

DECLINE IN CALF REGISTRATIONS IN 2013

CALF registrations in NI from January to April 2013 totalled 178,421 head compared with 190,748 head registered in the same period in 2012. This reduction of 12,327 calves translates into a 6.5 per cent reduction year on year. If this information is broken down further there are some interesting trends which can be observed.

Total beef sired calf registrations in NI totalled 107,527 head in the first four months of 2013 compared with 117,268 beef sired calf registrations in the same period in 2012. This is a decline of 9,741 head representing an 8.3 per cent reduction year on year.

Figure 1 displays total beef sired calf registrations from January 2011 to April 2013. Beef sired calf registrations in January 2013 were similar to those in January 2012 with 18,766 registrations but during February, March and April 2013 the number of beef sired calf registrations was notably lower than the corresponding months in 2012.

Meanwhile the number of dairy sired calves registered in the first four months of 2013 totalled 70,894 head, a 3.5 per cent decrease on the 73,480 head recorded in the same period in 2012.

This decline in calf registrations in the first third of 2013 has occurred despite the results of the DARD Agricultural Survey in December 2012 indicating a relatively stable dairy cow herd and three per cent growth in the number of

suckler cows. The number of beef heifers in calf with their first calf in December 2012 totalled 59,200 head, an increase of six per cent on the previous year.

The reduction recorded in calf registrations in the first third of 2013 is likely to be a result of some fertility issues experienced on NI farms last summer due to the poor weather and grazing conditions. Some producers have reported cows calving later and a higher barren rate than usual in 2013 to date as a result. In situations where reduced fertility on farms has caused an increase in the calving spread there is the potential for lower weaning weights this autumn and delayed finishing as a result.

The number of cows slaughtered in meat plants during the first third of 2013 has totalled 28,157 head. In the same period in 2012 24,932 cows were slaughtered, an increase of 13 per cent year on year. The tight fodder supplies experienced this spring combined with the reports of higher than usual empty rates and relatively good cull cow prices are all likely to have had a role to play in the increased cow throughput and a reduced number of calf registrations.

The difficult production conditions this spring has also seen the number of cows entering the rendering plants increase as discussed in last week's Bulletin. A total of 12,119 fallen cows were rendered in the first four months of 2013 compared with 9,387 in the same period last year. This increase by

2,732 head represents an increase of 29% in the number of cows handled by the renderers.

It is possible that the reduction in calf numbers will carry through into 2014 due to the increase in cow mortality this spring combined with the increase in the number of cows slaughtered in 2013 to date. In addition to this the combination of the fodder shortage, the late spring and reduced grass growth this year could result in more cows going to the bull with a sub optimal body score, with reduced fertility as a result.

Breed breakdown

Beef sired calf registrations accounted for 60 per cent of total calf registrations in NI during the first four months of 2013. These beef calf registrations continue to be dominated by seven breeds which accounted for 94 per cent of all beef sired calves registered during this period.

These are, in descending order of popularity, Limousin, Charolais, Aberdeen Angus, Simmental, Belgian Blue, Hereford and Blonde d'Aquitaine. The proportion of calf registrations within each beef breed during the first four months of 2013 is displayed in Figure 2.

While these seven breeds continue to dominate in terms of sire selection there have been some minor changes in the proportion of calves within each breed when comparing the 2012 and 2013 periods.

Limousin sired calves continue to be the most popular and accounted for 30.8 per cent of all beef sired calf registrations in the 2013 period, back slightly from the 31.9 per cent in the same period in 2012.

Charolais sired calves are the second most popular and accounted for 24.9 per cent of registrations in 2013 to date. This is back slightly from 25.7 per cent in the 2012 period.

Meanwhile there has been a slight increase in the proportion of Simmental, Belgian Blue and Hereford calves when comparing the 2012 and 2013 periods.

The proportion of Aberdeen Angus calves has remained constant between the two periods and accounted for 16.9 per cent of total beef calf registrations in 2013 to date.

Figure 1: Total beef sired calf registrations January 2011 to April 2013.

