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EU DEADWEIGHT CATTLE PRICES

NORTHERN Ireland, with an average R3 heifer price in Euro of 438.4c/kg for the week ending 21 July 2013, is ranked in third position in the EU Deadweight Cattle Prices League Table. The league table ranks EU countries in terms of the farmgate price paid for R3 grade heifers and provides a useful comparison on an EU basis.

The EU average R3 heifer price in the week ending 21 July 2013 was 417.4c/kg, a drop of 1.5c/kg from 418.9c/kg in the week ending 23 June 2013. R3 heifer prices in NI, GB and ROI have remained well above the EU average price despite the drop in British Isles prices between June and July 2013.

The R3 heifer price in NI during the week ending 21 July 2013 was 16.6c/kg lower than the 455.0c/kg recorded in the week ending 23 June 2013. Despite this marked drop in the average price paid for R3 heifers between the two weeks tabulated NI actually moved up one position on the league table from fourth position in June to third position in July. In the week ending 23 June 2013 the R3 heifer price in NI was 36.1c/kg higher than the EU average and by the week ending 21 July 2013 this had narrowed to 21c/kg.

Meanwhile in GB the average R3 heifer price for the week ending 21 July 2013 was 459.1c/kg. 7c/kg behind the 466.1c/kg paid during the week ending 23 June 2013. This drop in the average R3 heifer price moved it down from first position in June 2013 to second position in July 2013. In the week ending 23 June 2013 the R3 heifer price in GB was 47.2c/kg higher than the EU average and in the week ending 21 July 2013 this was reduced to 41.7c/kg.

The biggest drop in R3 heifer prices across the EU was in ROI where the average price the week ending 23 June 2013 was 465.3c/kg and this came back by 31.2c/kg to 434.1c/kg in the week ending 21 July 2013. This marked reduction in the average price paid moved ROI down two places on the league table from second position in the week ending 23 June to fourth position in the week ending 21 July. This movement in R3 heifer prices reduced the positive differential with the EU average from 46.4c/kg in the week ending 23 June 2013 to 16.7c/kg in the week ending 21 July 2013.

With an average R3 heifer price of 466c/kg France recorded the highest average R3 heifer price in the EU in the week ending 21 July 2013. This was an increase of 4c/kg when compared to the week ending 23 June 2013 when the average R3 heifer price was 462c/kg.

EU Deadweight Cattle Prices - Heifers R3 Equivalent (€ Cents)					
Position last Mth	Position this Mth	Country	Price last Mth (w/e 23.06.13)	Price this Mth (w/e 21.07.13)	Change on Mth (cents)
3	1	France	462.0	466.0	+4.0
1	2	Great Britain	**466.1**	**459.1**	**-7.0**
4	3	Northern Ireland	**455.0**	**438.4**	**-16.6**
2	4	Ireland	**465.3**	**434.1**	**-31.2**
5	5	Italy	421.6	406.7	-14.9
6	6	Sweden	420.9	405.5	-15.5
8	7	Spain	394.5	403.0	+8.5
7	8	Luxembourg	399.8	400.3	+0.5
9	9	Germany	382.5	383.5	+1.0
10	10	Denmark	380.0	378.3	-1.7
12	11	Belgium	356.5	358.5	+2.0
11	12	Austria	359.8	356.6	-3.2
13	13	Slovenia	326.1	340.9	+14.8
16	14	Lithuania	281.1	299.2	+18.2
14	15	Poland	297.9	295.0	-2.9
15	16	Czech Republic	292.6	290.2	-2.4
EU 29 Average			418.9	417.4	-1.5
Euro (€1=)			86.36	85.35	-
Official prices reported to the EC Dressing Specification					

EU SHORT TERM OUTLOOK BEEF AND SHEEP MEAT

STATISTICS from the European Commission have indicated that the EU-28 population is expected to show modest growth during 2013 and 2014 with the population projected to reach 511.3 million inhabitants in 2014. After a slight decline in 2012 the GDP of the EU 28 is projected to remain steady throughout 2013 before showing a weak recovery in 2014 (+1.4 per cent).

Some of the EU's largest economies are expected to remain stable, or to grow modestly, in 2013 but recover with higher growth rates in 2014. Growth in the UK is forecast at 0.6 per cent in 2013 and 1.7 per cent in 2014. Overall meat production and consumption is expected to decline in the EU for the second year in a row in 2013. This decline is driven primarily by lower supplies of beef and pork. However prospects for an improvement in the economic situation in the EU, continued population growth and lower grain prices could generate a slight increase in meat production in the EU in 2014.

