LMC BULLETIN
WEEKLY PUBLICATION OF THE LIVESTOCK AND MEAT COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND
Saturday 15 June 2013
Issue No. 2275

LAMB PRODUCTION UPDATE

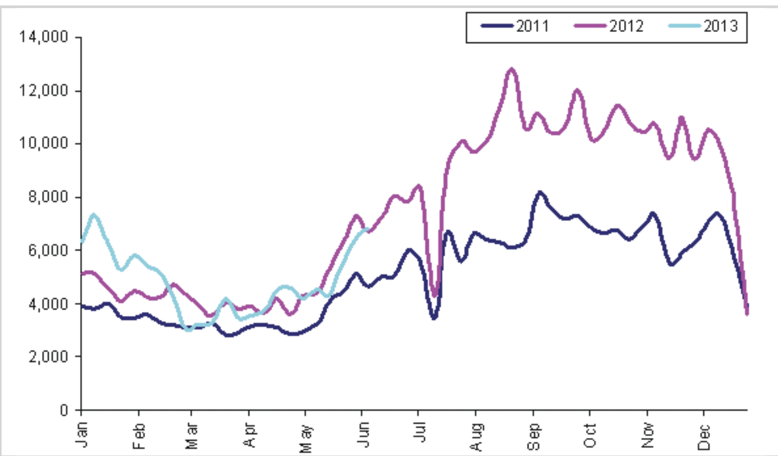
QUOTES from the plants for lambs have stabilised this week after coming under pressure in recent weeks. Quotes this week are 440-445p/kg for R3 grading lambs with plants paying up to 21kg. This week last year the quotes for lambs were in the region of 380-390p/kg.

Reports from the marts are also indicating a slight improvement in the trade this week compared to previous weeks. The quality of lambs being presented for slaughter and being sold through the marts has reportedly been very good with lambs adequately covered to meet requirements.

The supply of spring lambs has started to improve over the last few weeks as more producers get lambs up to slaughter weight. With the delayed grass growth this spring affecting many early lamb producers these finished lambs will have a higher cost of production against them than other years due to the increased levels of concentrate feeding required to maintain lamb performance.

The delay in spring lamb production this year coincided with a 3-4 week longer hogget season compared to 2012. This was due to an increase in the total number of lambs produced in NI last year combined with the difficult production conditions during 2012/2013 which slowed down the finishing process on many NI farms.

Figure 1: Lamb/Hogget slaughterings January 2011 to June 2013



Total lamb/hogget throughput in the NI plants for the year to date has totalled 111,306 head, a five per cent increase on the 105,994 head slaughtered during the same period in 2012. Much of this increase has stemmed from the increased carry over of hoggets from 2012 which led to higher throughputs earlier in the year as indicated in Figure 1 by the peak in slaughterings during January and February 2013.

With the hogget season coming to an end and spring lamb numbers remaining tight during May 2013 throughput in the NI plants was back 9.2 per cent on the same period in 2012. However the supply of lambs has been gradually increasing in recent weeks. Throughput last week was up 338 head on the previous week at 6,815 head.

The average hogget/lamb carcase weight during May 2013 was 21.2kg compared to an average of 22kg in May 2012. This may be an indication that producers are trying to get lambs closer to the desired 21kg carcase weight but may also be a consequence of the poor grass growth experienced this spring. Ewe and ram carcase weights during May 2013 were also back on the previous year at 28kg compared to an average carcase weight of 30.2kg in May 2012.

Exports to ROI for direct slaughter have shown a similar upward trend to domestic slaughterings with exports for the year to date running 31 per cent ahead of the corresponding period in 2012. An additional 45,600 lambs/hoggets have been exported in 2013 to date when compared to the same period in 2012.

Exports for direct slaughter during May 2013 totalled 21,734 head compared to 25,362 head during May 2012. This represents a reduction in exports when comparing the two periods of 14.3 per cent.

The average deadweight lamb price in NI during May 2013 was 494.4p/kg compared to an average deadweight lamb price of 371.7p/kg during May 2012. This is a 33 per cent increase in deadweight price when comparing the two periods. Meanwhile the average deadweight lamb price in GB in May 2013 was 530.7p/kg, a 19.2 per cent increase on the average price of 445.3p/kg in May 2012.

