

UK IMPORTS OF LAMB DOWN IN FIRST QUARTER

IMPORTS of sheepmeat into the UK during the first quarter of 2014 totalled 26,530 tonnes compared to 29,917 tonnes in the corresponding period in 2013. This decline by 3,387 tonnes accounts for an 11.3 per cent decline year on year.

During the first quarter of 2014 imports of sheepmeat from EU countries accounted for 12 per cent of total sheepmeat imports with imports from ROI during this period totalled 1,833 tonnes. This is an increase of five per cent on the corresponding period in 2013 and accounted for almost two thirds of total imports from EU countries. France and Spain accounted for 7 per cent and 5 per cent of EU imports of sheepmeat into the UK respectively during the 2014 period but there has been a notable decline in the volume imported from both countries when compared to the 2013 period.

Meanwhile the volume of sheep meat imported from non-EU countries during the first quarter of 2014 was back 14 per cent on year earlier levels with 23,448 tonnes imported. New Zealand continues to be the biggest exporter of

sheepmeat into the UK and exported 19,067 tonnes during the first quarter of 2014. However there has been a decrease in the volume of New Zealand origin lamb being imported into the UK year on year. Imports of sheep meat from New Zealand in the first quarter of 2014 were 20 per cent lower than the corresponding period in 2013 when 23,960 tonnes were imported.

This decline in the volume of imports has reduced the overall share that New Zealand has of the UK import market. In the first quarter of 2013 imports from New Zealand accounted for 88 per cent of all non EU imports of lamb and during the same period in 2014 this was reduced to 81 per cent. With exports out of New Zealand actually increasing during the first quarter of 2014 the drop in the level of exports to the UK is a result of product being directed into other markets such as China. This has allowed other non EU countries to increase their share of the UK import market.

Imports of sheepmeat from Australia increased from 3,112 tonnes in the first quarter of 2013 to 4,031 in the same

period in 2014. This 30 per cent increase in the volume of imports from Australia has increased its share of total non EU imports from 11 per cent in the 2013 period to 17 per cent in the 2014 period. It is expected that Australia will look to utilise their entire EU export quota this year.

LOCAL PRODUCTION

Sheepmeat production from lambs and hoggets in NI has totalled 2,679 tonnes during 2014 to date, an increase of 587 tonnes from the corresponding period in 2013. This increase has been driven by a marked increase in the number of lambs/hoggets processed in NI plants.

During 2014 to date 122,181 lambs/hoggets have been slaughtered in NI compared to 98,014 head during the 2013 period. This increase by 24,167 head accounts for a 24.5 per cent increase in throughput. There has also been an increase in average carcase weights from 21.3 kg in the 2013 period to 22kg in 2014 to date.

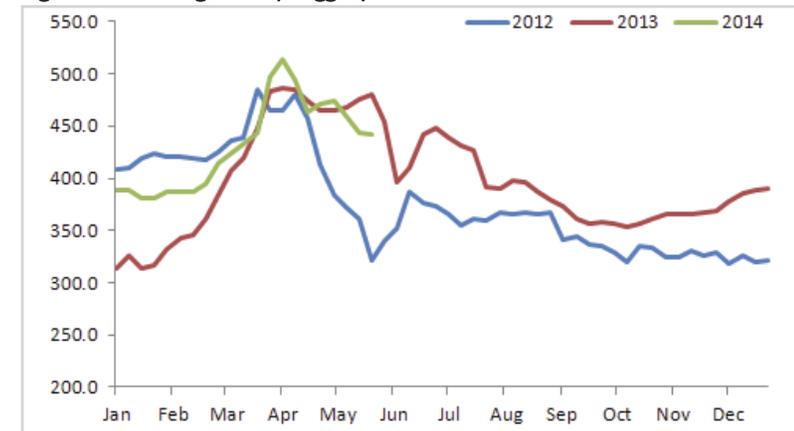
Increased demand from processors in NI for lambs/hoggets has increased the proportion of NI origin lambs

slaughtered in local plants. During 2014 to date 51 per cent of NI sheep have been killed locally compared to 38 per cent in the corresponding period in 2013. The increased demand from NI plants during 2014 to date has resulted in a 26 per cent drop in exports of sheep from NI to ROI for direct slaughter when compared to the 2013 period.

The NI plants have now shifted over to spring lambs with hoggets accounting for five per cent of the price reported kill

last week. Supplies of lambs have started to increase in recent weeks with throughput in both the marts and the plants showing an increase in throughput. With more supply coming out the market has come under pressure in recent weeks in line with normal seasonal trends, as indicated in Figure 1. While deadweight prices in NI in recent weeks have been below 2013 levels they are still high on a historical basis.

