

Issue No. 2509

SEVERAL FACTORS INFLUENCE GRADING SCORES OF PRIME CATTLE

ending 17 February 2018 prime cattle throughput in NI totalled 42,407 head. This was a three per cent increase from the corresponding period in 2017 when 41,114 prime cattle were killed locally.

While prime cattle throughput has increased between the two periods there has been a slight shift recorded in the conformation scores achieved. Several factors contribute to the conformation scores achieved including the type of cattle being killed, carcase weights and the type of finishing system being used. Table 1 outlines the conformation scores awarded to the price reported steer kill in NI during the six week period ending 17 February 2018 and the same period in 2017.

During the 2018 period 18.8 per cent of steer carcases were awarded a U grade. unchanged from the corresponding period in 2017. A further 36 per cent of steer carcases achieved an R grade, a 1.5 percentage point decrease from the same period in 2017 when 37.5 per cent of steers achieved an R grade.

Meanwhile 35.3 per cent of steer carcases achieved an O grade during the 2018 period, a 1.7 percentage point There was a marginal decrease in the proportion of P grading steer carcases between the two periods.

One factor which will have contributed to the slight downward shift in the conformation scores achieved is the source of the cattle being killed. During the 2018 period dairy sired steers accounted for 15.2 per cent of the NI steer kill, up slightly from 14.7 per cent in the same period in 2017.

There was also an increase in the proportion of beef sired steers sourced from the dairy herd in the NI kill year on year. These beef cross steers accounted for 25.4 per cent of the total steer kill in the 2018 period, up from 23.7 per cent of the kill in the 2017 period.

Steer carcase weights increased slightly in NI between the two periods so this is unlikely to have been a factor in the slight downward shift in conformation scores. The average carcase weight of price reported steers was 354kg during the six weeks ending 17 February 2018, a slight increase from 352kg in the same period in 2017.

The average carcase weight of beef cross steers was 343kg, up 5kg from the same period in 2017, Meanwhile the average carcase weight of suckler

origin steers increased from 367kg in the 2017 period to 370kg in the 2018

Table 2 outlines the conformation of the price reported heifer kill in NI during the six week period ending 17 February 2018 and the same period in 2017. As with the steer kill there has been a slight downward shift in the conformation scores achieved by the NI heifer kill year on year.

During the 2018 period 16.9 per cent of price reported heifers achieved a U grade. This was a marginal increase from the same period in 2017 when 16.5 per cent of heifers achieved a U grade. Meanwhile 45.2 per cent of price reported heifers achieved an R grade during the 2018 period, a 1.6 percentage point decline from the corresponding period in 2017 when 46.8 per cent of steers achieved an R grade.

O grading heifer carcases accounted for 31.6 per cent of the price reported heifer kill in the 2018 period. This was

a 1.1 percentage point increase from the corresponding period in 2017. P grading heifers accounted for 6.1 per cent of the heifer kill in the 2018 period, unchanged from year earlier levels.

the six week period ending 17 February 2018 and the same period in 2017.

Kill Year	Е	U	R	0	Р
2017	0.4%	18.7%	37.5%	33.6%	9.8%
2018	0.3%	18.8%	36.0%	35.3%	9.6%

Table 2: Conformation scores achieved by the NI price reported heifer kill during the six week period ending 17 February 2018 and the same period in 2017.

Kill Year	Е	U	R	0	Р
2017	0.2%	16.5%	46.8%	30.5%	6.0%
2018	0.1%	16.9%	45.2%	31.6%	6.1%

There has also been a slight shift in the source of the NI heifer kill which will have contributed to the slight downward shift in conformation scores between the two periods. In the 2018 period beef sired heifers from the dairy herd accounted for 28.9 per cent of total heifer throughput. This was an increase

from 25.1 per cent of the heifer kill in the same period in 2017.

The average heifer carcase weight in NI during the 2018 period was 319kg, up from 317kg in the 2017 period. The average carcase weight of beef cross heifers increased from 303kg in the 2017 period to 304kg in the 2018

period. Meanwhile the average carcase weight of sucker origin steers increased from 326kg in the 2017 period to 329kg.

The grading of cattle to EU standards is the responsibility of factory operators, under supervision of DAERA. Whilst LMC has not graded cattle or sheep since 2011 regular analysis of the grading results is featured in the LMC Bulletin to help industry to better understand and interpret any changes in grading trends observed within the deadweight profile of livestock.

AS MART

MC'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	05/03/2018
Saintfield	Wednesday	07/03/2018
Markethill	Tuesday	13/03/2018
Enniskillen	Thursday	15/03/2018
Kilrea	Wednesday	21/03/2018
Ballymena	Friday	23/03/2018

EU PUBLISHES DRAFT PROPOSAL ON BREXIT

ARLIER this week the European Commission published a draft withdrawal agreement outlining the conditions for the UK to leave the EU. One of the key recommendations outlined is that NI should remain a part of the single market and the customs union after Brexit.

