LMC BULLETIN

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NI CATTLE SLAUGHTERINGS UPDATE

PRIME cattle slaughterings during 2012 totalled 336,098 head a reduction of 11,594 head on 2011 when prime cattle throughput totalled 347,692 head. This reduction in the throughput of prime cattle represents a decline of three per cent year on year. There has however been a recovery in the availability of prime cattle as the year has progressed as indicated in Figure 1.

Table 1 outlines a breakdown of the prime kill by quarter in 2011 and 2012. In the first quarter of 2012 prime cattle throughput was 14.7 per cent lower than the corresponding period in 2011 and in the second quarter throughput was 5.2 per cent lower with 4,320 fewer prime cattle slaughtered. However increased availability of prime cattle in the third quarter saw throughput increase to 82,756 head, an increase of 6.3 per cent on the same period in 2011. Prime cattle throughput in the final quarter of 2012 was 2.6 per cent ahead of the final quarter of 2011.

The amount of beef from prime cattle processed obviously follows a similar trend to prime cattle throughput. While beef production in the first two quarters of 2012 was below the levels seen in 2011 the amount of beef from prime cattle processed in the third quarter of 2012 was 7 per cent per cent ahead of the corresponding quarter in 2011. The amount of prime beef processed in the fourth quarter of 2012 was 1.7 per cent ahead of the same period in 2011.

There was also an increase in average carcase weight of prime cattle between 2011 and 2012 from 335.5kg in 2011 to 340kg in 2012. Much of this increase in carcase weights can be observed in the first half of 2012 as outlined in Table 2. Average prime cattle carcase weights showed an increase in the first three quarters of 2012 when compared to the corresponding periods in 2011. In quarter 2 the average prime cattle carcase weight was 342kg, 10.5kg heavier than the same quarter in 2011. However the average prime cattle carcase weight in the fourth quarter was 3.2kg lighter than the same period in 2011 at 335.8kg.

The combination of the increase in carcase weights in the first three quarters of 2012 and the increase in cattle throughput in the last half of 2012 has helped to offset the deficit in the amount of beef from prime cattle processed in the first half of 2012. At year end the total amount of beef processed from prime cattle was back 2.1 per cent between 2011 and 2012.

The amount of cow beef processed has however increased 5.6 per cent between 2011 and 2012 with an additional 7,957 cows slaughtered. During the first quarter of 2012 cow throughput was 6.1 per cent behind the same period in 2011. However in the second quarter the throughput of cows recovered and was 1.4 per cent above the corresponding period in 2011. In the third and fourth quarters of 2012 the cow throughput was 19.2 per cent and 17.2 per cent higher respectively than the corresponding periods in 2011. It is likely that the wet summer and poor grass growing conditions encouraged producers to cull underperforming cows and thus the increase in cow slaughterings in the second half of the year.

There has been a drop in the average cow carcase weight from 304.3kg in 2011 to 296kg in 2012. This is partly due to an increasing number of dairy bred cows in the slaughter mix but forage shortages and high concentrate prices at present may also have resulted in producers marketing under-finished cows which will have resulted in lower carcase weights.

The increasing availability of cows in the latter half of 2012 has helped to increase the proportion of cows in the total kill from 19.9 per cent in 2011 to 21.7 per cent in 2012. The proportion of the total cattle kill made up of prime cattle has meanwhile declined from 77 per cent of the total kill in 2011 to 74.4 per cent in 2012

The combination of a decline in the prime kill and a marked increase in the cow kill has meant that the total cattle kill in 2012 was 1.3 per cent lower than 2011 with 446,023 cattle slaughtered compared to 451,716 the previous year. This is a reduction of 5,693 head, approximately half a week's total kill. The lower factory throughput has resulted in a 1.1 per cent reduction in the total beef processed.

Table 1: Northern Ireland prime cattle throughput by quarter 2011-2012

	2011	2012	Change (Head)	Change (%)
Q1	98,174	83,725	-14,449	-14.7
Q2	83,793	79,473	-4,320	-5.2
Q3	77,870	82,756	4,886	+6.3
Q4	87,855	90,144	2,289	+2.6