The average differential in deadweight prices between NI and GB during May 2013 was 36.3p/kg or £7.62 on a 21kg lamb. In May 2012 the differential was almost double the May 2013 differential at 73.6p/kg or £15.46 on a 21kg lamb.

The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 443.4p/kg, back 43.3p/kg on the previous week reflecting the softening in the trade in the marts and the drop in quotes from the plants. In GB the deadweight price was back 15.6p/kg to 499.7p/kg. These shifts in deadweight prices widened the differential to 56.3p/kg or £11.82 on a 21kg lamb.

A small number of lambs have been exported from NI to GB for direct slaughter in recent weeks to avail of the higher prices available.

FQAS NOTICE

ONLINE PAYMENTS

LMC has recently launched an online payment system for the Farm Quality Assurance Scheme. This allows producers to pay annual membership renewal and initial registration fees through the LMC website.

www.lmcni.com

FARM QUALITY ASSURED NORTHERN IRELAND

WHAT ARE CONSUMERS LOOKING FOR WHEN BUYING MEAT?

A recently published report commissioned by the European Union has studied the functioning of the meat market for consumers within the EU. The report has identified some important issues affecting consumers when they are considering the purchase and consumption of meat products.

For the purpose of this report meat market was defined as 'fresh meat (including fresh meat and frozen preparations) and processed meat products covering beef, pork, lamb and poultry which are available for final customers at the retailer.

While the report was a European wide study and covered a range of meat products it is still very applicable to the UK and NI beef and lamb markets, especially when we consider the volumes of beef and lamb exported into the EU market.

Consumers were asked during the completion of the study to identify the most and least important factors they considered when deciding on whether or not to purchase meat. The most important factor identified by consumers was the appearance of the product. The most popular responses from participants in the study were that the meat must look fresh, it must look tasty and that it must be displayed hygienically.

The price of the meat and its origin were also identified as important factors when deciding on purchasing meat. In addition to this the traceability of the meat and the length of time before reaching the best before date were classified as of average importance.

Consumers were also asked what information they look at when purchasing meat. The findings indicated that 68 per cent of EU consumers look for the use by/best before date when buying meat with 67 per cent of respondents indicating that they look at the price per kg at point of purchase. Also highlighted as very important was information on the origin of the meat with 48 per cent of respondents identifying that they looked for this information.

The report identified that the main sources of information for consumers when purchasing meat was from the product packaging (68 per cent), shelf/counter labelling (59 per cent) and staff at the retailer (56 per cent).

The findings of the report indicate that 40 per cent of EU consumers use supermarkets as their main retailer for meat with 25 per cent sourcing their meat mainly from butchers. A total of 18 per cent of consumers indicated that they use hypermarkets as their main retailer of choice for meat with smaller numbers primarily utilising alternative sources such as convenience stores (7 per cent), discount stores (6 per cent), farms (2 per cent) and markets (2 per cent).

Interestingly however 39 per cent of EU consumers indicated that they do not use their preferred retailer of meat as their main retailer. For example butchers and farms were identified as the preferred retailer for 36 per cent and 7 per cent of respondents respectively. However as indicated above only 25 per cent of respondents used butchers as their main meat source with 2 per cent using farms.

The reasons identified for this were higher prices in their preferred retailer, the convenience of being able to do all their shopping in one go at their main retailer or because their preferred retailer is too far away.

IMPROVING SOIL AND SWARD PERFORMANCE EVENTS 2013

Greenmount Campus Antrim Wednesday 3 July 2013 10am-7pm	Enniskillen Campus Friday 5 July 2013 10am-7pm

Field Demonstrations and Seminars will cover

- Soils: Assessing soil structure; Identifying, alleviating and preventing soil compaction
- Drainage: Identifying problems; Repairing existing drains; Planning new schemes
- Reseeding: Benefits; Prioritising fields for improvement; Minimal cultivation techniques
- Costs

For further information please contact:
Technology Administration
Tel 028 9442 6770
Email: rebeccacoalter@dardni.gov.uk

CAFRE Greenmount Campus
45 Tirgracy Road
Muckamore
Antrim
BT41 4PS

cafre
College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 10/06/13	Next Week 17/06/13
Prime		
U-3	378-380p	378-380p
R-3	372-374p	372-374p
O+3	366-368p	366-368p
* Plus 8p/kg in spec bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	290-310p	290-310p
Steakers	260-280p	260-280p
Blues	180-185p	180-185p