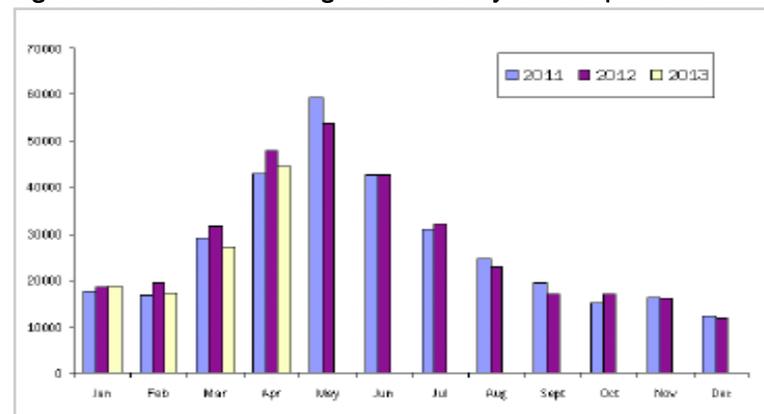
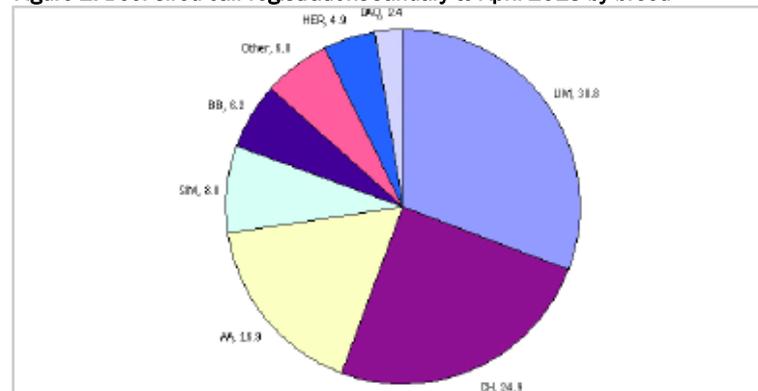


Figure 2: Beef sired calf registrations January to April 2013 by breed



LMC LAUNCH ONLINE PAYMENTS FOR FQAS

LMC is pleased to announce the launch of an online payments system for the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme. Members of the FQAS can now pay their membership fee online at www.lmcni.com whether the payment is an annual membership renewal or initial registration fee.

Previously all FQAS members had to pay their annual renewal/initial registration by cheque however members can now pay online with a valid credit/debit card. This new more flexible payment method will benefit FQAS members and means that payment can be made anytime and will save the farmer the price of postage.

Paying your membership fee online is quick and easy, available 24 hours a day, and secure through our own website. Cheques are still accepted if that is the preferred method of payment but it is

important that there is the option to pay online.

It is important to remember that card details cannot be taken over the phone. In order to pay using credit/debit card, FQAS members must pay through the website. The new online payment process should be quick and easy and all major credit/debit cards are accepted.



LMC ATTENDING BALMORAL SHOW 2013

THE Balmoral Show is Ireland's largest Agricultural and Food Show that entertains the whole family. The newly developed and spacious Balmoral Park will be host to the Balmoral Show 2013 from the 15-17 May 2013. This move to the new location will allow the event to offer many improvements including better parking, more space, additional livestock competitions and world class attractions

This year LMC has an action packed programme of events for everyone to enjoy. Come and join us at any time on any of the three days of the show for a cup of tea or coffee (Stand B5). Our staff will be on hand, whether you would like to discuss FQAS, industry developments, red meat promotion or the state of the trade.

On all three days of the show we will be highlighting the versatility of Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured produce by sampling hot beef and lamb rolls in the LMC stand. Filling, nutritious and tasty this is the easiest way to demonstrate the convenience of cooking with beef and lamb. Come and see for yourself, samples are being distributed between noon and 3pm each day.

On Wednesday and Friday LMC cookery demonstrators will be cooking and sampling Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured beef and lamb recipes in the Food NI marquee from 11am to 3pm. Feel free to come and pick up useful tips, a sample of what has been cooked, and easy recipes to cook at home.

FQAS Liaison Officer Mart Clinics Timetable

Markethill	Tuesday	14/05/13
Omagh	Monday	20/05/13
Enniskillen	Thursday	23/05/13

REMINDER

Completed Single Farm Payment Application Forms must be received by DARD on or before the 15 May 2013



FQAS Helpline

If you have had a recent inspection and need help and advice to rectify any non-conformances, contact the

FQAS helpline:
028 9263 3024

Answerphone Service

Factory Quotes &
Mart Results
Updated 5pm Daily

Tel: 028 9263 3011

Text Service

Free Price Quotes sent to your mobile phone weekly

Email - bulletin@lmcni.com
Tel: 028 9263 3000

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 06/05/13	Next Week 13/05/13
Prime		
U-3	370-374p	370-374p
R-3	364-368p	364-368p
O+3	358-362p	358-362p
* Plus 8p/kg in spec bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	280-310p	280-310p
Steakers	260-280p	260-280p
Blues	180-185p	180-185p

