LMC
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NORTHERN IRELAND R3 HEIFER PRICES THE HIGHEST IN THE EU

THE EU Deadweight Cattle Prices League Table compares farmgate R3 heifer prices across the EU in euro terms and allows a useful comparison to be drawn between deadweight cattle prices across the EU.

Northern Ireland

The deadweight trade for prime cattle has been steadily improving in Northern Ireland in recent weeks and this combined with a firming in the value of sterling against the euro has moved the region to the top of the EU Deadweight Cattle Prices League Table as outlined in Table 1.

The R3 heifer price in the region during the w/e 08/12/2019 was the equivalent of 397.7c/kg, a notable 14.4c/kg higher than the corresponding week last month (w/e 10/11/2019). This strong improvement in the market in euro terms has moved Northern Ireland up from sixth place in the league table to poll position.

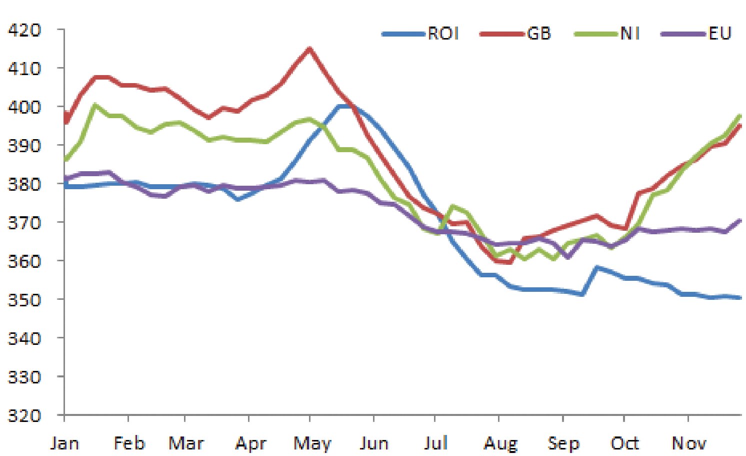
R3 heifer prices in Northern Ireland were 27.4c/kg higher than the average EU price during the w/e 08/12/2019. On a 330kg heifer carcase this differential is the equivalent of €90. This has widened from a differential of €49 in the value of a 330kg carcase during the w/e 10/11/2019.

Great Britain

There has also been a strong improvement in R3 heifer prices in euro terms in Great Britain over the last month. During the w/e 08/12/2019 the R3 heifer price in the region was the equivalent of 395.1c/kg, up 10.4c/kg from the week ending 10/11/2019. This improvement moves it up from fifth position in the league table into second place.

During the w/e 08/12/2019 the R3 heifer price in Great Britain was 24.8c/kg ahead of the average R3 heifer price in the EU which equates to a differential of €82 on a 330kg carcase. This has widened from €54 in the w/e 10/11/2019.

Figure 1: Weekly R3 heifer prices in Northern Ireland, Great Britain, Ireland and the European Union during 2019 to date (c/kg) Source: EU Price reporting



Ireland

During the w/e 08/12/2019 the R3 heifer price in Ireland was 350.4c/kg, back 1.2c/kg from the corresponding week in November 2019. This puts Ireland in ninth place in the EU league table during the w/e 08/12/2019. This was unchanged from the previous month.

The R3 heifer price in Ireland during the w/e 08/12/2019 was 19.9c/kg behind the EU average which is the equivalent of €65 on a 330kg carcase. This differential with the EU average has widened from €56 in the w/e 10/11/2019. R3 prices in ROI were 47.3c/kg behind the equivalent price in NI during the w/e 08/12/2019 which accounts for a differential of €156 on a 330kg carcase between the two regions. This has widened from €105 in the w/e 10/11/2019.