Beef update

The December 2012 Agricultural Census for the EU 27 recorded a total of 86.6 million head of cattle, marking a 0.5 per cent increase on the previous year. With the cow herd remaining stable after three years of steady decline production during 2014 is expected to increase due to the recapitalisation of the cattle herd. Tight domestic supplies of beef during 2013 will bring imports close to 2010 levels but on the back of an improved supply of cattle in 2014 imports should slightly decline.

With firm beef prices this year per capita consumption is expected to continue to retreat but at a slower rate than has been recorded in previous years. However an improvement in the EU economic situation and an improvement in meat supplies in 2014 could stabilise consumption at 10.8kg per capita.

Sheep update

Meanwhile in the sheep sector there was a strong increase recorded in sheep slaughterings in the first half of 2013 in the UK and Ireland, driven by the large carryover of hoggets from 2012 due to unfavourable weather conditions hampering production. This increase early in the year is expected to be followed by a tightening in availability as the year progresses. Lower productivity and reduced flock numbers are expected to be a fetaure in some of the key EU producing countries. The Spanish flock is expected to decline by 1.2 per cent, Greece by 2 per cent, France by 2.2 per cent and in Italy by 11.7 per cent. Overall sheep meat production in the EU is expected to increase by 0.9 per cent in 2013 but this increase will be short lived with production expected to continue declining in 2014.

Imports of sheep meat from New Zealand were 12 per cent higher the first four months of 2013 compared to the same period in 2012. However tighter supplies in New Zealand in the second part of the year should result in an increase in New Zealand imports for 2013 as a whole to be closer to two per cent. Lamb consumption in the EU is forecast to increase in 2013 after several years of continuous decline thanks to higher availabilities implying lower prices in 2013.

NI SHEEP INDUSTRY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (JUNE SNAP SHOT)

DEADWEIGHT lamb prices in NI in June 2013 were 19.2 per cent higher than during June 2012 at 442.3p/kg with average liveweight prices up 16.4 per cent year on year to 416.5p/kg.

Meanwhile in GB average deadweight prices were up 16 per cent to 491.2p/kg over the same period. In ROI the average deadweight figure for hoggets and lambs combined was 428p/kg for June 2013, 15.3 per cent higher than the 371.3p/kg recorded in June 2012.

Lamb and hogget slaughterings in NI plants during June 2013 totalled 31,570 head, a 5.6 per cent increase on throughput recorded in June 2012. Ewe and ram slaughterings during June 2013 totalled 3,140 head, an increase of 1,100 when compared to the corresponding month in 2012 (+54 per cent).

The average lamb/hogget carcase weight in NI during June 2013 was 20.9kg compared to 22.2kg in June 2012. This reduction by 1.3kg (-5.8 per cent) is perhaps a combination of the difficult production conditions experienced by producers and no incentives from the market to produce carcases over 21kg. Ewe and ram carcases were also lighter, down an average of 3kg to 29.4kg.

During June 2013 a total of 19,088 lambs were exported out of NI for direct slaughter with almost all of these destined for plants in ROI. This is a 33.2 per cent reduction on the number exported in June 2012 when 28,567 lambs were exported.

	Jun-12	Jun-13	% Change
Sheep Prices (p/kg)			
Average Deadweight Price (Lamb)	370.9	442.3	+19.2%
Average Liveweight Price (Lamb)	357.8	416.5	+16.4%
Average Weekly Price (GB - Lamb)	423.4	491.2	+16.0%
Average Weekly Price (ROI - Combined)	371.3	428.0	+15.3%
Slaughterings			
Total Hogget & Lamb Slaughterings (Head)	29,887	31,570	+5.6%
Total Ewe & Ram Slaughterings (Head)	2,039	3,140	+54.0%
Average Hogget & Lambs Carcase Weight (kg)	22.2	20.9	-5.8%
Average Ewe & Rams Carcase Weight (kg)	32.4	29.4	-9.3%
Trade (Head)			
Live Imports for Direct Slaughter	0	0	0
Live Exports for Direct Slaughter	28,567	19,088	-33.2%
All NI Figures Unless Otherwise Stated			

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 29/07/13	Next Week 05/08/13
Prime		
U-3	364-370p	360-362p
R-3	358-364p	354-356p
O+3	352-358p	348-350p
* Plus 8p/kg in spec bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	290-310p	290-300p
Steakers	250-270p	250-270p
Blues	180-185p	180-185p