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 08/06/13	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U-3=	389.3	393.4	379.7
U=3=	390.1	398.4	383.8
U=4=	380.6	388.3	-
R=3=	388.5	390.3	370.1
R=4=	383.4	385.4	-
O+3=	384.0	377.5	358.2
O=3=	383.4	379.4	354.4
Average	380.4	384.4	359.1

REPORTED COW PRICES NI W/E 08/06/13

Grades	Price (p/kg)	Avg Wgt
O+3=	319.4	308.3
O-3+	293.1	318.2
P+2+	268.3	278.2
P+3+	287.9	298.1
P-1-	191.3	219.9

COMMODITIES

COMMODITY PRICE

W/E 08/06/13	Price (£) per tonne / 1000litre	% weekly change
Barley	192.50	-0.3
Wheat	211.00	-1.6
Straw	23.33	-
Diesel	710-725	-

Deadweight Cattle Trade

QUOTES from the plants for U-3 grade prime cattle this week were 378-380p/kg with quotes for cows in the range of 290-310p/kg. The plants have reported steady supplies of both prime cattle and cows to meet demand. Similar quotes are expected for early next week

Prime cattle slaughterings last week totalled 6,458 head, a reduction of 264 head on the previous week but well ahead of the 5,814 head killed during the same week in 2012. Prime cattle slaughterings for the year to date are running four per cent ahead of the corresponding period in 2012. A total of 460 prime cattle were imported for direct slaughter from ROI last week, accounting for seven per cent of the total prime kill. A total of 64 cows were also imported for direct slaughter. Meanwhile 128 cows were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter taking the total for the year to date to 4,182 head.

A total of 315 cattle were exported to GB for direct slaughter last week taking the total for the year to date to 6,629 head. In the same period in 2012 a total of 2,163 head were exported to GB for direct slaughter.

Average steer and heifer prices in NI last week were up in the region of 2p/kg to 380.4p/kg and 384.4p/kg respectively. The strongest price increase was for R3 steers, up 3.3p/kg to 388.3p/kg. The R3 heifer price was almost unchanged at 389.1p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week was up 1.3p/kg on the previous week at 359.1p/kg with the U3 young bull price up 2.9p/kg to 379.3p/kg.

In GB last week average steer prices were back 1.2p/kg to 399.0p/kg with prices across the regions generally back by 2-4p/kg. One exception to this was Scotland where average steer prices increased by almost 1p/kg to 411.7p/kg. Meanwhile average heifer prices in GB were back marginally to 397.1p/kg with average prices generally back by 1-2 p/kg across the regions. One exception to this was in the Midlands where average prices were up by 1.7p/kg to 395.2p/kg.

The R3 steer price in ROI last week was the equivalent of 378.6p/kg, up marginally from the previous week. Meanwhile the R3 heifer price has crossed the £4/kg mark with an equivalent price of 400.7p/kg, 11.6p/kg higher than the R3 heifer price in NI and 6.4p/kg behind the Scottish R3 heifer price. The U3 heifer price in ROI last week was the equivalent of 3p/kg higher than the Scottish U3 heifer price.

This week's marts

FINISHED first quality steers sold to an average of 218p/kg this week compared to an average of 221p/kg last week. The trade for second quality finished steers was the same as last week with an average price of 200p/kg. Finished first quality heifers sold to an average of 227p/kg (+7p/kg) this week with second quality selling to an average of 196p/kg (+1p/kg). The trade for good quality cull cows remains strong with a top reported price of 229p/kg for a continental bred cow, with an average price for first quality beef bred cows of 188p/kg. First quality dairy type cows sold from 120-156p/kg (av 130p/kg).