Figure 1: Northern Ireland weekly prime cattle kill 2011-2012

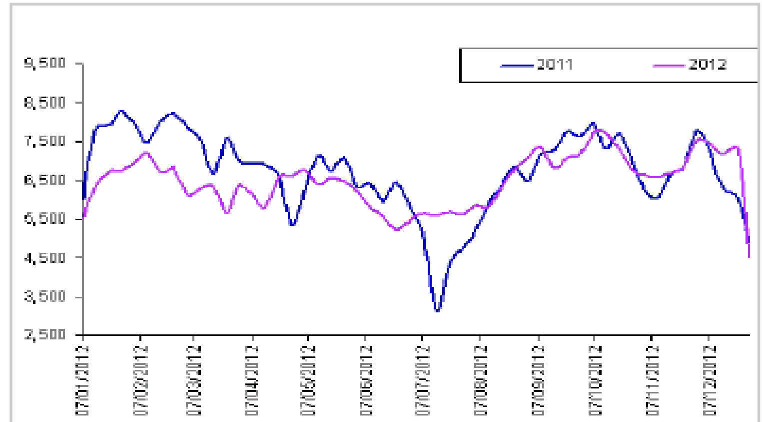
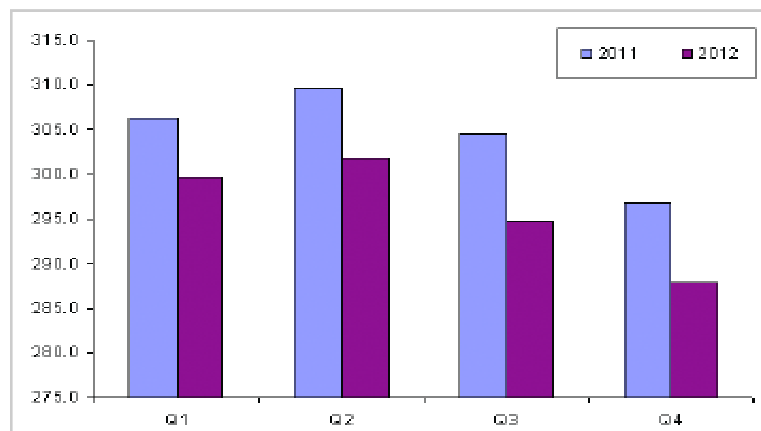


Table 2: Northern Ireland average prime cattle carcase weights by quarter 2011-2012 (kg)

	2011	2012	Change (kg)
Q1	334.3	341.9	+7.6
Q2	331.5	342.0	+10.5
Q3	337.0	340.30	+3.3
Q4	339.0	335.8	-3.2

Figure 2: Northern Ireland average cow carcase weights by quarter 2011-2012



FQAS LIAISON OFFICER
MART CLINICS TIMETABLE

Enniskillen	Thursday	10/01/2013
Omagh	Monday	14/01/2013
Saintfield	Wednesday	16/01/2013

LMC QUARTERLY

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HOGGET QUOTES DOWN £1/KG ON JANUARY 2012

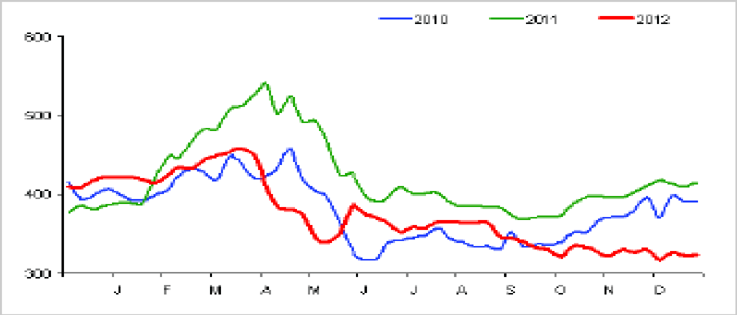
QUOTES from the plants earlier this week for R3 grading hoggets were 320 p/kg up to 22kgs but this has increased to 330p/kg as the week has progressed. This week last year the plants were quoting 415-420p/kg up to 22kgs for R3 grading hoggets. This means a 22kg carcase is now worth in the region of £22 less than the same time last year. There had been pressure over the Christmas period on base quotes with some indication of a drop from 330p/kg to 310p/kg. However there have been reports that buyers for the plants were unable to secure enough throughput at this price so the base quote was increased to 320p/kg where it remained until late this week when base quotes were increased.

The processors have reported a sticky retail trade for lamb with low levels of demand combined with a continued strong supply of lambs. The average deadweight lamb/hogget price in NI last week was 322.9p/kg as indicated in Figure 3. In the same week in 2011 it was 414.7p/kg which is a differential of 91.8p/kg or £20.20 on a 22kg lamb year on year.

Prices for lamb in GB are also substantially back on last year. In GB last week the average deadweight price was 338.9p/kg, back 119.4p/kg on the same week last year when it was 458.3p/kg, a reduction of £26.27 on a 22kg carcase.

