March this year. Exports peaked in May this year at 1,305 head and while levels have declined over the summer months they have remained above year earlier levels.

Exports of male cattle from NI to GB during the first 8 months of 2015 totalled 6,139 head, an increase of 1,735 head from the corresponding period in 2014 when 4,404 male cattle were exported. This accounts for a forty per cent increase year on year. In the first eight months of 2013 5,977 male cattle were exported from NI to GB for further production.

While exports from NI to GB have recorded an increase during August 2015 the number of cattle being imported into NI from ROI for further production on NI farms was lower than year earlier levels. During August 2015 206 male cattle were imported from ROI to NI for further production compared to 880 male cattle during the corresponding month in 2014.

However for the year to date imports of male cattle from ROI for further production in NI have totalled 4,273 head compared to 3,183 head in the same period in 2014. This is the highest level of import in the first eight months of the calendar year since 2012 when 5,512 male cattle were imported for further production. August 2015 was the first month since January in which the number of male cattle imported into NI from ROI was lower than the corresponding month in 2014.

The strength of sterling against euro will have been a key factor in the decision for some NI producers to consider buying ROI origin stock for further production despite the significant penalties for these so called nomadic cattle at point of slaughter. The tighter supplies of store cattle available in NI due to the reduced calf registrations and low levels of imports until recently will also have prompted some producers to consider importing ROI origin stock.

It is important that anyone considering importing cattle for further production is aware of the potential for significant penalties to be applied to these mixed origin cattle at point of slaughter reflecting their lower end market value. Processors can still market these types of animals but will do so at a price that may be below that of UK born animals.

It is therefore important that producers have consulted the processors and organised an outlet for these animals prior to purchase to avoid significant penalties further down the line.

Figure 1: Exports of male cattle from NI to GB for breeding and production

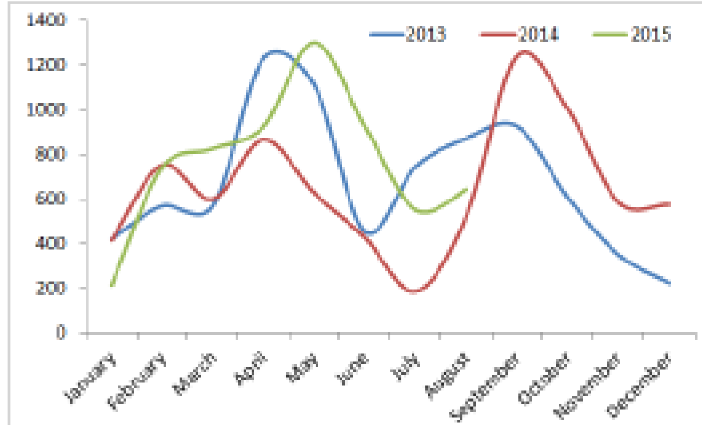
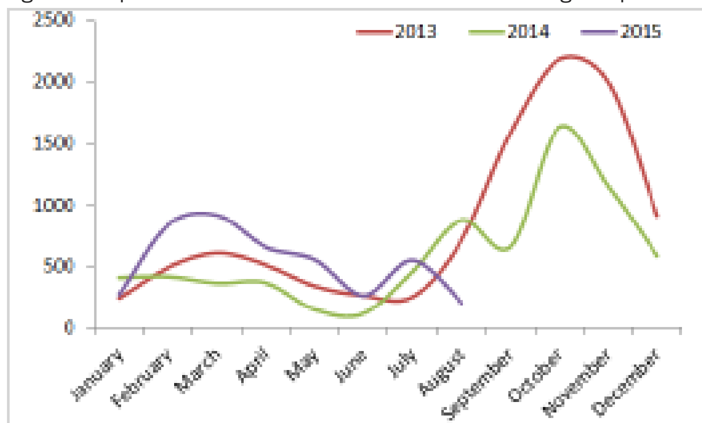


Figure 2: Imports of male cattle from ROI to NI for breeding and production



NI BEEF INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AUGUST 2015

THE average prime cattle price in NI during August 2015 was 322.3p/kg, an increase of 9.6p/kg from August 2014 when the average prime cattle price was 312.7p/kg. This accounts for a 3.1 per cent increase year on year.