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 27/07/13	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U-3=	379.8	377.2	368.0
U=3=	382.1	375.7	365.8
U=4=	380.7	374.4	-
R=3=	379.6	385.5	362.8
R=4=	369.6	381.7	-
O+3=	372.5	364.9	350.6
O=3=	366.7	362.7	342.8
Average	369.3	369.3	349.1

REPORTED COW PRICES NI W/E 27/07/13

Grades	Price (p/kg)	Avg Wgt
O+3=	312.3	328.0
O-3+	291.2	313.8
P+2+	276.4	287.1
P+3+	288.9	294.4
P-1-	188.5	217.1

COMMODITY PRICE

W/E 27/07/13	Price (£) per tonne / 1000litre	% weekly change
Barley	168.50	-5.9
Wheat	184.00	-3.2
Straw	23.33	-
Diesel	715-725	-

Deadweight Cattle Trade

THE base quotes from the plants for U-3 grade prime cattle this week were 364-370p/kg with the 8p/kg bonus available for in spec steers and heifers. The plants are quoting 360-362p/kg for Monday and have indicated that sales are difficult. However with reports of prime cattle being tight on the ground producers should be shopping around to ensure they get the best deal available. Quotes for good quality cows range from 290-310p/kg across the plants.

Throughput of prime cattle in the NI plants last week totalled 5,318 head bringing slaughterings for July 2013 to 22,211. This is 286 head less than the throughput the corresponding month last year (-1.3 per cent). Prime cattle carcases during July 2013 averaged 321.7kg, a 21.1kg reduction on the average carcase weight the previous July when it was 342.8kg. This represents a 6.1 per cent decline in average carcase weights. Meanwhile cow throughput for July 2013 in the NI plants was 6,595 head, a 9.8 per cent reduction on the 7,312 killed in July 2012. Cow carcase weights during July 2013 were similar to the previous July at 301kg.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants increased to 706 head last week. This is an increase of 226 head on the previous week and is the highest level of imports recorded since early December 2012. This increase resulted in imports from ROI accounting for 13.3 per cent of the total prime kill in NI last week compared to 8.8 per cent the previous week. Imports of cows from ROI were also at their highest since December 2012 with 145 head imported for direct slaughter. Exports to GB for direct slaughter last week totalled 276 head, consisting of 178 prime cattle and 97 cows.

The reported average steer price in NI last week was back 4.1p/kg on the previous week to 369.3p/kg with the average heifer price back 3.7p/kg to 369.3p/kg. Meanwhile in GB prices were also back but not to the same degree with the average steer price back 1p/kg to 398.8p/kg while the average heifer price was back by 2.9p/kg to 396.9p/kg. Average steer prices in Scotland and Northern England were similar to the previous week with prices in the Midlands and Southern England back in the region of 2.5p/kg. Heifer prices were within 1p/kg of the previous week in Scotland and Northern England with prices in the Midlands and Northern England back by 6.8p/kg and 5.3p/kg respectively. In ROI last week the R3 steer price was back the equivalent of 6.4p/kg to 355p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 9.8p/kg to 367.4p/kg.

This weeks marts

FINISHED first quality steers sold to an average of 228p/kg this week with second quality selling to an average of 195p/kg. First quality heifers sold to an average of 218p/kg with second quality selling to an average of 184p/kg. Good quality beef cows sold from 160-208p/kg (av 175p/kg) with plainer beef cows selling from 120-159p/kg (av 135p/kg). Dairy bred cows sold from 90-144p/kg dependent on quality. Bullocks over 500kg sold to an average of 216p/kg for first quality this week with second quality selling to an average of 170p/kg. First quality heifers over 450kg sold to an average of 195p/kg to a top price of 209p/kg.

