

NI BEEF PRICES COMING UNDER PRESSURE AS YEAR ENDS

THE deadweight cattle trade for prime cattle has come under pressure in NI in recent weeks with steady numbers of prime cattle being presented for slaughter. With cattle supplies currently running ahead of demand for beef this has put some downward pressure on the base quotes from the major plants.

Reports from the plants have indicated weaker demand for beef from the major retail and foodservice markets. This weaker demand combined with heavier carcass weights and strong supplies of cattle in all parts of the UK have also resulted in an increase in the volumes of beef held in storage. This has further contributed to the downward pressure on the deadweight cattle trade in all parts of the UK.

The average R3 steer price in NI last week was 349.4p/kg, back 12p/kg from the corresponding week in 2017 when the average R3 steer price was

361.4p/kg. This 3.3 per cent decline in the R3 steer price year on year is the equivalent of a £42 decrease in the value of a 350kg carcass. Figure 1 displays R3 steer prices in NI from January 2016 to December 2018 and as indicated in the chart the R3 steer price in NI is now at its lowest recorded level since November 2016.

The deadweight cattle trade has also come under pressure in all GB regions. Figure 2 displays the average R3 steer price in all of the regions of the British Isles during the w/e 15 December 2018. The average R3 steer price in GB last week was 361.1p/kg, back 11.9p/kg from the corresponding week last year. This takes the value of a 350kg carcass in GB back £42 from the corresponding week in 2017 which is

the same decline as recorded in NI.

There is however some variance in the deadweight trade for prime cattle across the GB regions with prices tending to come back as you move southwards. The highest regional R3 steer price in GB last week of 368.3p/kg was recorded in Scotland while the lowest price of 355.6p/kg was recorded in Southern England.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle has also been coming under pressure in ROI with an R3 steer price last week the equivalent of 331.9p/kg. This was 17.5p/kg below the equivalent price in NI. This equates to a differential of £61 on a 350kg carcass. In the same week last year the R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 342.6p/kg which was

18.8p/kg behind the equivalent price in NI

There is however some indication that the prices paid for P grading cattle have been impacted to a greater degree by the weaker trade than better grading animals. The average P3 steer price in NI last week was 299.7p/kg, back 12.3p/kg or 3.9 per cent from the corresponding week in 2017. This is a slightly stronger rate of decline than recorded for the R3 grading steers over the same period.

The price paid for P3 grading steers in NI remains above the prices available in the majority of GB regions. The average P3 steer price was 283.7p/kg in GB last week which was 16p/kg lower than the equivalent price in NI. The P3 steer

price in GB last week was back 19.3p/kg from the 303p/kg paid in the corresponding week in 2017 which accounts for a 6.4 per cent decline over the course of the year.

The cow trade in NI has also been coming under continued pressure in recent weeks with an average O3 cow price last week of 231.6p/kg. This is back 44.7p/kg from the 276.3p/kg paid in the same week last year. This accounts for a £134 decline in the value of a 300kg O3 grading cow carcass year on year. In GB last week the average O3 cow price was 228.5p/kg, back 34.6p/kg from the same week last year which is back £104 on a 300kg carcass.

Figure 1: Weekly R3 steer prices in NI January 2016- December 2018

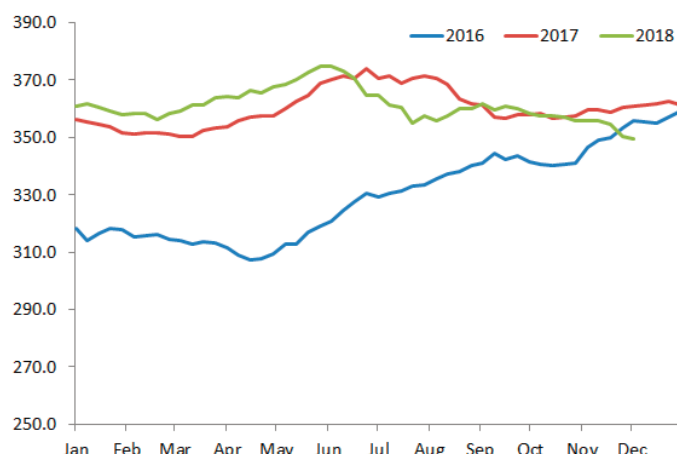
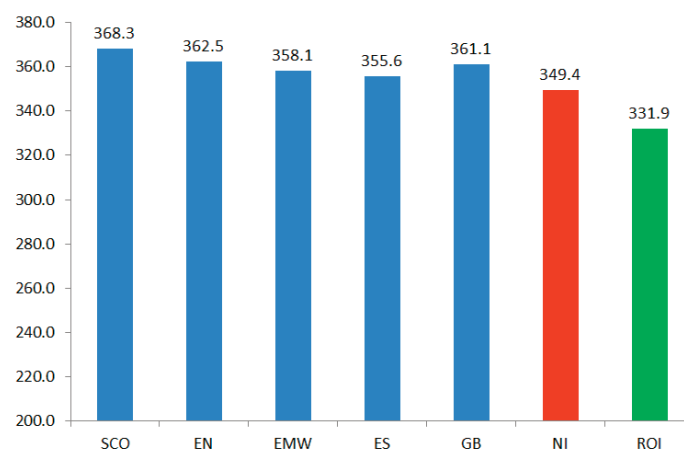