Table 1: R3 heifer prices in selected EU countries (c/kg) Source: EU Price reporting

EU Deadweight Cattle Prices – Heifers R3 Equivalent (€ Cents)					
Position last Mth	Position this Mth	Country	Price last Mth (w/e 10.11.19)	Price this Mth (w/e 08.12.19)	Change on Mth (cents)
6	1	Northern Ireland	383.3	397.7	+14.4
5	2	Great Britain	384.7	395.1	+10.4
2	3	Sweden	393.4	394.3	+0.9
3	4	Italy	388.3	391.3	+3.0
1	5	Luxembourg	403.5	389.8	-13.7
4	6	France	385.0	387.0	+2.0
7	7	Spain	381.6	386.5	+4.9
8	8	Germany	354.8	354.3	-0.5
9	9	Ireland	351.5	350.4	-1.2
10	10	Austria	350.2	347.1	-3.1
11	11	Denmark	348.2	347.0	-1.2
12	12	Slovenia	327.0	327.4	+0.4
13	13	Poland	323.3	322.1	-1.2
14	14	Belgium	318.0	316.0	-2.0
15	15	Lithuania	296.0	278.7	-17.3
16	16	Czech Republic	266.8	274.0	+7.2
		EU Average	368.4	370.3	+1.9
	Euro (€1=)		86.2	84.8	-1.4

Other Regions

Overall the average R3 heifer price in the EU increased by 1.9c/kg to 370.3c/kg. The strong increases in R3 heifer prices in Northern Ireland and Great Britain will have contributed to this upward movement but there have also been some improvement in R3 heifer prices in other EU markets such as Italy (+3c/kg), France (+2c/kg) and Spain (+4.9c/kg). Meanwhile R3 heifer prices came back strongly in Luxembourg (-13.7c/kg) with smaller declines recorded in Germany (-0.5c/kg), Austria (-3.1c/kg) and Denmark (1.2c/kg).

LMC would like to wish all of our levy-payers and stakeholders a very happy Christmas and a 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 Thursday 02 January 2020

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 28 December 2019

DECLINES IN UK LAMB IMPORTS

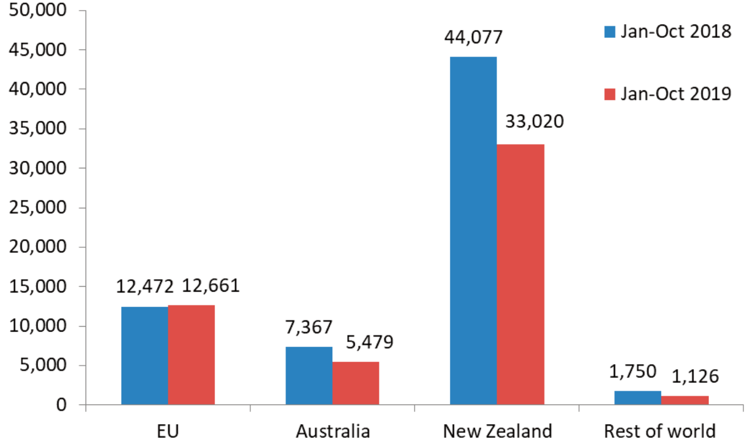
DURING the first ten months of 2019 the UK imported 52,285 tonnes of lamb. This was back by 13,382 tonnes or 20 per cent from the corresponding period in 2018.

There have been notable declines in the volume of lamb being imported by the UK from New Zealand and Australia with tighter supplies of lamb for export in both regions due to production difficulties. This lower production combined with strong demand in other markets has impacted the level of export from these regions to the EU.

In New Zealand there has been a five per cent drop in lamb throughput during 2019 according to the latest available figures from Gira with total sheepmeat exports from the region back by nine per cent from 2018 levels. Approximately 45 per cent of New Zealand lamb was exported to China during 2019 compared to 40 per cent in 2018. This increase was at the expense of exports to the EU and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) in particular.

The volume of lamb exported from Australia to China has also recorded strong growth during 2019 however with total exports declining this increase in the volume of trade with China has been at the expense of other export markets, in particular MENA. It has also taken product off the domestic market in Australia which can't compete with the export market on price.