During 2012 the NI plants have recorded the highest lamb throughput on record with lamb slaughterings 46.5 per cent ahead of throughput in 2011 with a total of 385,143 lambs. This represents an increase in throughput of 122,237 head year on year. Average carcase weights in 2012 have remained similar to the previous year at 21.8kg (21.7kg in 2011) which has meant the total amount of lamb processed has increased by 45 per cent.

Figure3: Deadweight lamb prices NI 2010-2012



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WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE		
(P/KG DW)	This Week 02/01/13	Next Week 07/01/2013
Prime		
U-3	328-332p	328-332p
R-3	322-326p	322-326p
O+3	316-320p	316-320p
* Plus 8p/kg in spec bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	264-275p	264-275p
Steakers	180-245p	180-245p
Blues	160-180p	160-180p

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG			
W/E 29/12/12	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U-3=	338.5	344.1	332.6
U=3=	341.0	348.7	333.9
U=4=	332.9	341.8	327.0
R=3=	339.2	342.5	327.2
R=4=	330.7	338.3	322.0
O+3=	335.7	333.4	320.7
O=3=	332.2	332.9	312.7
Average	332.4	336.1	326.0

REPORTED COW PRICES NI W/E 29/12/12		
Grades	Price (p/kg)	Avg Wgt
O+3=	277.6	326.8
O-3+	274.9	302.1
P+2+	247.0	266.2
P+3+	243.9	312.9
P-1-	161.9	207.8

COMMODITIES

COMMODITY PRICE		
W/E 21/12/12	Price (£) per tonne / 1000litre	% weekly change
Barley	212.50	-0.93
Wheat	228.00	-0.87
Soya	502.00	+2.03
Straw	16.00	-
Red Diesel	715-750	-

* Table shows the latest available commodity data in NI

Deadweight Cattle Trade

BASE quotes from the plants this week for U-3 grade prime cattle are 328-330p/kg for steers and 330-332p/kg for heifers with the additional 8p/kg bonus available for in spec animals. There have however been reports of higher prices being paid than quotes would suggest. The average price paid for U-3 grade heifers last week was 344.9p/kg. Even if all heifers within this grade qualified for the 8p/kg bonus the price paid was still in the region of 5-7p/kg above the base quotes of 330-332p/kg. Producers should ensure that they shop around to get the best possible deal. Quotes for first quality cows have remained in the range of 264-275p/kg with plants reporting a strong supply of cows.

The average price paid for steers in NI last week increased by 3.2p/kg to 332.4p/kg while the heifer price increased by 3.6p/kg to 336.1p/kg. The young bull price however showed the biggest increase in the region, up 6.3p/kg to 326.0p/kg. Average prices in GB also showed increases on the previous week with the steer price up 1.9p/kg to 366.4p/kg and the heifer price up 5.9p/kg to 367.3p/kg. The price differential between average GB and NI prices last week was 34p/kg for steers and 31.2p/kg for heifers.

There was however variation in the level of price changes across the regions. Average steer and heifer prices in Scotland were almost unchanged on the previous week at 373.0p/kg and 370.1p/kg respectively while prices in other areas have shown strong increases. The average heifer price in the Midlands increased by 9.7p/kg to 368.8p/kg while the steer price in the region increased by 6.5p/kg to 366.4p/kg. Meanwhile in Northern England the heifer price increased by 6.5p/kg to 366.8p/kg while the steer price was almost unchanged at 368.8p/kg.

The average price paid for cull cows in NI last week increased by 6.1p/kg on the previous week to 247.5p/kg. However cow prices in GB have shown stronger increases with average prices up between 17-32p/kg on the previous week across the regions. The average cow price in GB last week was 263.7p/kg. This puts the price differential between average NI and GB prices for cull cows last week at 16.2p/kg.

Prices in ROI have also shown increases for the majority of reported grades with reports of a decline in the availability of cattle over the last number of weeks. The R3 steer price in ROI last week increased the equivalent of 4.3p/kg to 321.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up 6.5p/kg to 339.0p/kg. The differential between ROI and NI prices last week for R3 grading steers and heifers was 14.8p/kg and 2.4p/kg respectively. Strong increases in cow prices were also reported in ROI with the price for O3 cows up the equivalent of 8.4p/kg to 270.6p/kg. In NI last week the O3 cow price was almost identical at 270.3p/kg.