Meanwhile the R3 steer price in NI during August 2015 was 332.3p/kg, a 2.5 per cent increase on the 324.2p/kg paid in August 2014. However deadweight prices for prime cattle remain well below the record prices of August 2013 when the R3 steer price in NI was 367.7p/kg.

During August 2015 the R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 288.8p/kg, up slightly from August 2014 levels when the R3 steer price was the equivalent of 286.2p/kg. However in euro terms the R3 steer price has increased from 359.1c/kg in August 2014 to 404.5c/kg in August 2015. This is a 12.6 per cent increase year on year.

The R3 steer price in GB during August 2015 averaged 353.7p/kg, an increase of 12.4p/kg from August 2014 when the R3 steer price was 341.3p/kg. This accounts for a 3.6 per cent increase between the two periods.

This puts the differential in R3 steer prices between NI and GB during August 2015 at 21.4p/kg compared to 17.1p/kg during August 2014. Meanwhile the differential in R3 steer prices between ROI and NI widened from 38p/kg in August 2014 to 43.5p/kg in August 2015.

Throughput of prime cattle in NI plants during August 2015 totalled 20,915 head, an 8.6 per cent reduction on the 22,876 prime cattle slaughtered in August 2014. While prime cattle slaughterings have reduced year on year average carcase weights have increased.

The average prime cattle carcase weight during August 2015 was 339.1kg compared to an average carcase weight in August 2014 of 330.6kg. This increase by 8.5kg has helped to offset some of the decline in prime cattle throughput in the NI plants.

There was a strong increase in cow throughput in NI during August with 7,964 cows slaughtered. This was a 15.2 per cent increase on August 2014 levels and was driven by increased culling from the NI dairy herd. Cow carcase weights remained similar to year earlier levels during August 2015 at 305kg.

Imports of cattle for direct slaughter during August 2015 totalled 2,002 head, a notable reduction from the 3,809 cattle imported during August 2014. Meanwhile exports for direct slaughter increased from 952 head in August 2014 to 1,951 head in August 2015. This increase has been largely driven by an increase in the export of cows from NI to ROI for direct slaughter.

Calf registrations in NI during August 2015 were similar to year earlier levels with 27,633 calves registered compared to 27,834 calf registrations in August 2014.

The number of cattle for beef production on NI farms aged 12-30 months in August 2015 totalled 448,550 head compared to 430,881 in August 2014. This is a 4.1 per cent increase year on year and is due to more cattle on NI farms in the lower age brackets as a result of improved calf registrations.

The sterling/euro exchange rate has a significant impact on the NI beef trade with other EU countries. There has been a weakening in the value of the euro against sterling from €1=79.7p in August 2014 to €1=71.4p in August 2015. This accounts for a 10.4 per cent decline year on year.

NI Beef Industry Key Performance Indicators (August Snapshot)	Aug-14	Aug-15	% Change
Finished Cattle Prices (p/kg)			
Average Prime Cattle Price	312.7	322.3	3.1%
Average Cow Price	227.5	219.0	-3.7%
Average R3 Steer Price **(NI)**	324.2	332.3	2.5%
Average R3 Steer Price **(ROI)**	286.2	288.8	0.9%
Average R3 Steer Price **(GB)**	341.3	353.7	3.6%
Slaughterings			
Total Clean Slaughterings (Head)	22,876	20,915	-8.6%
Total Cow Slaughterings (Head)	6,916	7,964	15.2%
Average Clean Carcase Weight (kg)	330.6	339.1	2.6%
Average Cow Carcase Weight (kg)	305.7	305.0	-0.3%
Trade (Head)			
Live Imports for Direct Slaughter	3,809	2,002	-47.4%
Live Exports for Direct Slaughter	952	1,951	104.9%
Availability (Head)			
No. Cattle on the Ground*	430,881	448,550	4.1%
Beef Sired	390,500	408,104	4.5%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	40,381	40,446	0.2%
Calf Births Registrations (Head)			
Calf Births	27,834	27,633	-0.7%
Beef Sired	22,796	22,685	-0.5%
Dairy Sired (Male Only)	5,038	4,948	-1.8%
Euro / Stg Exchange Rate (€ / £)	79.7	71.4	-10.4%