Figure 2: UK lamb imports from key regions January-October 2018 and 2019 (tonnes). Source: HMRC and Global Trade Atlas



FQAS Helpline

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

Answerphone Service

Factory Quotes & Mart Results
Updated 5pm Daily
Tel: 028 9263 3011

Text Service

Free weekly price quotes sent to your mobile phone
Email - bulletin@lmcni.com
Tel: 028 9263 3000

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 16/12/19	Next Week 23/12/19
Prime		
U-3	324 - 334p	324 - 334p
R-3	318 - 328p	318 - 328p
O+3	312 - 322p	312 - 322p
P+3	264 - 276p	264 - 276p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3 & better	230 - 256p	230 - 256p
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 14/12/19	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	337.9	344.5	325.0
R3	335.1	337.4	322.5
O+3	326.7	326.7	314.8

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 14/12/19	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	145.5	154.5	166.3	179.2
P2	169.3	185.4	204.7	218.8
P3	202.1	204.0	227.9	230.0
O3	-	231.5	239.2	250.6
O4	160.0	250.0	248.8	250.3
R3	-	-	-	271.9

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes from the major processing plants this week ranged from 324-334p/kg for U-3 grading steers and heifers. This has firmed slightly at the upper end however the majority of plants are quoting in the range of 328-332p/kg. Quotes for O+3 grading cows this week ranged from 230-256p/kg. Similar quotes for all types of cattle are expected next week. With such a range in quoted prices producers are encouraged to shop around for the best deal available.

Reports have indicated steady supplies of prime cattle coming forward for slaughter in NI with several of the plants indicating that they are fully booked until after Christmas. Prime cattle throughput last week totalled 6,789 head, up 182 head from the previous week. Meanwhile cow throughput has remained firm with 2,246 cows processed in local plants last week.

Imports for direct slaughter from ROI last week included 292 prime cattle and 88 cows which was similar to previous weeks. A further 10 prime cattle and 75 cows were imported from GB for slaughter in local plants last week. Exports of cattle from NI to ROI for slaughter last week included seven prime cattle, 58 cows and three bulls. No cattle were exported from NI to GB for direct slaughter last week which was the fourth consecutive week. This is unsurprisng given that the differential in deadweight prices between NI and GB has been so small and in the last few weeks deadweight prices in NI for prime cattle have actually been trending above equivalent prices in GB.

The average steer price in NI last week was 330.7p/kg, up 2.3p/kg from the previous week. The R3 steer price meanwhile increased by 2.8p/kg to total 340.3p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week increased by half a penny to 332.4p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by the same margin to total 339.8p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week was 313.9p/kg, up by 1.2p/kg from the previous week. There was a mixed performance across the grades last week but the biggest shift was for U3 grading young bulls which came back by 5p/kg to 324.6p/kg.

In GB last week the average steer price was back by half a penny to 328.4p/kg while the R3 steer price held steady at 336.8p/kg. The R3 steer price reported variations across the GB regions with increases in Scotland (+2.2p/kg) and the Midlands and Wales (+0.4p/kg) and declines reported in Southern England (-1p/kg) and Northern England (-1.8p/kg). The average GB heifer price last week was back by 0.4p/kg to 328.8p/kg while the R3 heifer price came back by a penny to 336.1p/kg. The R3 heifer price reported decreases in all regions except Northern England where it was slightly up 0.3p/kg to 336.2p/kg. Meanwhile the O3 cow price in GB increased by 3p/kg to 232.6p/kg last week, this is 16.7p/kg below the NI price.

The deadweight prime cattle trade improved in ROI last week with increases reported in all of the grades. The R3 steer price increased by the equivalent of 3.4p/kg to 294.7p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up by 3.8p/kg to 302.6p/kg.