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 04/05/13	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U-3=	380.2	387.9	365.5
U=3=	380.0	383.4	370.0
U=4=	378.7	378.0	-
R=3=	374.0	382.0	363.5
R=4=	374.7	375.8	-
O+3=	375.2	374.5	352.6
O=3=	365.3	361.4	351.3
Average	370.4	374.8	351.0

REPORTED COW PRICES NI W/E 04/05/13

Grades	Price (p/kg)	Avg Wgt
O+3=	312.2	316.0
O-3+	282.4	310.7
P+2+	263.9	293.3
P+3+	277.4	307.0
P-1-	187.7	219.0

COMMODITIES

COMMODITY PRICE

W/E 04/05/13	Price (£) per tonne / 1000litre	% weekly change
Barley	202.00	+0.25
Wheat	223.50	+0.45
Straw	19.90	-
Red Diesel	720-740	-

Deadweight Cattle Trade

B ASE quotes from the plants this week for U-3 grade prime cattle were 370-374p/kg with similar quotes expected for early next week. The quotes for cows are generally 300-310p/kg with one plant continuing to quote 280p/kg. The plants are reporting a slight tightening in supplies as the weeks progress.

Prime cattle slaughterings remained strong in NI last week with 7,326 head passing through the plants. Imports of prime cattle for direct slaughter from ROI totalled 415 head, accounting for six per cent of prime cattle throughput. Meanwhile the number of cows passing through the plants totalled 1,660 head, back 110 head on the previous week. A total of 335 cattle were exported to GB for direct slaughter last week with 179 cows being exported to ROI for direct slaughter.

Average steer prices in NI last week increased by 1.5p/kg to 370.4p/kg while average heifer prices increased in the region of a penny to 374.8p/kg. Average steer prices in GB increased by 2.3p/kg to 399.1p/kg last week while average heifer prices increased by 1.4p/kg to 395.2p/kg.

All regions of GB recorded increases in the average steer price with the strongest increase recorded in Northern England where it increased by 4.8p/kg to 406.3p/kg. This was the same average price as Scotland. The average heifer price also increased in all regions with the exception of the Midlands where it was back in the region of a penny to 392.1p/kg.

R3 steer and heifer prices in GB last week were up in the region of a penny to 399.0p/kg and 396.7p/kg respectively. In Northern England the R3 steer price was up 3.7p/kg to 402.0p/kg while the R3 heifer price in the region was up 3.9p/kg to 395.7p/kg. In NI last week the R3 steer and heifer prices were relatively stable at 378.0p/kg and 381.4p/kg respectively.

The prices paid for cattle in ROI last week were fairly similar to the previous with the majority of reported grades within 1p/kg of the previous week in sterling terms. There are reports of finished cattle availability showing signs of tightening in ROI this week with supplies expected to tighten further in the weeks ahead.

This week's marts

F INISHED first quality steers sold to an average price of 220p/kg liveweight this week with second quality finished steers selling to an average of 200p/kg. Finished first quality heifers sold to an average of 220p/kg with a top reported price of 231p/kg. Well fleshed beef cows sold to a top price of 207p/kg with an average for first quality beef cows of 170p/kg. Dairy bred cows sold from 80-148p/kg depending on quality.

First quality store bullocks in the 400-500kg weight range sold to an average of 217p/kg with second quality selling to 185p/kg. First quality heifers over 450kg sold from 190-212p/kg (av 200p/kg) while second quality sold from 160-188p/kg (av 175p/kg).

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

W/E 04/05/13	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB	
Steers	U3	379.5	369.1	411.0	405.7	407.7	405.3	407.8
	R3	378.0	362.3	406.1	402.0	395.2	391.0	399.0
	R4	376.5	362.7	408.7	414.5	397.4	393.7	405.4
	O3	367.1	346.8	394.0	397.4	376.4	373.8	386.8
	AVG	370.4	-	406.3	406.3	394.2	383.8	399.1
Heifers	U3	385.2	397.6	409.2	405.8	408.8	401.2	407.3
	R3	381.4	382.6	402.9	395.7	395.3	389.8	396.7
	R4	378.0	383.2	405.7	403.6	394.0	391.3	399.4
	O3	368.2	364.4	388.0	389.5	373.7	367.9	380.7
	AVG	374.8	-	403.1	401.1	392.1	379.7	395.2
Young Bulls	U3	367.0	359.9	404.5	387.4	398.5	402.7	398.0
	R3	364.8	353.5	387.8	381.1	386.0	389.1	385.6
	O3	348.6	336.0	369.7	363.0	362.3	380.2	368.2
	AVG	351.0	-	384.8	372.2	378.3	381.5	378.4
Prime Cattle Price Reported	5127	-	7113	5864	5744	4374	23095	
Cows	O3	298.8	298.4	319.6	302.0	300.0	287.3	302.3
	O4	303.4	301.1	322.2	308.3	305.6	290.1	305.6
	P2	245.3	248.7	270.8	243.8	250.9	226.7	244.5
	P3	272.4	285.7	288.1	284.4	259.6	260.5	273.8
	AVG	270.6	-	306.0	285.6	285.5	245.5	276.2