Figure 1: Deadweight lamb/hogget prices in NI 2012-2014



REPORTS OF INCREASED LIVER FLUKE ON UK FARMS

THE number of cattle livers showing signs of fluke damage in GB recorded a marked increase during 2013 with 24 per cent of cattle livers condemned compared to 19 per cent in 2012. This increase should be a cause for concern for all beef farmers across the UK but particularly in Scotland where 32 per cent of livers were rejected and in Wales where 27 per cent of livers were condemned (Source: EBLEX). Figures for the proportion of livers condemned in NI were not available at the time of publication but industry sources have indicated that the level of incidences would be broadly similar to the levels recorded in GB.

Internal parasites, such as liver fluke, are a significant threat to both animal health and production performance on NI farms. The cost of liver fluke infection to the beef industry is difficult to calculate but EBLEX have estimated that the parasite can cost the producer in the region of £87 per head through increasing finishing times and reducing feed efficiency.

In addition livers that have been badly damaged by fluke during the animal's lifetime have scarring and fibrous tissue that make them unsuitable for human consumption and thereby reduces the value of the fifth quarter. The annual cost to the UK beef industry is estimated to be in the tens of millions

in lost production and treatment costs. Adult fluke live in the bile ducts and livers of infected cattle with a moderate infestation of fluke resulting in blood loss from the liver of up to half a litre per week. This results in many infected animals becoming anaemic. In cattle a fluke infestation can cause a rapid loss in body condition, a drop in milk yield, reduced fertility and increases the animal's susceptibility to other infections.

In addition the presence of parasites such as fluke prevents cattle from maximising growth rates by stopping them from efficiently utilising the nutrients in their feed. This may mean that cattle intended for slaughter can take longer to meet the required specification for finishing and heifers intended for breeding are failing to reach target live weights for breeding.

For the effective treatment and management of fluke producers must first understand the life cycle of the fluke parasite. Adult fluke eggs are excreted by cattle in their manure where they develop into larvae and seek out the mud snail which acts as an intermediate host. Here the parasite multiplies before leaving the snail and attaching to wet grass in the form of a cyst to be eaten by grazing animals. Once ingested the cyst hatches in the intestines of the animal before migrating to the liver where they mature

and lay eggs for the cycle to start again. The whole cycle takes about 18-20 weeks with approximately twelve weeks on the pasture and eight weeks in the animal.

In wet springs and summers snail populations rapidly multiply and become infected with fluke parasites which they then shed onto the pasture in large numbers and increase the level of infection found in cattle later in the year. For this reason fluke infestation in cattle usually shows the highest level of incidence in the autumn.

Dry or cold weather in early summer can reduce the number of snail and parasite transmissions which results in fluke contamination in the autumn being much lower. However producers must also be aware that snails infected with the fluke larvae in late summer can survive mild winters and lead to contaminated grazing the following spring. Wet areas in fields increase the risk of cattle becoming contaminated with fluke by providing a habitat for the snail intermediate host.

Where possible producers should avoid grazing these areas but when this is not possible cattle should be treated as part of a strategic dosing regime suited to the farming system. For example where cattle are out-wintered they should typically be treated twice, once during October/December period to

remove any infection that has built up over the summer months and again in April/May to remove any fluke infection they may have picked up over the winter months.

Where cattle have been treated during the housing period they should effectively be infection free at turnout. Where possible producers should aim to treat these cattle 5-8 weeks after housing with a second treatment given in the mid-summer period. This strategic treatment against fluke will help to limit the risk of subsequent egg contamination on the pasture and the level of infection picked up by grazing animals.

At present some abattoirs monitor liver

condemnations due to fluke and can provide this information to producers upon request. The provision of this valuable information has several key benefits. It identifies where there is a fluke problem within a particular herd, allows the implementation of an effective treatment plan at farm level, identifies the source of fluke damage (e.g. home bred or purchased stock), encourages treatment to improve productivity and can improve the overall health status of the herd.

It is important to note that treatment plans will vary between farms and producers should consult with their vet or farm advisor before putting in place an appropriate treatment plan to suit the individual farming system.