Figure 2: Average R3 steer prices across the GB regions w/e 15/12/2018



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

LMC would like to wish all of our levy-payers and stakeholders a very happy Christmas and prosperous New Year

Holiday Arrangements
LMC's offices will be closed for the Christmas and New Year period (25 December - 01 January).
We will reopen on Wednesday 02 January.

Answerphone & Text Service

There will be no answerphone or text message service during Christmas Week

LMC Bulletin
There will be no LMC Bulletin published on Saturday 29 December

FQAS MART CLINICS JANUARY 2019

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 in the table. For further information call (028) 9263 3024.



LOCATION	DAY	DATE
Omagh	Monday	07/01/2019
Saintfield	Wednesday	09/01/2019
Markethill	Tuesday	15/01/2019
Enniskillen	Thursday	17/01/2019
Kilrea	Wednesday	23/01/2019
Ballymena	Friday	25/01/2019

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 17/12/18	Next Week 24/12/18
Prime		
U-3	336 - 344p	336 - 344p
R-3	330 - 338p	330 - 338p
O+3	324 - 332p	324 - 332p
P+3	282 - 294p	282 - 294p
Including bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	218 - 240p	218 - 240p
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.

Deadweight Cattle Trade

BASE quotes held steady this week at 336-344p/kg for U-3 grade in spec steers and heifers from the major processing plants. Quotes for cows have also remained steady, ranging from 218-240p/kg across the plants. Similar quotes are expected for all types of cattle next week.

The plants have reported strong supplies of prime cattle coming forward to meet demand for beef. Prime cattle throughput in NI last week totalled 7,079 head, back by 54 head from the previous week. In the corresponding week in 2017 prime cattle throughput in local plants totalled 6,956 head. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 1,986 head, back 215 cows from the previous week. In the same week in 2017 cow throughput in local plants totalled 2,306 head.

Imports and exports of cattle for direct slaughter have continued at similar levels to previous weeks. Last week 236 prime cattle and 63 cows were imported from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants with a further six steers and 99 cows imported from GB. Meanwhile one steer, 99 cows and nine bulls were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week while exports to GB consisted of 28 steers, 10 cows and two bulls.

The average steer price in NI last week was back by 1.8p/kg to 340p/kg with the R3 steer price back a penny to 349.4p/kg. In the corresponding week last year the R3 steer price in NI was 361.4p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week increased by half a penny to 343.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 1.3p/kg to 349.1p/kg. In the corresponding week in 2017 the R3 heifer price was 359.9p/kg. There was an increase in the average cow price in NI last week, up by 1.5p/kg to 212.2p/kg with the O3 cow price reporting a further decrease of 1.4p/kg to 231.6p/kg.

In GB last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle continued to come under pressure. The average steer in GB price last week was back by 2.6p/kg to 351.9p/kg while the R3 steer price was back by 4.1p/kg to 361.1p/kg. The R3 steer price was back in all the GB regions with the most notable decrease in Southern England where it was back by 8.8p/kg to 355.6p/kg. The average heifer price in GB last week was back by 2.7p/kg to 351.6p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 3.5p/kg to 360.5p/kg. The R3 heifer price was also back in all the GB regions with the most notable decrease also in Southern England where it was back by 4.9p/kg to 356.7p/kg. The O3 cow price in GB decreased by 3.5p/kg to 228.5p/kg last week, this is 3.1p/kg below the NI price.

The deadweight trade improved in ROI last week with reported prices up for all types of cattle. The R3 steer price increased by the equivalent of 4.2p/kg to 331.9p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up by 4.5p/kg to 342.8p/kg. This puts the differential with NI at 17.5p/kg for R3 grade steers and 6.3p/kg for R3 grade heifers. The O3 cow price in ROI increased by the equivalent of 1.6p/kg to 243p/kg last week, this is 11.4p/kg higher than the O3 cow price in NI.

