

CATTLE TRADE

AVERAGE DEADWEIGHT CATTLE PRICES (P/KG)

Week Ending 28/03/26	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB	
Steers	U3	635.2	594.4	639.7	643.6	644.3	640.6	641.8
	R3	632.9	587.0	640.8	644.1	638.5	635.1	639.5
	R4	632.6	591.1	641.4	646.8	639.0	638.9	642.5
	O3	626.0	577.9	625.9	637.2	626.6	627.3	629.2
	AVG	628.8	-	637.9	642.1	632.7	629.9	636.0
Heifers	U3	637.4	605.1	647.2	643.9	651.1	644.6	647.9
	R3	632.7	591.4	642.6	643.4	639.6	635.8	640.1
	R4	635.1	595.4	644.8	645.3	640.3	637.5	642.9
	O3	627.9	582.1	629.3	635.1	624.2	623.6	626.6
	AVG	630.1	-	640.9	637.5	632.3	623.2	634.0
Young Bulls	U3	627.4	592.0	630.3	634.5	643.4	643.4	637.8
	R3	622.0	576.9	627.0	625.7	630.8	629.6	628.7
	O3	609.8	561.6	620.4	609.7	613.7	604.9	613.0
	AVG	613.4	-	598.0	612.2	620.4	614.6	613.4
	Prime Cattle Price Reported	5,937	-	6083	6526	7889	4480	24978
Cows	O3	532.6	517.4	564.4	569.9	565.6	567.7	566.9
	O4	539.5	516.0	561.8	568.7	564.1	560.7	565.9
	P3	517.8	505.9	530.6	537.7	535.3	532.3	534.5
	AVG	498.4	-	546.3	538.7	526.6	513.4	527.7

Prices listed are for deadweight price reported animals only. Prices are p/kg. Sterling to ROI prices are converted at 1 euro = 86.55p Stg. AVG is the average price of all grades in the category (not just those listed).

CATTLE IMPORTS FOR DIRECT SLAUGHTER

	2025	YTD 29/03/25	YTD 28/03/26
Imports from ROI Prime	10,066	3,039	3,825
Imports from ROI Cows	5,403	2,128	1,569

CATTLE SLAUGHTERINGS

	2025	YTD 29/03/25	YTD 28/03/26
Prime Cattle	367,136	95,080	90,499
Cows	112,059	29,842	26,438

CATTLE AVERAGE CARCASE WEIGHTS (KG)

	2025	YTD 29/03/25	YTD 28/03/26
Prime Cattle	342.5	337.8	351.1
Cows	295.8	299.4	296.3

2025 and 2026 year to date figures are based on the same number of weeks in each year. Source: DAERA.

LMC-IFJ 2026 Spring Conference

Friday 17 April, 9.00am to 12.30pm at the Glenavon Hotel, Cookstown. A discussion on the prospects for agriculture in 2026 and beyond. To register, please scan the QR code or visit www.ifj.ie/springconference2026



NI cattle prices began the year on a relatively stable footing; however, prices began to fall in mid-February and have ended the quarter with R3 steers 11.9p/kg lower than in the first week of January at 632.9p/kg. Prices have ended Q1 21.5p/kg below this time last year when prices were rising more than 10p/kg each week. Slaughter numbers have continued to lag 2025, however, heavier average weights have gone some way to mitigating the smaller presentation of cattle and imports from ROI for direct slaughter were higher throughout the first quarter.

Increasing beef imports from outside the EU have been putting UK and ROI cattle prices under pressure throughout Q1. Data from HMRC and AHDB shows that imports from Australia and New Zealand were 140 per cent and 350 per cent higher respectively in January 2026 than January 2025. At 1,456 tonnes and 2,054 tonnes, Australasian beef now accounts for 13.8 per cent of UK beef imports. Brazilian beef imports were 56 per cent higher at 3,242 tonnes.

Last week saw local prices weaken for steers by an average of 4.4p/kg to 628.8p/kg. The changes were smaller in higher grades with U3 and R3 steers back 2.1p/kg and 2.8p/kg respectively. O grade price movements were similar between premium and non-premium averages after several weeks of disconnect due to a varied Wagyu slaughter. Heifers were steadier on the week, back by 0.8p/kg to an average price of 630.1p/kg. Cow prices weakened again last week by 3p/kg on average. There were larger falls for heavier cows while P grade animals under 220kg saw rises last week. Young bulls improved last week by an average of 2.3p/kg, led by strong increases in U3 and R3 prices.

Local slaughter numbers rose by 1,198 head to 9,647 head last week after a reduced presentation over the St Patrick's Day holiday in the previous week. The year to date has seen 8,171 head fewer cattle slaughtered than during Q1 2025 which marks a 6.4 per cent reduction. Prime slaughter numbers are down 4.8 per cent (4,581 head) while cow slaughter numbers are 11.4 per cent (3,404 head) lower.

Prime average weights in Q1 2026 were 3.9 per cent higher than 2025 at 351.1kg compared to 337.8kg. Average prime weights across the entirety of 2024 and 2025 were 342.9kg and 342.5kg. The total weight of beef slaughtered in Q1 2026 stands at 39,608 tonnes which is 3.5 per cent lower than Q1 2025 as heavier weights partially counteract lower slaughter numbers.

In GB, prices rose across all categories for a second week. Steers increased by 2.4p/kg, heifers by 0.3p/kg, young bulls by 0.5p/kg and cows by 0.9p/kg. The North of England saw steers rising 4.6p/kg last week to 642.1p/kg and heifers in Scotland rose 1.4p/kg to 640.9p/kg. GB prices increased the differentials to NI with steers and heifers now trading 7.2p/kg and 3.9p/kg respectively compared to 0.4p/kg and 2.8p/kg in the previous week.

