LMC
Livestock & Meat Commission

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# UK BEEF IMPORTS CONTINUE TO DECLINE

AT a recent 'Future Proofing Beef Farming Event' organised by LMC, AFBI, CAFRE and Agrisearch there were several queries regarding the volume of beef being imported by the UK and a breakdown of where this imported beef is coming from.

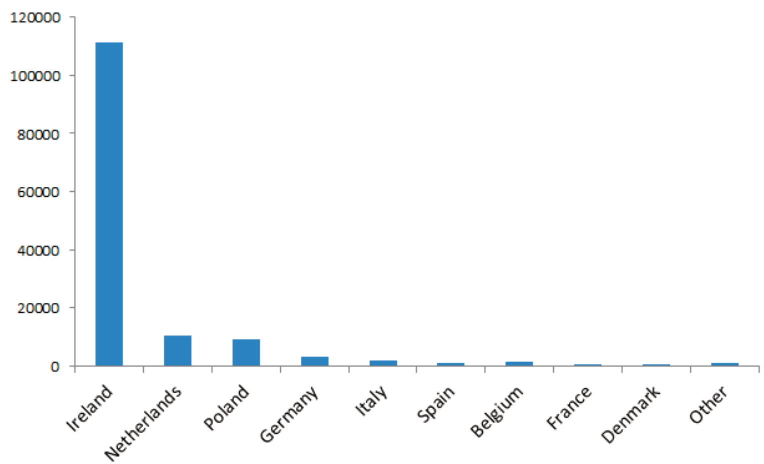
The latest available beef import figures from HMRC are for the period January-July 2019. During this period the UK imported 143,897 tonnes of beef, a notable 13 per cent reduction from the corresponding period in 2018.

### Imports from EU Countries

Beef imports from countries within the EU continue to account for the largest proportion of UK beef imports. During the first seven months of 2019 the UK imported 139,632 tonnes of beef which accounted for 97 per cent of total beef imports. In the same period last year the UK imported 155,513 tonnes of beef which accounts for a ten per cent decline year on year.

Figure 1 provides a breakdown of beef imports from the EU by country. Ireland is by far the biggest source of imported beef with 111,262 tonnes of beef imported from the region during the first seven months of 2019. This accounts for 80 per cent of total beef imports from the EU. The volume of beef imported from all the EU countries listed in Figure 1 recorded a decline during the first seven months of 2019.

Figure 1: Imports of beef by the UK from other EU countries during the first seven months of 2019 (tonnes)




Imports of beef from the Netherlands totalled 10,509 tonnes during the first seven months of 2019 which makes it the second biggest source of imports for the UK. The level of import from the region was back marginally from the 10,725 tonnes of beef imported during the corresponding period in 2018.

Poland is the third largest source of imported beef with 8,967 tonnes of beef imported by the UK during the first seven months of 2019. This was back 15 per cent from the 10,573 tonnes imported during the same period in 2018.

### Imports from Non- EU Countries

Imports of beef from non-EU countries totalled 4,265 tonnes during the first seven months of 2019. This was less than half of the 9,561 tonnes imported from non-EU markets during the same period last year. This strong decline in imports from global markets is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1: UK imports of beef from non- EU countries January-July 2018/19 (tonnes) (Source HMRC)

| | Jan-Jul 2018 | Jan-Jul 2019 | % Change yoy |
|---|---|---|---|
| from Non-EU | 9561 | 4265 | -55% |
| Brazil | 2009 | 975 | -51% |
| Botswana | 1641 | 45 | -97% |
| Uruguay | 1618 | 986 | -39% |
| Australia | 1355 | 817 | -40% |
| Namibia | 1163 | 843 | -27% |
| New Zealand | 838 | 233 | -72% |
| Argentina | 491 | 278 | -43% |

Beef imports from non EU countries accounted for just **three per cent** of total beef imports during the 2019 period