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

W/E 15/12/2018	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	347.8	340.1	372.1	362.0	364.1	365.8
	R3	349.4	331.9	368.3	362.5	358.1	361.1
	R4	346.7	330.4	370.9	370.1	358.1	365.9
	AVG	340.0	-	366.6	353.8	345.5	351.9
Heifers	U3	356.4	354.0	375.5	369.6	368.9	370.6
	R3	349.1	342.8	365.1	361.6	358.5	360.5
	R4	348.7	343.8	369.6	362.8	357.7	362.1
	AVG	343.5	-	366.7	352.5	344.5	351.6
Young Bulls	U3	334.9	331.8	365.9	350.6	341.1	349.8
	R3	336.8	323.2	353.6	342.7	341.8	344.9
	O3	320.0	310.2	323.4	307.2	311.2	312.6
	AVG	323.7	-	339.5	325.4	314.7	322.1
Prime Cattle Price Reported	6,067	-	7,171	6,888	7,541	4,779	26,379
Cows	O3	231.6	243.0	229.0	230.7	232.0	228.5
	O4	233.9	243.5	233.5	230.9	236.0	229.3
	P2	193.4	208.8	174.4	184.3	182.5	180.6
	P3	210.0	229.7	199.9	199.8	206.7	201.0
AVG	212.2	-	216.1	206.2	195.2	183.3	197.1

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=90.06p 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

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 15/12/18	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	346.5	355.0	335.1
R3	344.3	347.2	336.7
O+3	337.0	337.2	327.9

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 15/12/18	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220- 250kg	Wgt 250- 280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	129.1	141.9	150.6	165.5
P2	146.1	175.2	187.9	202.5
P3	193.3	193.0	208.7	211.4
O3	-	206.3	225.6	232.5
O4	-	190.0	224.0	234.4
R3	-	-	-	251.3

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 17/12/18	Next Week 24/12/18
Lambs > 22kg	405p	405-410p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 01/12/18	W/E 08/12/18	W/E 15/12/18
NI L/W Lambs	371.8	386.4	376.7
NI D/W Lambs	393.5	408.4	405.4
GB D/W Lambs	399.0	402.9	408.9
ROI D/W	407.6	419.3	422.2

Deadweight Sheep Trade

BASE quotes for R3 grading lambs ended this week ranging from 405-410p/kg up to 22kg across the major NI processing plants. Similar quotes are expected for early next week. The plants have reported good supplies to meet demand for lamb with throughput in NI last week totalling 8,948 head, back 325 head from the previous week. This is an increase of 769 lambs when compared to the 8,179 lambs killed in the same week in 2017. Lamb exports to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 8,811 head, back ten per cent from the previous week. The average deadweight price in NI was 405.4p/kg last week, back 3p/kg from the previous week while the ROI deadweight price increased by the equivalent of 2.9p/kg to 422.2p/kg.

This week's marts

THE trade in the marts this week held steady with smaller numbers of lambs passing through the sale rings. In Kilrea on Monday 300 lambs sold from 365-417p/kg compared to 500 lambs last week selling from 365-439p/kg. In Saintfield this week 510 lambs sold from 362-465p/kg compared to 1092 lambs last week selling from 360-430p/kg. In Rathfriland this week 400 lambs sold from 353-434p/kg (avg 384p/kg) compared to 1000 lambs last week selling from 355-411p/kg (avg 377p/kg). In Markethill this week 450 lambs sold from 370-420p/kg compared to 1500 lambs last week selling from 370-415p/kg. Top prices for cull ewes across the marts generally ranged from £80-116.

LATEST LIVELWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 15/12/18	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	190	201	195	160	189	175
Friesians	146	157	152	129	142	136
Heifers	195	203	198	165	194	180
Beef Cows	134	178	142	110	133	121
Dairy Cows	85	96	91	60	83	72
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	210	232	220	165	209	185
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	200	224	212	170	199	185
Bullocks over 500kg	190	196	193	165	189	178
Heifers up to 450kg	220	259	230	170	219	195
Heifers over 450kg	180	185	182	155	179	168
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	325	445	385	215	320	265
Continental Heifers	300	400	340	160	295	220
Friesian Bulls	100	175	125	50	95	70
Holstein Bulls	85	130	105	5	80	40

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 14/12/18		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
To: 20/12/18		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	320	342	378	-
Saturday	Omagh	736	378	428	-
	Swatragh	600	355	422	-
Monday	Massereene	709	370	404	-
	Kilrea	300	365	417	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	510	362	465	-
	Rathfriland	400	353	434	384
Wednesday	Ballymena	1071	340	412	371
	Enniskillen	347	362	388	-
	Markethill	450	370	420	-
	Armoey	284	344	410	-

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