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

All NI Figures Unless Otherwise Stated

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 14/09/15	Next Week 21/09/15
Prime		
U-3	324 - 328p	324 - 328p
R-3	318 - 322p	318 - 322p
O+3	312 - 316p	312 - 316p
P+3	268 - 296p	268 - 296p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3 & better	224 - 250p	224 - 250p
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 12/09/15	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	329.7	332.9	325.8
R3	326.9	327.9	323.9
O+3	319.4	318.5	299.7

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

w/e 12/09/15	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220-250kg	Wgt 250-280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	125.5	136.9	144.6	157.6
P2	146.3	165.0	193.2	212.6
P3	167.2	195.9	214.0	224.5
O3	215.0	221.9	233.1	244.7
O4	-	230.0	233.0	245.6
R3	-	-	-	261.1

Deadweight Cattle Trade

QUOTES from the major NI processors this week remained steady at 324-328p/kg for in spec U-3 grade prime cattle. Some of the major plants have indicated an improvement in the supply of prime cattle coming forward for slaughter while the supply of cull cows has tightened. Quotes for good quality O+3 grade cows generally ranged 224-250p/kg with the majority of plants quoting 235-240p/kg.

Prime cattle throughput in NI last week totalled 5,586 head, an increase of 526 head from the previous week and very similar to the corresponding week in 2014 when 5,584 prime cattle were slaughtered in NI plants. The average prime cattle carcase weight in NI last week was 342kg compared to an average carcase weight in the corresponding week in 2014 of 331kg. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 1,585 head, a reduction of 224 head from the previous week and the lowest cow throughput by NI processors since mid-July. In the corresponding week in 2014 cow throughput in NI totalled 1,977 head.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants last week were similar to the previous week at 558 head and accounted for 10 per cent of prime cattle slaughterings in NI. In the corresponding week in 2014 824 prime cattle were imported from ROI for direct slaughter and accounted for 15 per cent of total throughput in NI plants. Meanwhile exports of prime cattle from NI to GB last week for direct slaughter totalled 182 head with 38 cows also exported. Exports of cows from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week remained similar to previous weeks with 239 head exported.

The average steer price in NI last week was 320.8p/kg, up 1.5p/kg from the previous week while the R3 steer price was similar to the previous week at 328.9p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week was back in the region of 1p/kg to 323.1p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 2.7p/kg to 328.8p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week was up in the region of 1p/kg to 311.8p/kg.

In GB last week the deadweight cattle trade was similar to the previous week with average steer and heifer prices of 350.2p/kg and 350.0p/kg respectively. The R3 steer price in GB last week was up marginally to 355.4p/kg with the R3 steer price in the Midlands back 2.2p/kg to 348.7p/kg while the rest of the GB regions recorded an improvement. The R3 heifer price in GB last week was also up marginally to 356p/kg with increases recorded in Scotland and Northern England while prices in the Midlands and Southern England were back from the previous week. The average cow price in NI last week increased by 3.9p/kg to 216.8p/kg. With quotes unchanged this is likely to be due to an increase in the proportion of suckler origin cows in the slaughter mix. Last week 40 per cent of the NI cow kill were of suckler origin compared to 35 per cent the previous week.

In ROI last week the R3 steer price was the equivalent of 285.4p/kg, back 3.3p/kg from the previous week. The R3 heifer price was back by a similar margin to 293.6p/kg. This puts the differential with NI at 43.5p/kg for R3 steers and 35.2p/kg for heifers.