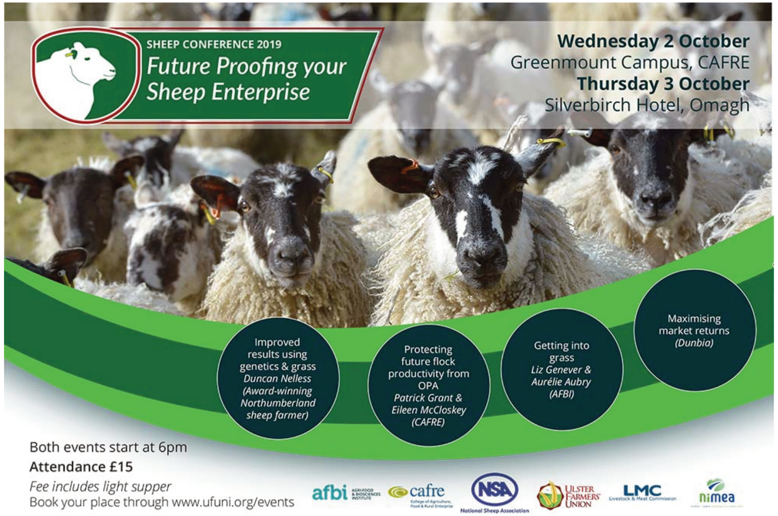
It is worth noting that the volume of beef imported by the UK from non-EU countries is fractional in comparison with the level of trade with countries within the EU. The 4,265 tonnes of beef imported from non-EU countries accounted for just three per cent of total beef imports.

The largest non-EU supplier to the UK market during the first seven months of 2019 was Uruguay which supplied 986 tonnes of beef. This was back by 39 per cent from the same period in 2018. Brazil was the second largest source of non-EU beef and supplied 975 tonnes of beef, back by 51 per cent from year earlier levels.

# BOOK NOW
# SHEEP CONFERENCE 2019

**How to Book your Place?** Interest in this event is anticipated to be very high so if you want to be guaranteed a place then you need to book early. Conference cost is £15 per person and includes a light supper.

Booking is via the UFU website www.ufuni.org/events
If you have difficulty booking online, please contact Angela Scott at UFU HQ on 028 9037 0222. Note: Places cannot be reserved and payment in full is required at the time of booking by credit or debit card.




# UPDATE ON CATTLE IMPORTS FOR DIRECT SLAUGHTER

AT last week's mart events the number of cattle being imported from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants was also discussed.

Last week there were 221 prime cattle imported from ROI for direct slaughter locally. This was an increase of 40 head from the previous week however as indicated in Figure 2 the level of import remains lower than the levels recorded earlier this summer. The level of import was also lower than the 348 prime cattle imported during the corresponding week last year.

As indicated in the chart the level of import can vary considerably from week to week and during 2019 to date there have been 6,832 prime cattle imported from ROI for direct slaughter locally. While this level of import is notably higher than the 2,291 prime cattle imported during the same period in 2018 it is very similar to 2017 levels.

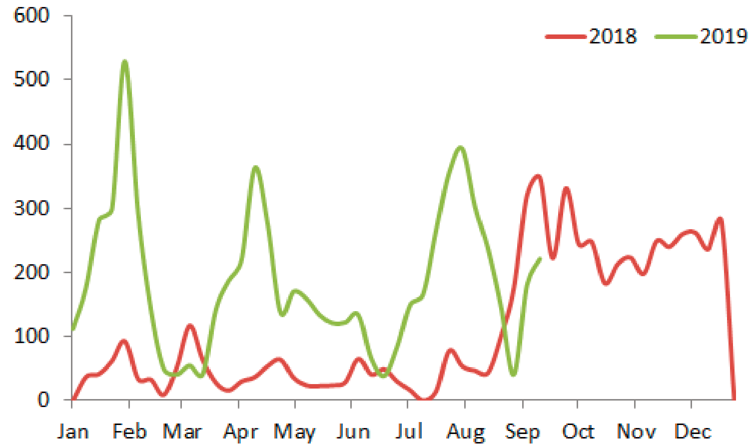
Cattle imported from ROI for direct slaughter have accounted for three per cent of the local prime cattle kill during 2019 to date. While this is an increase from one per cent during the same period in 2018 it is similar to 2017 when prime cattle imports from ROI also accounted for three per cent of throughput in local processing plants.