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=84.45p 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 LIVELWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 04/05/13	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Average	From	To	Average
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	216	240	220	190	215	200
Friesians	162	171	166	132	161	142
Heifers	209	231	220	180	208	195
Beef Cows	150	207	170	120	149	135
Dairy Cows	124	148	130	80	122	101
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	200	231	207	170	198	180
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	205	236	217	175	204	185
Bullocks over 500kg	206	242	220	160	205	182
Heifers up to 450kg	191	220	200	160	190	175
Heifers over 450kg	190	212	200	160	188	175
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	250	395	290	150	248	200
Continental Heifers	200	300	235	120	198	160
Friesian Bulls	110	160	130	40	108	70
Holstein Bulls	50	102	70	10	48	25

SHEEP TRADE

REPORTED HOGGET PRICES - P/KG

(P/KG DW)	W/E 20/04/13	W/E 27/04/13	W/E 04/05/13
NI Liveweight	378.2p	388.5p	383.9p
NI Deadweight	447.0p	441.9p	441.6p
ROI Deadweight	436.4p	434.4p	438.4p
GB Deadweight	456.5p	455.2p	460.9p

REPORTED SPRING LAMB PRICES - P/KG

(P/KG DW)	W/E 20/04/13	W/E 27/04/13	W/E 04/05/13
NI Liveweight	463.6p	460.0p	479.1p
NI Deadweight	497.9p	478.8p	482.4p
GB Deadweight	526.3p	528.6p	532.9p

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants this week have been fairly steady with quotes of 450p/kg to 22kg available for hoggets and 490p/kg to 21kg available for spring lambs. Lamb/Hogget throughput in the plants last week totalled 4,198 head, back 400 head on the previous week. A further 4,193 sheep were exported to ROI for direct slaughter last week taking the total for the year to date to 171,736 head.

The deadweight hogget price in NI last week was almost unchanged at 441.6p/kg while the spring lamb price was up 3.6p/kg to 482.4p/kg. Meanwhile in GB the hogget price was up 5.7p/kg to 460.9p/kg with the spring lamb price up 4.3p/kg to 532.9p/kg.

This week's marts

SMALL numbers of mixed quality hoggets passed through the sale rings this week as the season comes to an end. In Massereene on Monday 205 hoggets sold from 360-400p/kg compared to 310 hoggets last week selling from 380-411p/kg. In Ballymena on Wednesday 345 hoggets sold to an average of 355p/kg compared to 303 hoggets last week selling to an average of 370p/kg. An entry of 129 spring lambs in Ballymena sold to an average of 470p/kg this week with 330 spring lambs in Kilrea on Monday selling to an average of 452p/kg. A top price of £90 was reported for well fleshed cull ewes in Saintfield on Tuesday.

HOGGET/LAMB QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)		This Week 06/05/13	Next Week 13/05/13
NI Factories	Spring Lambs	490p	490p
	Hoggets	450p	450p

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 04/05/13 To: 09/05/13		Hoggets (P/KG LW)				Spring Lambs (P/KG LW)			
		No.	From	To	Avg	No.	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	103	370	441	-	75	452	466	-
Monday	Massereene	205	360	400	-	310	450	491	-
	Kilrea	-	-	-	-	330	440	462	452
Tuesday	Saintfield	302	-	-	390	102	-	-	480
	Rathfriland	-	-	-	-	254	456	492	473
Wednesday	Enniskillen	359	373	404	-	103	455	490	-
	Ballymena	345	320	400	355	129	450	575	470
	Markethill	250	375	435	389	210	460	500	472

Contact us:

Website: www.lmcsi.com

Telephone: 028 9263 3000

Fax: 028 9263 3001

FQAS Helpline: 028 9263 3024

Answerphone: 028 9263 3011

Comments: bulletin@lmcsi.com

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