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

W/E 08/06/13		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	389.7	385.7	416.2	404.3	406.9	402.4	408.5
	R3	388.3	378.6	411.6	399.6	394.0	391.9	400.1
	R4	385.3	378.2	415.3	413.6	394.5	389.3	406.0
	O3	378.7	362.3	396.4	387.1	378.1	372.2	384.8
	AVG	380.4	-	411.7	402.6	393.0	380.9	399.0
Heifers	U3	395.2	416.9	413.9	403.3	410.5	399.4	408.4
	R3	389.1	400.7	407.1	399.8	395.4	387.9	398.5
	R4	387.5	401.3	411.1	398.0	394.3	388.5	399.5
	O3	376.9	381.7	387.6	387.1	386.0	367.3	382.7
	AVG	384.4	-	408.2	397.9	395.2	378.6	397.1
Young Bulls	U3	379.3	380.7	412.7	385.8	398.1	400.3	397.0
	R3	372.4	373.4	403.4	374.1	381.4	382.4	381.8
	O3	355.1	356.3	375.1	358.0	361.9	368.6	364.4
	AVG	359.1	-	395.6	370.7	381.4	376.8	379.2
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5177	-	7000	5898	5690	3981	22569
Cows	O3	303.4	309.7	306.7	298.4	297.1	279.7	294.8
	O4	309.2	311.6	308.6	301.2	298.4	283.9	298.1
	P2	253.9	274.5	239.7	244.7	236.4	230.4	238.2
	P3	283.2	300.9	275.3	270.8	265.0	248.4	266.0
	AVG	280.2	-	299.4	275.5	286.1	248.9	275.2

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.18p 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 08/06/13	1st QUALITY From	1st QUALITY To	1st QUALITY Average	2nd QUALITY From	2nd QUALITY To	2nd QUALITY Average
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	215	233	218	180	214	200
Friesians	168	181	172	100	166	162
Heifers	214	242	227	180	213	196
Beef Cows	165	229	188	126	163	148
Dairy Cows	120	156	130	86	118	102
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	200	238	220	170	199	185
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	214	252	230	170	212	190
Bullocks over 500kg	200	232	220	165	199	182
Heifers up to 450kg	190	236	210	165	189	177
Heifers over 450kg	200	243	215	170	199	184
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	220	420	280	120	218	170
Continental Heifers	185	315	235	80	180	130
Friesian Bulls	60	112	100	10	58	35
Holstein Bulls	40	102	70	1	38	20

SHEEP TRADE

LAMB QUOTES		
(P/Kg DW)	This Week 10/06/13	Next Week 17/06/13
NI Factories	440-445p	440-445p
ROI Factories	445-450p	445-450p

REPORTED LAMB PRICES - P/KG			
(P/KG DW)	W/E 25/05/13	W/E 01/06/13	W/E 08/06/13
NI Liveweight	469.8p	420.1p	418.3p
NI Deadweight	514.9p	486.7p	443.4p
GB Deadweight	532.6p	515.3p	499.7p

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants this week for R3 grading lambs have stabilised at 440-445p/kg with plants paying up to 21kg. The plants are reporting an improvement in the availability of lambs with reports that the quality of lambs on offer has generally been very good. Slaughterings in the NI plants last week totalled 6,815 head, an increase of 338 head on the previous week. Meanwhile exports to ROI for direct slaughter totalled 4,129 head last week, back 466 head on the previous week. A total of 37 lambs were also exported to GB for direct slaughter. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 443.4p/kg, back 43.3p/kg on the previous week. Deadweight prices were also back in GB, back 15.6p/kg to 499.7p/kg.

This week's marts

THE marts have reported a steadier trade this week with an entry of 606 lambs in Massereene on Monday selling from 410-452p/kg compared to 733 lambs last week selling from 400-446p/kg. A smaller show of lambs in Kilrea on Monday of 180 lambs sold to an average of 411p/kg compared to 410 lambs last week selling to an average of 400p/kg. In Ballymena on Wednesday 632 lambs sold from 390-444p/kg (av 414p/kg) compared to 305 lambs last week selling from 385-468p/kg (av 400p/kg). In Enniskillen this week a good trade saw 318 lambs sell to an average of 420p/kg. The top prices for cull ewes were generally £75-85 with a top reported price of £94 in Rathfriland on Tuesday.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS					
From: 08/06/13 To: 13/06/13		Spring Lambs (P/KG LW)			
		No.	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Donemana	296	417	433	-
	Omagh	212	421	447	-
	Hilltown	270	383	421	388
Monday	Massereene	606	410	452	-
	Kilrea	180	400	427	411
Tuesday	Saintfield	471	395	440	-
	Rathfriland	282	402	447	414
Wednesday	Enniskillen	318	398	436	420
	Ballymena	632	390	444	414
	Markethill	540	410	446	420

Contact us:
Website: www.lmcni.com
Telephone: 028 9263 3000
Fax: 028 9263 3001
FQAS Helpline: 028 9263 3024
Answerphone: 028 9263 3011
Comments: bulletin@lmcni.com

LMC