### Imports for further production

A small number of cattle continue to be imported from ROI for further breeding and production on NI farms. During the period January-August 2019 there were 2,260 male cattle imported from ROI for further production on NI farms, up from 1,293 male cattle imported during the same period in 2018.

While this was an increase from 2018 levels the number of imported cattle remains low in comparison to historical levels. Cattle born in ROI but finished and slaughtered in NI have mixed origin or NOMAD status. Market outlets for beef from these animals is much more limited and this may be reflected in the prices available at point of slaughter.

**Figure 2: Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter in NI 2018/2019**

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# WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

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## CATTLE TRADE

### NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

| (P/KG DW) | This Week 16/09/19 | Next Week 23/09/19 |
|---|---|---|
| **Prime** | | |
| U-3 | 312 - 320p | 312 - 320p |
| R-3 | 306 - 314p | 306 - 314p |
| O+3 | 300 - 308p | 300 - 308p |
| P+3 | 252 - 262p | 252 - 262p |
| | Including bonus where applicable | |
| **Cows** | | |
| O+3 & better | 235 - 250p | 235 - 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 14/09/19 | Steers | Heifers | Young Bulls |
|---|---|---|---|
| U3 | 322.0 | 327.8 | 316.7 |
| R3 | 320.2 | 323.7 | 313.5 |
| O+3 | 314.4 | 314.5 | 304.2 |

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

### REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

| W/E 14/09/19 | Wgt <220kg | Wgt 220-250kg | Wgt 250-280kg | Wgt >280kg |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| P1 | 149.7 | 161.8 | 174.5 | 184.8 |
| P2 | 179.4 | 195.2 | 212.6 | 226.8 |
| P3 | 191.5 | 213.5 | 230.8 | 236.4 |
| O3 | 202.6 | 224.0 | 250.0 | 253.4 |
| O4 | - | 250.0 | 249.6 | 255.6 |
| R3 | - | - | 266.0 | 272.1 |

## Deadweight Cattle Trade

BASE quotes from the major NI processing plants this week held steady with the plants quoting from 312-320p/kg for in spec U-3 grade prime cattle. Quotes for good quality O+3 grade cows have also held steady, ranging from 235-250p/kg across the plants. These quotes should be used as a starting point for negotiation.

Supplies of prime cattle for slaughter in NI have continued to firm with 7,387 head slaughtered in local plants last week. This is 783 head increase compared to the previous week and the highest weekly throughput to date in 2019. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 2,334 head, an increase of 212 cows when compared to the previous week and also the highest weekly throughput of cows in 2019.

Imports from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants last week included 221 prime cattle and 60 cows. Meanwhile imports from GB for direct slaughter consisted of 4 steers and 65 cows. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter consisted of 11 prime cattle and 33 cows while no cattle made the journey to GB for direct slaughter.

The NI deadweight trade for prime cattle reported a mixed trade overall last week when compared to the previous week. An increase of 2.2p/kg was reported in the average steer price to 316.8p/kg with the R3 steer price up by just under a penny to 325.1p/kg. The average heifer price was back by just under a penny last week to 319.7p/kg while the R3 heifer price marginally increased to 327.2p/kg. The average young bull price was back by 3.3p/kg to 302.4p/kg while the R3 young bull price was back by 8.8p/kg to 313.6p/kg. The trade for cows generally held steady last week with the average price up by half a penny to 229.3p/kg while the O3 price was back by 0.7p/kg to 252.5p/kg.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle came under pressure in GB last week. The average steer price in GB last week was back 1.4p/kg to 323.9p/kg with the R3 steer price back by over a penny to 331.5p/kg. This has narrowed the differential between NI and GB R3 steer prices last week to 6.4p/kg. The average GB heifer prices last week reported a decrease of 2.7p/kg to 325.6p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 2.2p/kg to 331.6p/kg. This has narrowed the differential between NI and GB R3 heifer prices last week to 4.4p/kg. The average cow price in GB last week came back by 0.7p/kg to 223.5p/kg. Meanwhile the O3 price was up by 1.5p/kg to 251.7p/kg, 0.8p/kg below the NI O3 cow price last week.