The legal document incorporates the 'first phase' commitments agreed upon by the EU and the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{UK}}$ in December 2017 as well as the EU's position on the outstanding withdrawal issues and the UK's transition period. According to the EU's chief negotiator Michel Barnier, the Commission has released the draft text "for reasons of transparency" and "to foster a facts-based and realistic public debate on Brexit".

A key element of the draft document is a protocol on Ireland and Northern Ireland. This outlines that in the absence of any other alternative agreement prior to the UK leaving the EU that the "fall-back solution" would be applied to avoid a 'hard border' between the two regions. This proposal would maintain "those rules of the Union's internal market and the customs union"

that are needed to support North-South cooperation, the island's economy and the protection of the Good Friday Agreement.

This would effectively create a common regulatory area comprising the European Union and the United Kingdom in respect of Northern Ireland and that will "constitute an area without internal borders in which the free movement of goods is ensured. This would involve an area in which the free movement of goods is ensured, covering customs, VAT, energy, agriculture, goods and other sectors, across the island of Ireland

Barnier highlighted that this is the only way to guarantee that the joint commitments of the EU and the UK ill be upheld in all circumstances however the proposal was met with some resistance by the British Government. Theresa May said that the draft legal text the EU has published would, if implemented, undermine the UK common market and threaten the constitutional integrity of the UK by creating a customs and regulatory border down the Irish Sea, and no UK prime minster could ever agree to it.



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 Factory Quotes & Mart Results **Updated 5pm Daily**

Tel: 028 9263 3011

Text Service Free Price Quotes sent to your mobile phone weekly

> Email - bulletin@lmcni.com Tel: 028 9263 3000

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE						
(P/KG DW)	This Week 26/02/18	Next Week 05/03/18				
Prime						
U-3	348 - 354p	348 - 354p				
R-3	342 - 348p	342 - 348p				
0+3	336 - 342p	336 - 342p				
P+3	290 - 306р	290 - 306р				
	Including bonus where applicable					
Cows						
0+3 & better	260 - 280p	260 - 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 24/02/18	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	359.8	359.5	351.6
R3	355.1	354.7	344.2
0+3	345.9	343.8	338.1

^{*}Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 24/02/18	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220- 250kg	Wgt 250- 280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	185.1	200.3	215.7	230.6
P2	198.3	223.9	246.8	257.9
Р3	200.8	237.5	258.3	266.0
03	-	267.3	278.4	285.9
04	-	280.0	283.0	287.0
R3	-	-	-	304.4

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 26/02/18	Next Week 05/03/18
Hoggets >22kg	435-460p	440-460p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 10/02/18	W/E 17/02/18	W/E 24/02/18
NI L/W Hoggets	382.3	399.5	402.4
NI D/W Hoggets	412.9	439.0	454.2
GB D/W Hoggets	442.6	461.4	486.3
ROI D/W	429.2	448.3	-

Deadweight Cattle Trade

ASE quotes from the major NI processors this week for in spec U-3 $\,$ grade steers and heifers ranged from 348-354p/kg. The trade for good quality 0+3 grade cows remained steady this week ranging from 260-280p/kg across the plants. Similar base quotes are expected for all types of cattle early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in NI plants last week totalled 7,149 head. an increase of 153 head from the previous week. This is 2.3 per cent higher than the 6,841 prime cattle slaughtered in the corresponding week in 2017. Meanwhile a total of 2,220 cows were slaughtered in NI plants last week, an increase of 73 head from the previous week and a notable 17.8 per cent higher than the 1,885 cows killed in NI plants during the same

Prime cattle imports from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants last week totalled 9 head, a decline of 228 head in the corresponding week in 2017 when a total of 237 prime cattle were imported from the region. The number of cows imported from ROI for direct slaughter in NI last week totalled 20 head compared to 81 cows in the same week last year. Meanwhile 96 cows were exported from NI for direct slaughter in ROI last week, 53 head lower than the 149 cows exported during the previous week. Exports from NI for direct slaughter in GB last week consisted of 30 prime cattle compared to 37 prime cattle exported the previous week.

The average steer price in NI last week was up marginally to 349.7p/kg while the R3 steer price was back slightly from the previous week at 358.2p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week was back by 2.4p/kg to 348.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price was unchanged at 356.9p/kg. The average cow price in NI last week decreased by 2.7p/kg to 264.6p/kg while the O3 cow price was up by 0.7p/kg to 284.9p/kg.

In GB last week the average steer price was back by 1.1p/kg to 353.9p/kg while the average R3 steer price increased by 0.9p/kg to 364.2p/kg. The differential in R3 steer prices last week between NI and GB was 6.0p/kg or £21 on a 350kg carcase. The average heifer price in GB last week was back 0.8 p/kg to 357.8 p/kg while the average R3 heifer price decreased by 0.5p/kg to 365p/kg. This puts the differential in R3 heifer prices last week between NI and the GB average at 8p/kg or £26 on a 320kg carcase. The O3 cow price increased in GB by 2.2p/kg to 278.7p/kg last week but despite the increase it was 6.2p/kg lower than the equivalent

Reports from ROI last week indicated steady deadweight cattle prices in euro terms however a weakening in euro against sterling meant the deadweight trade was back slightly in sterling terms. The R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 342.2p/kg, a decrease of 0.7p/kg from the previous week while the R3 heifer price was the equivalent of 352.5p/kg, back 1.6p/kg from the previous week. The O3 cow price in ROI last week recorded an increase of 0.5p/kg to the equivalent of 288.2p/kg, making it 3.3p/kg higher than the 03 cow price in NI.