FQAS MART CLINICS JUNE 2014

LOCATION	DAY	DATE
Omagh	Monday	09/06/2014
Saintfield	Wednesday	11/06/2014
Markethill	Tuesday	17/06/2014
Enniskillen	Thursday	19/06/2014
Kilrea	Wednesday	25/06/2014
Ballymena	Friday	27/06/2014



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 26/05/14	Next Week 02/06/14
Prime		
U-3	322-326p	318-320p
R-3	316-320p	312-314p
O+3	310-314p	306-308p
Including bonus		
Cows		
O+3 & better	240-250p	240-250p
Steakers	140-170p	140-170p
Blues	120-130p	120-130p

Deadweight Cattle Trade

BASE quotes from the plants this week for U-3 steers and heifers ranged from 322-326p/kg, including the bonus in some plants. Some plants have indicated base quotes of 318-320p/kg for Monday while other plants have not quoted. Penalties for out of spec cattle vary between plants so producers are encouraged to shop around to ensure they get the best possible price for the cattle they are selling. Quotes for O+3 grade cows have remained steady at 240-250p/kg.

Some plants are reporting that they are fully booked with cattle for next week while others have indicated that they expect numbers to tighten over the next few weeks. Prime cattle throughput has continued to gradually increase with 7,575 prime cattle slaughtered last week. This was the highest weekly throughput for the year to date and brings the prime cattle kill to 135,120 head. This is 3.3 per cent behind the corresponding period last year when 139,519 prime cattle were slaughtered. The cow kill in NI last week was similar to previous weeks at 1,300 with the cow kill for the year to date totalling 30,656 head, 12 per cent lower than the same period in 2013.

Deadweight prime cattle prices in NI last week continued to come under pressure with the average steer price back by 5p/kg to 322.6p/kg while the R3 steer price was back by 3.3p/kg to 332.6p/kg. Average heifer prices were back by 3.5p/kg to 328.9p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back by 2.6p/kg to 335.4p/kg. Average young bull prices were back by 1.7p/kg to 303.4p/kg with the average cow price back by a similar margin to 228.8p/kg. The prices paid for prime cattle in GB have also continued to decline with the average steer price back by 3.8p/kg to 337.2p/kg. The R3 steer price in GB last week came back by 4.3p/kg to 340.1p/kg, putting the differential with NI at 7.5p/kg or £25 on a 330kg R3 grade steer carcass. There is however some variation in deadweight cattle prices across the GB regions. Deadweight prime cattle prices in the Midlands continue to be fairly similar to those being paid in NI with an R3 steer price of 330.6p/kg (332.6p/kg in NI) and an average steer price of 320.4p/kg (322.6p/kg in NI). Meanwhile the R3 steer price in Southern England last week was 324.6p/kg, 8p/kg lower than the R3 steer price in NI while the R3 heifer price was 13.2p/kg lower than the equivalent NI price at 322.2p/kg.

In Scotland last week average steer and heifer prices were back in the region of 5p/kg to 354.8p/kg and 354.5p/kg respectively. Average young bull prices in the region were back by 2p/kg to 336.5p/kg. This is well above the average young bull price in the other regions. Part of the reason for this is the lower proportion of dairy origin bulls in the Scottish slaughter mix. The average young bull price in GB last week was 305.5p/kg, 2.1p/kg higher than the 303.4p/kg paid in NI.

Strong supplies of cattle have continued to come forward for slaughter in ROI with a total kill last week of 32,821 head. The R3 steer price was 310.3p/kg last week, back 2.2p/kg from the previous week and 22.3p/kg behind the equivalent price in NI. The R3 heifer price was back by 1.2p/kg to 319.3p/kg, 16.1p/kg behind the NI R3 heifer price.

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

W/E 24/05/2013	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	331.4	319.1	362.0	353.8	347.7	352.6
	R3	332.6	310.3	355.1	342.2	330.6	340.1
	R4	328.3	309.2	356.3	358.6	335.7	348.4
	AVG	322.6	-	354.8	348.9	320.4	337.2
Heifers	U3	341.0	332.2	363.0	351.8	346.1	352.7
	R3	335.4	319.3	352.7	341.9	335.1	340.1
	R4	330.5	318.3	354.5	348.5	336.6	343.1
	AVG	320.5	302.0	335.3	329.1	308.1	320.4
Young Bulls	U3	319.6	305.0	358.4	322.1	328.5	331.0
	R3	313.5	296.1	347.6	309.5	319.6	318.8
	O3	292.7	274.5	297.1	271.4	289.7	284.2
	AVG	303.4	-	336.5	290.8	308.2	305.5
Prime Cattle Price Reported	6500	-	6597	5812	5495	4012	21916
Cows	O3	243.4	243.6	257.9	245.1	245.7	247.8
	O4	246.9	245.1	259.4	247.9	253.6	250.4
	P2	193.3	208.4	204.7	208.2	181.6	198.3
	P3	221.6	234.4	216.9	226.5	205.8	216.4
AVG	228.8	-	245.0	231.4	244.6	209.1	230.3

- Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=81.15p 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

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 24/05/14	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U-3=	335.7	341.4	327.4
U=3=	328.6	341.6	319.6
U=4=	311.2	338.7	270.0
R=3=	332.7	334.7	306.6
R=4=	326.7	329.6	290.2
O+3=	325.8	328.1	295.0
O=3=	320.5	310.0	282.2
Average	322.6	328.9	303.4

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

w/e 24/05/2014	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220- 250kg	Wgt 250- 280kg	Wgt >280kg
O+3=	-	250.0	-	256.6
O-3+	-	-	237.2	236.6
P+2+	140.0	205.0	208.4	212.9
P+3+	-	-	176.0	225.0
P-1-	155.9	147.7	140.7	-

COMMODITY PRICE

W/E 24/05/14	Price (£) per tonne / 1000litre	% weekly change
Barley	152.50	-3.6
Wheat	174.50	-0.6
Straw	17.25	-
Red Diesel	675-690	-

LATEST LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 24/05/14	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Average	From	To	Average
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	183	191	188	165	182	174
Friesians	134	148	143	102	132	117
Heifers	180	197	187	160	179	172
Beef Cows	150	200	160	110	149	128
Dairy Cows	102	129	110	75	101	88
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	176	200	188	138	175	158
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	186	201	193	140	177	160
Bullocks over 500kg	175	190	182	137	174	156
Heifers up to 450kg	190	217	206	145	189	167
Heifers over 450kg	175	192	185	138	174	154
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	280	380	330	180	278	230
Continental Heifers	200	260	230	80	198	140
Friesian Bulls	102	168	150	25	90	65
Holstein Bulls	50	100	75	2	48	25

SHEEP TRADE

LAMB QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 26/05/14	Next Week 02/06/14
Lambs	460>21kg	450-455>21kg

REPORTED LAMB PRICES - P/KG

(P/KG DW)	W/E 10/05/14	W/E 17/05/14	W/E 24/05/14
NI Liveweight	427.5	433.3	438.2
NI Deadweight	472.3	451.7	469.0
ROI Deadweight	434.4	438.4	448.4
GB Deadweight	520.1	516.2	523.7

* ROI price is lamb and hogget prices combined

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the plants this week for R3 grade lambs came back to 460p/kg up to 21kg as the week progressed with quotes expected to be in the region of 450-455p/kg up to 21kg on Monday. The number of lambs coming forward for slaughter has started to increase in line with normal seasonal trends. Improving supplies have increased lamb throughput in the NI plants with 6,521 lambs killed last week. This is an increase of 1,058 head from the previous week when 5,463 lambs were killed.

The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 469p/kg, up 17.3p/kg from the previous week while prices in GB increased by 7.5p/kg to 523.7p/kg.

This Week's Marts

THE trade in the marts this week was back on previous weeks as increased numbers of lambs start to pass through the sale rings. In Omagh last Saturday 360 lambs sold from 412-451p/kg compared to 87 lambs the previous week selling from 424-477p/kg. In Kilrea on Monday 350 lambs sold from 430-440p/kg compared to 170 lambs selling from 445-462p/kg the previous Monday. In Enniskillen on Wednesday 423 lambs sold from 378-422p/kg (avg 395p/kg) compared to 292 lambs last week selling from 428-465p/kg. The trade for cull ewes has remained fairly firm with top reported prices generally ranging from £90-100.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 24/05/14		Lambs (P/KG LW)			
To: 31/05/14		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Donemana	380	440	490	-
	Omagh	360	412	451	-
Monday	Swatragh	450	423	481	-
	Massereene	546	420	448	-
Tuesday	Kilrea	350	430	440	-
	Saintfield	462	415	460	-
Wednesday	Rathfriland	687	400	454	431
	Ballymena	255	380	440	404
	Enniskillen	423	378	422	395
	Markethill	550	400	429	418
	Armoy	135	405	425	417

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 does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any third party information provided in or included with this publication. LMC hereby disclaims any responsibility for error, omission or inaccuracy in the information, misinterpretation or any other loss, disappointment, negligence or damage caused by reliance on third party information.

Not for further publication or distribution without prior permission from LMC