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

W/E 14/12/19		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	339.2	302.7	348.6	337.7	337.5	336.0	340.0
	R3	340.3	294.7	348.9	336.9	332.1	328.9	336.8
	R4	336.8	293.1	347.8	341.4	333.7	331.5	339.9
	O3	328.4	278.7	332.6	315.7	307.1	306.8	315.8
	AVG	330.7	-	344.6	328.6	320.7	318.0	328.4
Heifers	U3	344.9	311.8	353.0	342.2	343.3	338.0	344.4
	R3	339.8	302.6	346.4	336.2	332.1	329.9	336.1
	R4	336.2	301.6	347.2	340.0	334.4	330.4	338.5
	O3	330.7	289.0	331.4	313.3	304.3	309.0	314.5
	AVG	332.4	-	344.6	330.3	321.7	316.4	328.8
Young Bulls	U3	324.6	283.5	339.7	323.7	330.3	328.6	330.3
	R3	322.8	274.7	332.1	321.4	321.8	320.6	323.5
	O3	309.0	261.2	302.0	297.7	298.0	287.8	297.7
	AVG	313.9	-	320.0	299.1	306.2	285.7	304.8
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5,715	-	7,211	7,444	7,503	4,877	27,035
Cows	O3	249.3	221.4	233.9	238.4	233.1	224.0	232.6
	O4	249.9	221.6	235.6	237.6	232.3	219.2	230.9
	P2	207.2	193.9	188.7	194.1	188.1	184.9	188.2
	P3	228.1	209.0	190.8	210.9	206.5	196.5	202.6
	AVG	224.5	-	223.7	212.2	199.4	190.5	203.0

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=84.12p 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

W/E 14/12/19	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	201	209	205	170	200	185
Friesians	160	165	162	130	159	146
Heifers	204	213	208	160	198	180
Beef Cows	142	185	155	115	141	130
Dairy Cows	103	119	108	65	102	85
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	220	256	235	185	219	205
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	210	222	215	170	209	200
Bullocks over 500kg	200	214	207	165	199	185
Heifers up to 450kg	210	231	220	165	209	188
Heifers over 450kg	200	212	205	165	199	185
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	325	485	375	220	320	270
Continental Heifers	300	570	340	175	295	235
Friesian Bulls	135	180	150	55	130	85
Holstein Bulls	135	195	145	10	130	70

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 16/12/19	Next Week 23/12/19
Lambs up to 22kgs	390-400p	395-405p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 30/11/19	W/E 07/12/19	W/E 14/12/19
NI L/W Lambs	360.6	364.7	371.7
NI D/W Lambs	383.7	387.7	393.3
GB D/W Lambs	423.3	427.4	431.7
ROI D/W	396.7	398.5	397.9

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes for R3 grading lambs this week ranged from 390-400p/kg up to 22kg across the major NI processing plants. Quotes for next week are expected to range from 395-405p/kg up to 22kgs. The plants have reported good supplies to meet demand for lamb with NI throughput last week similar to the previous week at 8,862 head. This is a slight decrease when compared to the 8,948 lambs killed in the same week in 2018. Lamb exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week reported similar levels to the previous week at 8,753 head. The average deadweight price in NI was 393.3p/kg last week, up 5.6p/kg from the previous week while the ROI deadweight price decreased by the equivalent of 0.6p/kg to 397.9p/kg.

This week's marts

The trade in the marts this week generally held steady with good numbers continuing to pass through many of the marts. In Swatragh last Saturday 700 lambs sold from 333-375p/kg compared to 703 lambs the previous week selling from 330-376p/kg. In Massereene on Monday 1,106 lambs sold from 360-391p/kg compared 936 lambs last week selling from 365-388p/kg. In Saintfield this week 901 lambs sold from 348-447p/kg compared 630 lambs last week selling from 350-441p/kg. In Rathfriland this week 510 lambs sold from 344-395p/kg (avg 368p/kg) compared to 458 lambs last week selling from 340-428p/kg (avg 375p/kg). The cull ewe trade remains firm with top reported prices ranging from £92.50 - £138 across the marts.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 13/12/19		Lambs			
To: 19/12/19		No	From	To	Avg
Friday	Newtownstewart	236	325	368	-
Saturday	Swatragh	700	333	375	-
	Omagh	1131	371	416	-
Monday	Massereene	1106	360	391	-
	Kilrea	330	347	397	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	901	348	447	-
	Rathfriland	510	344	395	368
Wednesday	Ballymena	2007	350	395	363
	Enniskillen	502	358	394	-
	Armoy	482	368	425	-
	Markethill	750	360	390	-

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