LMC

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EU DEADWEIGHT CATTLE PRICES UPDATE

THE EU cattle price league table provides a useful summary of developments in farmgate prices for prime cattle across key EU markets. EU countries are ranked in terms of their R3 heifer price which provides an indicator of the deadweight trade for prime cattle across the region.

As outlined in Table 1 Sweden continues to have the highest deadweight beef price in the EU with an R3 heifer price the equivalent of 466.2c/kg during the week ending 16 July 2017. This is 78.6c/kg above the EU average and is 20.9c/kg higher than the previous month when it was the equivalent of 445.2c/kg. The strong Swedish beef price is driven by a combination of favourable exchange rates, tighter cattle supplies and firm domestic demand for locally produced beef.

In the week ending 16 July 2017 the R3 heifer price in GB was the equivalent of 426.8c/kg, up by 4.4c/kg from the week ending 18 June 2017 and keeping it in second place in the EU league table. The differential between the EU average R3 heifer price and the GB R3 heifer price widened from 32.8c/kg in the week ending 18/06/2017 to 39.2c/kg in the week ending 16 July 2017. In the corresponding week in 2016 the R3 heifer price in GB was the equivalent of 403.8c/kg which accounts for a 23c/kg increase year on year.

In the week ending 16 July 2017 the R3 heifer price in NI was the equivalent of 418.5c/kg which puts it in third place in the EU league table. This position was unchanged from the previous month. The R3 heifer price in NI was back by 1.4c/kg from the week ending 18 June 2017 and was 8.3c/kg lower than the equivalent price in GB. However the R3 heifer price in NI was 30.9c/kg higher than the EU average price of 387.6c/kg in the week ending 16 July 2017, a similar differential to the previous month. In the corresponding week in 2016 the R3 heifer price in NI was 391.9c/kg which accounts for an increase of 26.6c/kg or €87 on a 330kg carcase year on year.

ROI was in fifth position in the EU league table in the week ending 16 July 2017 with an R3 heifer price of 407.4c/kg. This was a decline of 9.9c/kg from the week ending 18 June 2017 and moved it down one position in the league table. The R3 heifer price in ROI was 11.1c/kg below the NI price in the week ending 16 July 2017 and 19.8c/kg above the EU average. In the corresponding week in 2016 the R3 heifer price in ROI was 394c/kg. This accounts for an increase of 13.4c/kg or €44 on a 330kg carcase year on year.

The average R3 heifer price in the EU in the week ending 16 July 2017 was 387.6c/kg, back by 2c/kg from the week ending 18 June 2017 when it was 389.6c/kg. There was a slight improvement in the value of the euro against sterling over the same period with €1 = £0.884 in the week ending 16 July 2017. In the corresponding week in 2016 the R3 heifer price in the EU was 375.9c/kg while the euro was trading against sterling at €1 = £0.839.

Table 1: EU Deadweight Cattle Prices - Heifers R3 Equivalent (€ Cents)

Position last Mth	Position this Mth	Country	Price last Mth (w/e 18.06.17)	Price this Mth (w/e 16.07.17)	Change on Mth (cents)
1	1	Sweden	445.2	466.2	+20.9
2	2	Great Britain	422.4	426.8	+4.4
3	3	Northern Ireland	419.9	418.5	-1.4
6	4	Luxembourg	405.7	414.4	+8.7
4	5	Ireland	417.3	407.4	-9.9
5	6	Italy	410.4	401.1	-9.4
7	7	France	396.0	393.0	-3.0
8	8	Spain	385.1	390.9	+5.7
10	9	Germany	364.8	365.1	+0.3
9	10	Denmark	365.5	359.3	-6.2
11	11	Austria	352.0	355.6	+3.6
12	12	Slovenia	331.5	331.3	-0.2
16	13	Lithuania	277.1	328.5	+51.5
14	14	Belgium	316.5	318.0	+1.5
13	15	Poland	319.6	314.7	-4.8
15	16	Czech Republic	285.9	282.6	-3.4
		EU Average	389.6	387.6	-2.0
Euro (€1 =)			87.9	88.4	+0.4

FQAS MART CLINICS AUGUST 2017

LMC's Farm Liaison Officer, Terry White, runs Farm Quality Assurance Scheme (FQAS) mart clinics 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 above. For further information call (028) 9263 3024.