Prices in ROI continue to decrease at a sharper rate than NI with R3 steers and heifers down by an equivalent of 7.3p/kg and 9.4p/kg. The price gap has further widened with NI R3 steers 45.9p/kg ahead of ROI and R3 heifers ahead by 41.3p/kg.

NI AVERAGE NON-PREMIUM CATTLE PRICES (P/KG)

Week Ending 28/03/26	Steers	Change	Heifers	Change	Young Bulls	Change
U-3	634.1	↓ -2.6	635.5	↓ -1.5	625.2	↑ +3.2
R-3	628.1	↓ -2.4	628.9	↓ -1.7	621.8	↑ +7.6
O+3	622.6	↓ -3.0	622.9	↓ -1.3	616.3	→ -0.1
P+3	589.7	↓ -1.5	584.3	↑ +4.4	583.8	

Prices exclude animals paid a premium as notified by price reporting plants. Blank cells indicate no price in the grade or no price comparison can be made with the previous period.

NI AVERAGE COW PRICES (P/KG)

Week Ending 28/03/26	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	422.9	437.0	450.3	470.6
P2	448.0	476.3	491.5	510.0
P3	466.9	523.5	512.2	519.4
O3	488.9	504.3	517.1	534.2
O4	-	-	521.3	540.4
R3	-	-	-	553.3

Blank cells indicate no animals within grade were reported during the period or no price comparison can be made with previous period.

NI CATTLE MART LIVEWEIGHT PRICES (P/KG)

Week Ending 28/03/26	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	FROM	TO	AVG	FROM	TO	AVG
Finished Cattle						
Steers	370	408	381	310	369	330
Friesians	314	328	321	282	312	298
Heifers	361	410	374	300	360	330
Beef Cows	320	418	349	230	319	290
Dairy Cows	242	296	260	102	241	195
Store Cattle						
Steers up to 400kg	510	591	530	415	509	450
Steers 400kg - 500kg	460	551	510	360	459	400
Steers over 500kg	420	469	440	320	419	365
Heifers up to 450kg	480	547	510	400	479	425
Heifers over 450kg	420	451	435	330	419	370
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	745	1100	860	535	735	600
Continental Heifers	675	1110	775	425	670	530
Friesian Bulls	500	710	608	80	460	290
Holstein Bulls	460	620	500	270	390	293

Prices supplied by Ballymena Livestock Market.

SHEEP TRADE

NI DEADWEIGHT SHEEP BASE QUOTES (P/KG)

	25/03/2026	01/04/2026
R3 Hoggets (to 22kg)	820	830
R3 Hoggets (to 22.5kg)	810	790 - 820

Quotes from 3 of 3 major NI plants.

TOTAL SHEEP SLAUGHTERINGS & EXPORTS (HEAD)

	2025	YTD 29/03/25	YTD 28/03/26
NI Slaughtering	375,178	83,031	114,389
ROI DS Exports	197,261	71,662	45,227
GB DS Exports	45,484	45	31,465

2025 and 2026 year to date figures are based on the same number of weeks in each year. Source: DAERA.

GB/ROI DW AVERAGE SHEEP PRICES (P/KG)

	21/03/2026	Change	28/03/2026	Change
GB	837.5	↑ +37.8	867.3	↑ +29.8
ROI	748.5	↑ +50.7	758.9	↑ +10.3

Source: AHDB & DAFM.

Last week 8,708 hoggets and lambs were slaughtered in local plants, bringing total throughput during Q1 2026 to 114,389 head. Weekly throughout during Q1 remained above weekly equivalents in 2025, equating to a total year on year increase of 31,358 head or 37.8 per cent. Combined ewe and ram slaughterings locally did decline by 641 head or 9.2 per cent during the comparable 13-week period year on year to 6,360 head.

Hogget/lamb exports to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 3,950 head, with an additional 2,536 head exported to GB for direct slaughter. During Q1 2026, 45,227 hoggets/lambs and 1,580 ewes/rams travelled to ROI plants for direct slaughter, respective year on year declines across the categories of 26,435 head (36.9 per cent) and 2,074 head (56.8 per cent). More sheep travelled to GB plants for slaughter with 31,465 head exported during the opening quarter of 2026, a significant change from 45 sheep during the corresponding period of 2025. Direct slaughter exports to other countries also contracted during Q1 by 2,489 head (57.6 per cent) to total 1,830 head.

This week the trade for all types of sheep has been strong, with small numbers of lambs making their way to local marts and selling to a top reported price of 970p/kg. Base quotes for R3 hoggets ended this week at 790p/kg & 820p/kg (22.5kg) and 830p/kg (22kg).

NI SHEEP MART LIVEWEIGHT PRICES (P/KG)

28/03/2026 - 01/04/2026		No	From	To
Monday	Kilrea	950	738	800
	Markethill	760	740	801
Tuesday	Saintfield	604	690	800
	Rathfriland	400	765	890
Wednesday	Ballymena	1588	700	847 (AVE 738)
	Enniskillen	912	715	800
	Armoyle	450	680	780

Prices supplied by individual marts.



FQAS MART DATES APRIL 2026

Wednesday 8th Kilrea
Friday 10th Rathfriland
LMC Farm Liaison Officer Terry White will assist with scheme queries and offer advice.
FQAS Helpline: 028 9263 3024.

Information supplied by LMC/DAERA/AHDB/DAFM

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