Deadweight Sheep Trade

UOTES for R3 grade hoggets started this week at 435-460p/kg up to 22kg and firmed as the week progressed. Quotes of 440-460p/kg up to 22kg are expected for Monday. The processors have reported an increase in the number of hoggets coming forward for slaughter with throughput last week totalling 6,141 head, up from the 5,780 hoggets killed in NI plants the previous week. In the corresponding week in 2017 a total of 6,818 hoggets were killed locally. Hogget exports to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 7.678 head compared to 8.060 head during the previous week. The average deadweight hogget price in NI last week recorded a notable increase of 15.2p/kg to 454.2p/kg. In GB the average deadweight hogget price increased by 24.9p/kg to 486.3p/kg.

This week's marts

EPORTS from the marts this week indicated relatively steady numbers of hoggets passing through the sale rings with the liveweight trade continuing to strengthen. In Swatragh on Saturday 700 hoggets sold from 382-435p/kg compared to 592 hoggets the previous week selling from 406-442p/kg. In Kilrea on Monday 350 hoggets sold from 415-449p/kg compared to 400 hoggets the previous week selling from 400-440p/kg. In Saintfield on Tuesday 544 hoggets sold from 405-468p/kg similar trade to last week. In Enniskillen on Wednesday 492 hoggets sold from 390-425p/kg compared to 825 hoggets the previous week selling from 390-438p/kg. Top reported prices for well fleshed cull ewes ranged from £105-£126.

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

	V/E 2/2018	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
	U3	361.1	352.5	370.0	365.0	370.3	368.6	368.9
	R3	358.2	342.2	372.2	360.9	362.4	360.8	364.2
Steers	R4	355.7	344.2	373.1	366.9	360.4	359.5	365.8
	03	344.6	326.8	342.2	331.6	332.4	333.4	334.9
	AVG	349.7	-	366.6	352.7	349.0	346.2	353.9
	U3	359.9	365.7	378.5	370.9	375.2	374.4	375.0
	R3	356.9	352.5	369.7	362.4	364.9	360.9	365.0
Heifers	R4	355.0	353.2	371.9	366.5	365.0	359.5	366.4
	03	348.5	337.0	353.3	332.9	336.6	341.5	341.6
	AVG	348.5	-	369.7	356.7	353.9	348.9	357.8
	U3	351.4	345.0	362.8	356.6	362.6	357.0	359.9
Young	R3	343.9	334.0	348.9	344.7	347.5	345.7	346.6
Bulls	03	328.0	319.9	323.1	307.2	316.6	331.3	315.6
	AVG	330.0	-	336.0	319.0	326.8	325.3	326.1
	e Cattle Reported	6454	-	6891	7273	7552	5039	26755
	03	284.9	288.2	274.6	275.0	283.3	274.7	278.7
	04	286.8	289.1	280.0	275.3	282.6	274.4	278.9
Cows	P2	246.0	259.3	230.9	233.6	234.7	236.5	234.5
	Р3	261.9	278.5	239.8	251.2	248.8	257.9	250.1
	AVG	264.6	-	268.1	253.5	251.1	248.5	253.0

(i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=88.30p 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							
	1.9	st QUAL	ΙΤΥ	2nd QUALITY			
W/E 24/02/18	From	То	Avg	From	То	Avg	
Finished Cattle (p/kg)							
Steers	200	211	204	180	198	190	
Friesians	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Heifers	201	209	205	175	200	190	
Beef Cows	150	211	164	120	149	135	
Dairy Cows	117	137	120	70	116	95	
Store Cattle (p/kg)							
Bullocks up to 400kg	235	271	250	200	234	218	
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	210	256	230	175	209	192	
Bullocks over 500kg	200	221	210	170	199	185	
Heifers up to 450kg	210	244	228	170	209	195	
Heifers over 450kg	200	216	208	165	199	182	
Dropped Calves (£/head)							
Continental Bulls	305	425	340	210	302	255	
Continental Heifers	225	340	260	120	220	165	
Friesian Bulls	175	325	215	65	170	120	
Holstein Bulls	105	170	135	20	90	60	

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From	: 23/02/18		P/KG LW)	G LW)		
То:	To: 01/03/18		From	То	Avg	
Friday	Newtownstewart	135	360	417	-	
Saturday	Omagh	1164	410	449	-	
	Swatragh	700	382	435	-	
Monday	Massereene	726	400	445	-	
	Kilrea	350	415	449	-	
Tuesday	Saintfield	554	405	468	-	
	Rathfriland	500	411	490	424	
Wednesday	Ballymena	1507	380	446	412	
	Enniskillen	492	390	425	-	
	Armoy	312	405	430	-	

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