LOCATION	DAY	DATE
Omagh	Monday	07/08/2017
Saintfield	Wednesday	09/08/2017
Markethill	Tuesday	15/08/2017
Enniskillen	Thursday	17/08/2017
Kilrea	Wednesday	23/08/2017
Ballymena	Friday	25/08/2017

LAMB CLASSIFICATION UPDATE Q2 2017

REPORTS from the major NI plants that are processing lamb have indicated that lambs being presented for slaughter in recent months have generally been of very good quality and this has been verified through analysis of the conformation and fat class scores awarded at point of slaughter. Lambs in NI are graded using the 5 point EUROP scale.

During the three month period April-June 2017 42 per cent of price reported lambs in NI were awarded a U grade as outlined in Figure 1. This was up marginally from the same period in 2016 when 41 per cent of lambs were classified as U grading. Meanwhile a further 54 per cent of price reported lambs were awarded an R grade during the 2017 period. This was a slight decrease from 2016 levels when 56 per cent of price reported lambs in NI were classified as R grading.

There has been a slight increase in the proportion of lambs awarded an O grade for conformation in local plants although the numbers involved remain very small and accounted for just 3 per cent of the total price reported kill in the 2017 period.

While conformation scores have remained fairly consistent year on year there has been a notable shift in the fat scores achieved by price reported lambs in local plants as outlined in Figure 2.

During the 2017 period 23 per cent of price reported lambs achieved a fat cover 2, a notable nine percentage point decline from the same period in 2016 when 32 per cent of lambs were in this category. Meanwhile price reported lambs achieving a 3 for fat cover accounted for 71 per cent of the kill during the 2017 period, an 11 percentage point increase from April-June 2016 when 60 per cent of lambs were in this category.

There has also been a slight increase in the average carcase weight of lambs killed in local plants from 21.5kg in the 2016 period to 21.6kg in the 2017 period. The higher carcase weights and improvement in fat cover levels recorded are most likely due to the better grass growing conditions on NI farms this spring and early summer when compared to 2016.

Figure 1: Conformation scores achieved by price reported lambs in NI from April - June 2017 and the corresponding period in 2016

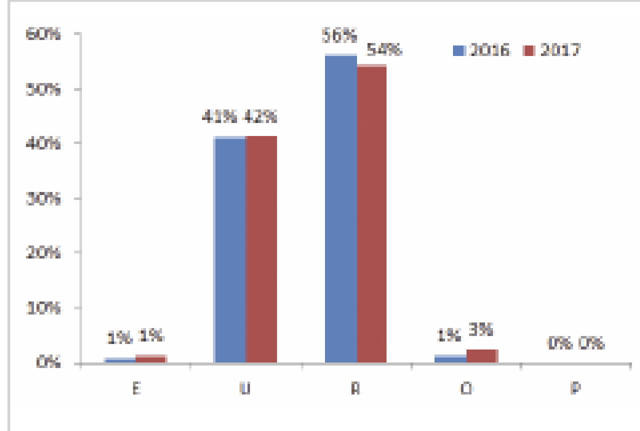
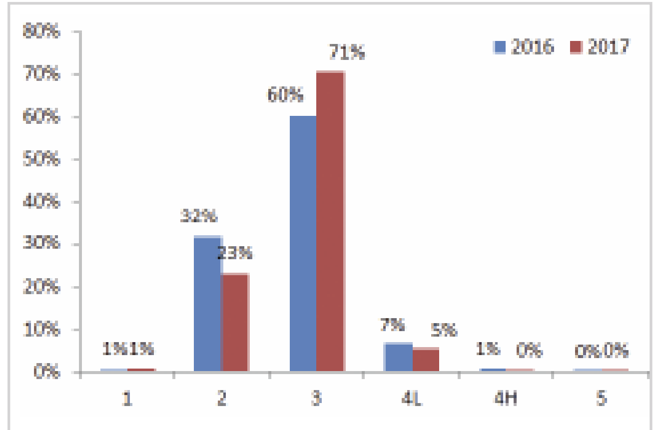