LAST WEEK'S DEADWEIGHT CATTLE PRICES (UK / ROI)								
W/E 29/12/2012		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	338.9	331.7	376.1	378.9	380.0	382.1	378.9
	R3	336.3	321.5	371.6	374.2	366.7	363.0	369.2
	R4	332.2	312.8	376.3	381.0	369.5	370.2	375.3
	O3	329.9	290.5	361.1	352.4	348.6	341.6	352.7
	AVG	332.4	-	373.0	366.8	366.4	355.0	366.4
Heifers	U3	345.9	349.5	375.1	377.5	375.7	377.4	376.2
	R3	341.4	339.0	368.2	369.1	366.7	361.7	366.9
	R4	338.2	338.9	372.2	372.0	371.1	374.0	372.1
	O3	328.7	325.1	355.0	354.7	351.2	344.6	351.5
	AVG	336.1	-	370.1	368.8	368.8	357.5	367.3
Young Bulls	U3	332.9	326.0	363.3	350.6	362.7	368.0	357.2
	R3	330.3	316.1	358.6	346.1	349.9	358.3	350.8
	O3	315.4	298.2	337.3	332.4	338.5	342.0	335.5
	AVG	326.0	-	345.8	338.3	347.1	341.9	342.3
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5446	-	4472	3257	2646	1913	12288
Cows	O3	270.3	270.6	286.1	272.1	285.3	254.1	276.1
	O4	269.5	267.7	284.5	280.9	282.6	259.4	276.3
	P2	217.1	245.4	229.2	230.7	262.6	185.9	219.2
	P3	247.3	263.6	231.3	260.0	258.6	203.9	231.9
	AVG	247.5	-	278.2	272.3	279.4	228.8	263.7

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=81.81p 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 15/12/12	From	To	Average	From	To	Average
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	188	209	194	165	187	176
Friesians	145	169	155	100	144	130
Heifers	180	206	190	160	179	170
Beef Cows	159	185	170	125	158	141
Dairy Cows	109	130	120	80	108	94
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	180	204	192	160	179	170
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	176	200	188	155	175	165
Bullocks over 500kg	180	197	190	155	179	167
Heifers up to 450kg	175	195	185	150	174	162
Heifers over 450kg	170	180	175	150	169	160
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	225	470	270	140	220	180
Continental Heifers	190	450	250	100	188	145
Friesian Bulls	125	190	150	30	120	75
Holstein Bulls	100	185	145	5	95	45

* Table shows the latest available liveweight cattle mart prices in NI (w/e 15/12/2012)

SHEEP TRADE

HOGGET QUOTES		
(P/Kg DW)	This Week 02/01/13	Next Week 07/01/2013
NI Factories	320p	330p
ROI Factories	330p	330p

Notes: (i)Lambs up to 22kg
(ii)ROI prices converted at 1 euro=81.81p Stg

REPORTED LAMB/HOGGET PRICES - P/KG			
(P/KG DW)	W/E 15/12/12	W/E 22/12/12	W/E 29/12/12
NI Liveweight	293.9p	292.4p	280.4p
NI Deadweight	325.6p	321.9p	322.9p
ROI Deadweight	328.7p	335.3p	n/a
GB Deadweight	355.5p	339.8p	338.9p

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants early this week were 320p/kg for R3 grading hoggets up to 22kg but by late this week the quotes had increased to 330p/kg with similar quotes expected for Monday morning. Quotes from the ROI plants this week continue at 330p/kg. Throughput in the NI plants was, as expected, much lower during the Christmas period with 3,615 lambs slaughtered bringing the total throughput for the year to 385,143 head. Deadweight lamb prices in NI remained fairly steady over the Christmas period at 322.9p/kg with deadweight prices in GB also remaining steady at 338.9p/kg.

This week's marts

MANY of the marts were closed over the Christmas period and will resume normal sheep sales next week. In Massereene on Monday trade was back slightly with 1102 hoggets selling from 285-310p/kg compared to 1006 lambs in the last sale before the holidays selling from 295-318p/kg. In Markethill on Wednesday 425 hoggets sold from 287-310p/kg. In Downpatrick on Thursday trade was similar to the few weeks before Christmas with 325 hoggets sold from 285-300p/kg.

* Please note the sheep sale in Newtownstewart has been moved to a Saturday at 2pm as of today (04/01/2013)

LATEST SHEEP MARTS					
From: 22/12/2012 To: 29/12/2012		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
		No.	From	To	Average
Saturday	Omagh	535	265	316	
Monday	Massereene	1102	285	310	
Wednesday	Enniskillen	290	290	318	298
	Markethill	425	287	310	299
	Downpatrick	325	285	300	

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