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

W/E 27/07/13		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	379.6	364.0	423.6	403.8	401.9	398.7	407.9
	R3	379.7	355.0	417.8	398.2	390.5	389.8	400.3
	R4	376.9	355.7	422.2	413.7	390.0	394.3	407.9
	O3	365.6	338.3	395.1	386.7	376.3	367.4	382.9
	AVG	369.3	-	417.7	402.3	386.3	379.8	398.8
Heifers	U3	379.1	378.2	423.7	399.9	396.9	403.4	407.0
	R3	381.4	367.4	413.3	390.4	384.3	381.6	394.1
	R4	377.5	366.7	419.0	400.1	391.0	383.6	401.1
	O3	364.2	349.0	380.6	387.9	371.8	373.5	379.7
	AVG	369.3	-	414.5	399.2	386.7	376.5	396.9
Young Bulls	U3	367.7	357.7	416.5	385.9	389.6	393.4	393.1
	R3	361.5	346.2	406.9	371.5	375.9	381.5	379.2
	O3	344.8	317.5	373.1	352.0	347.6	372.1	358.5
	AVG	349.1	-	399.6	366.7	372.9	372.0	374.4
Prime Cattle Price Reported		3737	-	6821	5884	5655	4125	22485
Cows	O3	299.2	268.7	305.2	294.0	286.9	276.3	291.3
	O4	304.5	274.6	305.7	296.3	293.4	279.0	293.1
	P2	259.1	235.1	244.9	238.0	217.0	226.2	235.4
	P3	282.8	258.3	269.9	271.5	262.9	246.6	261.9
	AVG	280.4	-	296.1	268.7	268.2	245.4	269.0

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=86.12p 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 27/07/13	1st QUALITY From	1st QUALITY To	1st QUALITY Average	2nd QUALITY From	2nd QUALITY To	2nd QUALITY Average
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	216	242	228	180	215	195
Friesians	154	186	166	119	153	136
Heifers	200	235	218	150	195	184
Beef Cows	160	208	175	120	159	135
Dairy Cows	121	144	127	90	120	105
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	190	215	200	165	189	177
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	200	232	219	149	199	178
Bullocks over 500kg	202	225	216	137	197	170
Heifers up to 450kg	190	214	200	160	189	175
Heifers over 450kg	184	209	195	160	183	170
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	235	392	270	125	230	175
Continental Heifers	150	295	215	180	148	115
Friesian Bulls	80	180	130	20	78	65
Holstein Bulls	50	150	100	4	48	25

SHEEP TRADE

LAMB QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 29/07/13	Next Week 05/08/13
NI Factories	390-400p	390-400p
ROI Factories	395p	395p

REPORTED LAMB PRICES - P/KG

(P/KG DW)	W/E 13/07/13	W/E 20/07/13	W/E 27/07/13
NI Liveweight	398.4p	406.4p	346.6p
NI Deadweight	430.5p	427.1p	390.5p
ROI Deadweight	424.9p	429.2p	399.7p
GB Deadweight	491.3p	474.5p	409.6p

Deadweight Sheep Trade

THE plants are quoting 390-400p/kg for R3 grading lambs this week with reports from the plants of very tight availability. The NI deadweight price last week was 390.5p/kg, a drop of 36.6p/kg on the previous week. Meanwhile in GB the deadweight lamb price last week was 409.6p/kg, a drop of 64.9p/kg on the previous week. This marked drop in lamb prices in GB has narrowed the differential with NI to 19p/kg. Throughput in the NI plants last week totalled 9,713 head, an 11 per cent increase on the 8,777 killed the previous week. Meanwhile exports to ROI for direct slaughter also increased last week with 9,266 exported. This is a 27 per cent increase on the 7,311 lambs exported the previous week.

This week's marts

THERE were reports of a range in the quality of lambs on offer across the marts this week but the trade improved as the week progressed. In Omagh last Saturday 594 lambs sold from 355-401p/kg compared to 834 lambs the previous week selling from 365-401p/kg. An improved trade in Rathfriland on Tuesday saw an entry of 780 lambs selling from 351-400p/kg (av 378p/kg) compared to 1,163 lambs last week selling from 333-376p/kg (av 354p/kg). A firmer trade in Armoy on Wednesday night saw a smaller entry of 306 fat lambs sell from 350-382p/kg (av 376p/kg) while in Markethill 250 lambs sold from 340-392p/kg (av 379p/kg). Top prices for fat ewes generally ranged from £75 to £85 across the marts.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 27/07/13 To: 01/08/13		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
		No.	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	594	355	401	-
	Hilltown	400	330	373	345
	Newtownstewart	75	-	-	354
Monday	Massereene	826	340	386	-
	Kilrea	350	346	372	359
Tuesday	Saintfield	525	356	400	-
	Rathfriland	780	351	400	378
Wednesday	Enniskillen	358	354	389	-
	Ballymena	659	330	383	357
	Markethill	250	340	392	379
	Armoy	306	350	382	376

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