Figure 2: Fat scores achieved by price reported lambs in NI from April - June 2017 and the corresponding period in 2016



FQAS Helpline
If you have had a recent inspection and need help and advice to rectify any non-conformances, contact the FQAS helpline:
028 9263 3024

Answerphone Service
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WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 24/07/17	Next Week 31/07/17
Prime		
U-3	360 - 364p	360 - 364p
R-3	354 - 358p	354 - 358p
O+3	348 - 352p	348 - 352p
P+3	290 - 310p	290 - 310p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3 & better	270 - 280p	270 - 280p
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 22/07/17	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	370.5	372.6	366.6
R3	364.4	364.4	352.2
O+3	357.8	357.9	346.7

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 22/07/17	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220-250kg	Wgt 250-280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	178.1	197.2	208.6	228.9
P2	208.5	229.4	251.5	257.4
P3	208.8	238.8	265.7	269.1
O3	-	246.5	279.9	284.5
O4	-	-	278.4	289.8
R3	-	-	-	302.5

Deadweight Cattle Trade

THE deadweight trade for prime cattle has held steady this week with base quotes for in spec U-3 grade steers and heifers ranging from 360-364p/kg across the plants. Reports have indicated relatively tight supplies of prime cattle available for slaughter to meet demand for beef so producers are encouraged to shop around to make sure they get the best possible deal. The cow trade has also held steady in NI this week with quotes ranging from 270-280p/kg for good quality O+3 grading cows.

Prime cattle slaughterings in local plants last week totalled 5,395 head which brings prime cattle throughput for the last six weeks to 33,407 head. This is an increase of 1,492 head from the corresponding period in 2016 when prime cattle throughput totalled 31,915 head. This accounts for a 5 per cent increase year on year. Cow slaughterings in NI last week totalled 1,815 head which brings cow throughput for the last six weeks to 11,110 head, similar to the 10,803 cows killed in the same period in 2016.

Cattle imports from ROI last week for direct slaughter consisted of 126 prime cattle and 153 cows with a further 8 prime cattle and 86 cows imported from GB. Meanwhile exports from NI for direct slaughter in ROI consisted of 62 cows and 4 bulls while no cattle made the journey to GB for direct slaughter.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in NI came under some pressure last week with an average steer price of 359.7p/kg, back almost a penny from the previous week while the R3 steer price was back by 2.4p/kg to 369.1p/kg. Meanwhile the average heifer price in NI last week was back by 2.1p/kg to 361.3p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by a similar margin to 369.6p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week was back by 6.8p/kg to 349.1p/kg and this was primarily driven by a 6.3p/kg decline in the O3 young bull price to 339.8p/kg.

The deadweight trade in GB has held steady with the average steer price up by just over a penny to 368.5p/kg last week while the R3 steer price was up by half a penny to 378.5p/kg. There was however some variation between the regions with the R3 steer price increasing by 8.4p/kg in Southern England to 381.2p/kg while it recorded declines in Scotland (-0.6p/kg), the Northern England (-1.4p/kg) and the Midlands (-3.1p/kg). The average heifer price in GB last week increased marginally to 371.9p/kg while the R3 heifer price was also up slightly to 379.7p/kg. As with the steer trade there was some variability across the regions with R3 heifer prices improving in Scotland (+0.9p/kg), Northern England (+1.2p/kg) and Southern England (+6.1p/kg) while they declined in the Midlands (-3.3p/kg).

In ROI last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle held steady in euro terms and increased slightly in sterling terms due to a strengthening in the value of the euro against sterling. The R3 steer price in ROI last week was the equivalent 354.5p/kg, up 1.4p/kg from the previous week while the R3 heifer price was up by a similar margin to 363.5p/kg.