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

W/E 12/09/2015		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	330.2	293.9	370.0	361.5	357.8	359.7	362.8
	R3	328.9	285.4	366.9	354.9	348.7	349.1	355.4
	R4	327.2	284.5	371.9	366.0	349.5	347.7	361.3
	O3	318.6	270.2	351.8	338.8	324.1	327.6	336.4
	AVG	320.8	-	366.0	352.9	336.4	339.6	350.2
Heifers	U3	333.5	301.9	377.5	367.1	360.5	359.2	367.5
	R3	328.8	293.6	368.3	355.6	350.7	345.9	356.0
	R4	328.2	292.3	369.8	357.5	349.2	346.9	357.7
	O3	317.8	281.0	326.8	334.7	323.0	328.3	328.4
	AVG	323.1	-	366.2	350.9	336.7	336.0	350.0
Young Bulls	U3	325.1	289.4	363.1	349.4	355.5	360.0	355.4
	R3	323.1	285.3	359.3	334.4	339.8	337.6	340.1
	O3	301.0	271.5	314.7	302.7	318.4	325.3	314.6
	AVG	311.8	-	340.0	323.6	337.0	326.2	331.8
Prime Cattle Price Reported		4743	-	6021	6362	5268	4268	21919
Cows	O3	242.6	247.6	246.6	242.3	238.0	227.8	240.1
	O4	245.3	249.2	250.2	245.8	242.7	232.6	244.3
	P2	196.1	217.0	188.9	205.9	190.3	180.8	191.1
	P3	221.2	243.6	203.3	221.8	203.5	203.1	207.4
	AVG	216.8	-	228.2	220.3	200.3	194.0	212.1

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=72.74p 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 12/09/15	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	190	209	199	168	189	180
Friesians	137	154	145	120	135	127
Heifers	185	205	193	160	184	172
Beef Cows	130	168	140	100	129	115
Dairy Cows	100	117	106	60	99	80
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	206	235	222	170	200	185
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	211	238	218	170	210	190
Bullocks over 500kg	200	216	204	170	199	185
Heifers up to 450kg	200	220	207	176	197	181
Heifers over 450kg	196	209	204	170	195	180
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	300	430	350	200	298	250
Continental Heifers	260	440	310	160	258	200
Friesian Bulls	100	150	125	35	98	65
Holstein Bulls	70	120	90	25	68	45

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP QUOTES		
(P/Kg DW)	This Week 14/09/15	Next Week 21/09/15
Lambs	315-320>21kg	310-315>21kg

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES			
(P/KG)	W/E 29/08/15	W/E 05/09/15	W/E 12/09/15
NI Lambs L/W	270.6	276.4	288.4
NI Lambs D/W	303.6	300.2	316.5
GB Lambs D/W	331.3	342.7	354.1
ROI D/W	321.3	321.6	323.7

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants for R3 grade lambs ended this week at 320p/kg to 21kg with quotes early next week expected to be 310-315p/kg up to 21kg. Good supplies of lambs have been reported with 12,631 lambs killed last week. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week increased to 9,992 head, the highest weekly export for 2015 to date. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter since June have totalled 83,053 head, 8 per cent lower than the 2014 period when 90,251 sheep were exported. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week increased to 316.5p/kg in response to the increase in quotes by the processors. The lamb kill has been of good quality with 46 per cent of lambs in the last six weeks achieving an R3 grade and a further 29 per cent achieving a U3 grade.

This week's marts

GOOD numbers have been passing through the marts this week with reports indicating a similar trade to previous weeks. In Massereene on Monday 1,312 lambs sold from 265-302p/kg compared to 1,217 lambs last Monday selling from 270-306p/kg. In Saintfield this week a larger entry of 1,311 lambs sold from 267-312p/kg compared to 788 lambs last week selling from 272-317p/kg. In Rathfriland this week 1,123 lambs sold to an average of 288p/kg compared to 1,327 lambs last week selling to an average of 287p/kg. There has been an increase in the number of ewes being sold in many of the marts with top reported prices generally ranging from £80-100.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 11/09/15		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
To: 17/09/15		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	925	265	304	-
Saturday	Omagh	1923	313	365	-
	Swatragh	1735	262	324	-
Monday	Massereene	1312	265	302	-
	Kilrea	707	275	318	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	1311	267	312	-
	Rathfriland	1123	265	320	288
Wednesday	Ballymena	2506	255	292	269
	Enniskillen	902	278	308	284
	Markethill	1950	275	328	290

Contact us:

Website: www.lmcni.com

Telephone: 028 9263 3000

Fax: 028 9263 3001

FQAS Helpline: 028 9263 3024

Answerphone: 028 9263 3011

Comments: bulletin@lmcni.com

LMC