Deadweight prices for prime cattle in ROI generally held steady last week however a weakening euro has resulted in declines in deadweight cattle prices in sterling terms. The R3 steer price was the equivalent of 308.3p/kg in ROI last week, back 3p/kg from the previous week. The R3 heifer price was back by 4.2p/kg to 316p/kg. This has resulted in the differential in R3 heifer prices between NI and ROI widening to 11.2p/kg or £36 on a 320kg carcase.

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

| W/E 14/09/19 | | Northern Ireland | Rep of Ireland | Scotland | Northern England | Midlands & Wales | Southern England | GB |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Steers | U3 | 323.2 | 314.3 | 342.5 | 335.5 | 331.4 | 330.5 | 335.1 |
| | R3 | 325.1 | 308.3 | 340.5 | 336.6 | 326.4 | 324.2 | 331.5 |
| | R4 | 323.0 | 306.7 | 346.0 | 340.3 | 325.8 | 325.0 | 336.1 |
| | O3 | 318.2 | 292.6 | 321.6 | 312.6 | 301.4 | 305.7 | 310.4 |
| | AVG | 316.8 | - | 340.2 | 326.6 | 313.4 | 314.2 | 323.9 |
| Heifers | U3 | 328.7 | 326.1 | 345.7 | 338.5 | 336.0 | 335.5 | 338.9 |
| | R3 | 327.2 | 316.0 | 339.3 | 333.8 | 327.7 | 326.6 | 331.6 |
| | R4 | 325.2 | 314.9 | 341.6 | 333.3 | 328.5 | 326.8 | 333.1 |
| | O3 | 318.5 | 307.9 | 316.1 | 317.0 | 306.5 | 309.9 | 311.8 |
| | AVG | 319.7 | - | 339.0 | 328.5 | 316.9 | 317.6 | 325.6 |
| Young Bulls | U3 | 317.3 | 303.0 | 323.1 | 318.3 | 322.5 | 323.5 | 321.4 |
| | R3 | 313.6 | 295.9 | 325.8 | 319.3 | 315.9 | 315.2 | 318.5 |
| | O3 | 298.7 | 273.8 | 291.1 | 278.6 | 289.6 | 288.8 | 285.3 |
| | AVG | 302.4 | - | 312.4 | 303.8 | 307.6 | 300.2 | 306.9 |
| Prime Cattle Price Reported | | 6,370 | - | 6,974 | 7,057 | 7,768 | 4,837 | 26,636 |
| Cows | O3 | 252.5 | 253.8 | 256.3 | 250.8 | 251.6 | 250.4 | 251.7 |
| | O4 | 255.4 | 255.2 | 253.7 | 252.9 | 252.2 | 244.9 | 251.1 |
| | P2 | 216.8 | 223.9 | 218.2 | 210.9 | 214.1 | 211.8 | 213.6 |
| | P3 | 234.2 | 242.8 | 229.3 | 223.6 | 226.7 | 223.3 | 225.8 |
| | AVG | 229.3 | - | 245.4 | 230.8 | 218.4 | 214.2 | 223.5 |