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

W/E 22/07/2017		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	371.7	363.3	393.8	375.9	374.6	382.4	381.0
	R3	369.1	354.5	390.4	368.9	372.5	381.2	378.5
	R4	368.9	355.2	394.2	384.4	371.6	379.4	383.7
	O3	360.3	338.6	362.0	345.4	341.4	352.0	349.9
	AVG	359.7	-	386.9	365.0	356.7	364.9	368.5
Heifers	U3	373.0	375.4	401.3	377.2	386.0	383.3	387.4
	R3	369.6	363.5	394.9	369.1	374.7	377.5	379.7
	R4	366.4	363.5	391.2	375.4	375.1	373.9	379.3
	O3	362.9	348.4	377.5	343.5	352.1	355.4	358.0
	AVG	361.3	-	390.3	367.1	365.1	362.7	371.9
Young Bulls	U3	365.4	361.1	385.9	362.9	369.1	373.9	371.2
	R3	362.0	350.7	380.5	354.1	361.5	365.3	363.7
	O3	339.8	330.4	337.9	319.1	322.1	344.2	327.4
	AVG	349.1	-	371.2	347.5	354.8	352.5	355.9
Prime Cattle Price Reported		4587	-	6393	7139	7065	4388	24985
Cows	O3	283.2	287.9	293.2	275.5	282.6	286.7	282.7
	O4	289.1	289.1	292.7	279.5	284.2	280.5	283.6
	P2	248.7	263.8	243.1	237.2	234.5	241.9	238.2
	P3	265.6	282.0	250.5	251.7	244.1	258.3	249.4
	AVG	266.3	-	280.2	258.3	251.2	250.9	255.9

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=88.67p 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 22/07/17	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	206	248	215	175	205	195
Friesians	142	166	159	118	140	128
Heifers	200	215	210	179	199	190
Beef Cows	149	225	166	120	148	135
Dairy Cows	117	140	125	75	116	98
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	225	268	240	190	224	210
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	210	244	222	188	209	198
Bullocks over 500kg	200	226	212	175	199	190
Heifers up to 450kg	220	265	235	175	218	198
Heifers over 450kg	200	226	215	170	199	185
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	325	450	375	225	322	275
Continental Heifers	225	375	290	140	220	180
Friesian Bulls	140	205	170	80	138	110
Holstein Bulls	75	155	115	38	72	55

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 24/07/17	Next Week 31/07/17
Lambs >21kg	420-425p	405-410p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 08/07/17	W/E 15/07/17	W/E 22/07/17
NI Lambs L/W	399.7	403.2	386.9
NI Lambs D/W	428.9	427.4	423.0
GB Lambs D/W	461.2	466.2	466.5
ROI D/W	446.6	458.2	446.9

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants this week came under some pressure as more lambs become available for slaughter. The plants ended the week quoting 405-410p/kg for R3 grading lambs up to 21kg with similar quotes expected early next week. Lamb throughput in local plants last week totalled 10,709 head which was the highest weekly throughput for the year to date. In the same week last year lamb throughput in local plants totalled 11,219 head. Exports of lambs to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 6,709 head and accounted for 39 per cent of total output from the NI lamb flock. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was back by 4.4p/kg to 423p/kg while in ROI the deadweight price came back by the equivalent of 11.3p/kg to 446.9p/kg.

This week's marts

THE live trade for lambs was generally back from previous weeks with many of the marts reporting good numbers of lambs passing through the sale rings. In Kilrea on Monday 540 lambs sold from 364-378p/kg compared to 580 lambs last week selling from 388-411p/kg. In Rathfriland this week a large entry of 1,035 lambs sold to an average of 359p/kg compared to 860 lambs last week selling to an average of 398p/kg. In Ballymena this week an entry of 1,407 lambs sold to an average of 360p/kg compared to 1,929 lambs last week selling to an average of 384p/kg. In Armoy on Wednesday 512 lambs sold from 345-385p/kg compared to 654 lambs last week selling from 390-415p/kg. Top reported prices for cull ewes were over £100 in several of the marts this week with a top reported price of £129 in Ballymena on Wednesday.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 21/07/17		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
To: 27/07/17		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	348	370	398	-
Saturday	Omagh	1439	395	436	-
	Swatragh	1300	379	428	-
Monday	Kilrea	540	364	378	-
	Massereene	946	370	400	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	672	360	390	-
	Rathfriland	1035	345	385	359
Wednesday	Ballymena	1407	350	390	360
	Enniskillen	840	378	410	-
	Markethill	1120	350	375	-
	Armoy	512	345	385	-

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

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