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=89.14p 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 14/09/19 | From | To | Avg | From | To | Avg |
| **Finished Cattle (p/kg)** | | | | | | |
| Steers | 196 | 203 | 199 | 170 | 194 | 182 |
| Friesians | 126 | 135 | 130 | 106 | 125 | 118 |
| Heifers | 192 | 200 | 197 | 171 | 186 | 178 |
| Beef Cows | 147 | 174 | 159 | 115 | 146 | 130 |
| Dairy Cows | 106 | 123 | 110 | 65 | 105 | 85 |
| **Store Cattle (p/kg)** | | | | | | |
| Bullocks up to 400kg | 200 | 233 | 215 | 160 | 199 | 180 |
| Bullocks 400kg - 500kg | 200 | 221 | 210 | 165 | 199 | 180 |
| Bullocks over 500kg | 180 | 201 | 190 | 160 | 179 | 172 |
| Heifers up to 450kg | 190 | 209 | 200 | 160 | 189 | 175 |
| Heifers over 450kg | 185 | 200 | 192 | 160 | 184 | 172 |
| **Dropped Calves(£/head)** | | | | | | |
| Continental Bulls | 300 | 395 | 335 | 200 | 295 | 245 |
| Continental Heifers | 255 | 345 | 290 | 150 | 250 | 200 |
| Friesian Bulls | 130 | 190 | 160 | 50 | 115 | 85 |
| Holstein Bulls | 70 | 115 | 90 | 10 | 65 | 40 |

# SHEEP TRADE

## SHEEP BASE QUOTES

| (P/Kg DW) | This Week 16/09/19 | Next Week 23/09/19 |
|---|---|---|
| Lambs up to 21kg | 350-360p | 345-355p |

## REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

| (P/KG) | W/E 31/08/19 | W/E 07/09/19 | W/E 14/09/19 |
|---|---|---|---|
| NI L/W Lambs | 326.6 | 321.5 | 317.8 |
| NI D/W Lambs | 362.7 | 362.4 | 357.7 |
| GB D/W Lambs | 391.9 | 386.6 | 378.9 |
| ROI D/W | 390.8 | 391.2 | - |

## Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the local plants for R3 grading lambs ended this week ranging from 350-355p/kg with plants paying up to 21kg. Quotes for next week are expected to range from 345-355p/kg up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in NI last week totalled 9,492 head, a decline of 815 lambs from the previous week and back 1,276 lambs when compared to the same week in 2019 when throughput totalled 10,768 head. Exports of lambs to ROI for direct slaughter decreased last week to 7,481 head compared to 8,421 head the previous week. In the same week last year 7,660 lambs were exported from NI for direct slaughter in ROI plants. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was back by 4.7p/kg to 357.7p/kg.

## This week's marts

THE liveweight trade held steady in the majority of local marts this week with numbers generally back from last week. In Swatragh last Saturday a good entry of 1,100 lambs sold from 325-350p/kg compared to 1,220 lambs the previous Saturday selling from 312-352p/kg. In Massereene on Monday 1,033 lambs sold from 310-335p/kg, a similar trade to last week when 1,002 lambs last week selling from 310-339p/kg. In Saintfield this week 554 lambs sold from 295-350p/kg compared to 834 lambs selling from 300-373p/kg. In Ballymena this week 1,425 lambs sold from 296-345p/kg (avg 310p/kg) compared to 1,704 lambs last week selling from 295-328p/kg (avg 308p/kg). Top reported prices for cull ewes generally ranged from £80-100 across the marts with a top price of £110 in Masserene on Monday.

## LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

| From: 13/09/19 | | Lambs | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| To: 19/09/19 | | No | From | To | Avg |
| Friday | Newtownstewart | 534 | 295 | 325 | - |
| Saturday | Swatragh | 1100 | 325 | 350 | - |
| | Omagh | 1459 | 375 | 448 | - |
| Monday | Massereene | 1033 | 310 | 335 | - |
| | Kilrea | 400 | 300 | 372 | - |
| Tuesday | Saintfield | 554 | 295 | 350 | - |
| | Rathfriland | 572 | 295 | 378 | 314 |
| Wednesday | Ballymena | 1425 | 296 | 345 | 310 |
| | Enniskillen | 402 | 305 | 332 | - |
| | Markethill | 770 | 300 | 326 | - |
| | Armoy | 374 | 300 | 355 | - |


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