

NI SHEEP INDUSTRY KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (MARCH SNAPSHOT)

DURING March 2017 the average deadweight lamb/hogget price was 396.9p/kg, back 14.1p/kg from March 2016 levels accounting for a 3.4 per cent decline year on year. The deadweight trade in GB has followed a similar pattern with deadweight prices also back year on year. Easter is in April this year while it was in March in 2016 which will have been a key factor behind the lower deadweight prices in both regions year on year.

Meanwhile in ROI the average lamb/hogget deadweight price during March 2017 was the equivalent of 411.6p/kg. This is 6p/kg or 1.4 per cent lower than the equivalent price in March 2016. However in euro terms the deadweight lamb/hogget price during March 2017 was 476c/kg, back by 56c/kg from March 2016 levels. This accounts for an 11 per cent decline year on year. The French market is a key export destination for both UK and ROI lamb and the market there has been subdued in the run up to Easter this year with weaker demand and plentiful supplies.

Throughput of lambs/hoggets in NI during March 2017 totalled 25,423 head, a 2.5 per cent increase from March 2016 levels when 24,806 lambs/hoggets were killed in local plants. Throughput of lambs/hoggets for the first quarter of 2017 however totalled 85,103 head, a notable 19 per cent increase from 2016 levels.

The average lamb/hogget carcase weight during March 2016 was 22.9kg, up from 22.2kg during March 2016. This accounts for a 3.3 per cent increase in average carcase weights and would confirm reports from the major processors of lambs/hoggets being presented for slaughter at higher carcase weights. The volume of lamb/hogget carcasses handled by local processors during March 2017 totalled 582 tonnes, up from 551 tonnes handled during March 2016. This accounts for a six per cent increase in throughput year on year.

Ewe and ram slaughterings in local plants totalled 1,714 head during March 2016, up slightly from year earlier

levels. Meanwhile the average carcase weight of ewes and rams slaughtered also recorded an increase, up by 0.6kg year on year to 28.5kg in March 2017.

Exports of sheep from NI to ROI for direct slaughter during March 2017 totalled 36,047 head, almost unchanged from the 36,145 head exported during March 2016. Total exports of sheep from NI to ROI for direct slaughter during the first quarter of 2017 totalled 102,537 head, back from 107,962 head exported during the first quarter of 2016.

During March 2017 the euro traded strongly against sterling with an average exchange rate of €1 = 86.6p. This was a 10.9 per cent increase from March 2016 levels when €1 = 78p. A stronger euro benefits the NI sheep industry in two ways. Firstly it makes NI origin lambs/hoggets more attractive to major processors in ROI and secondly it makes it easier for NI processors to secure market outlets on the valuable EU market due to increased cost competitiveness.

Table 1: NI Sheep Industry Key Performance Indicators (March Snapshot)

	Mar-16	Mar-17	% Change
Sheep Prices (p/kg)			
Average Deadweight Price NI (Combined)	411.0	396.9	-3.4%
Average Liveweight Price NI (Combined)	374.9	361.6	-3.5%
Average Weekly Price GB (D/W) (Combined)	429.4	396.3	-7.7%
Average Weekly Price ROI (D/W)	417.6	411.6	-1.4%
Slaughterings			
Total Hoggets & Lambs Slaughterings (Head)	24,806	25,423	+2.5%
Total Ewes & Rams Slaughterings (Head)	1,689	1,714	+1.5%
Average Hogget & Lambs Carcase Weight (kg)	22.2	22.9	+3.3%
Average Ewe & Rams Carcase Weight (kg)	27.9	28.5	+2.1%
Trade (Head)			
Live Imports for Direct Slaughter	0	0	-
Live Exports for Direct Slaughter	36,145	36,047	-0.3%
Euro / Stg Exchange Rate (€ / £)	78.0	86.6	+10.9%
All NI Figures Unless Otherwise Stated			

NI BVD VIRUS ERADICATION PROGRAMME UPDATE

THE BVD Eradication Scheme Order (NI) came into effect on the 01 March 2016 at the request of the NI cattle industry, making the tagging and testing of all new born calves for BVD compulsory. Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD) is a production disease that impacts mainly at farm level and is endemic in Northern Ireland. The aim of the scheme is to reduce and ultimately eradicate BVD in Northern Ireland.

The presence of a BVD Persistently Infected (PI) animal in a breeding herd will, in one year, increase the risk of BVD PI calves being born in the following year. The early removal of these highly infectious animals is therefore critical to the success of BVD eradication.

To incentivise the removal of these BVD PI calves DAERA announced the opening of the BVD PI Removal Incentivisation Scheme which is being funded using exceptional adjustment aid. The scheme came into operation on the 01 February 2017 and will operate until 30 September 2017.

LMC are the delivery agent for the PI Removal Incentivisation Scheme on behalf of DAERA and as such may pay financial assistance to herd keepers as

an incentive for the humane destruction and disposal of BVD PI calves from their herds.

For an animal to be eligible for the compensatory payment it must have tested positive for the presence of BVD and have been confirmed dead on APHIS between the 01 February 2017 and the 30 September 2017. There are also a number of other eligibility criteria which must be fulfilled before payment can be awarded, further details of which can be found on the LMC, AHWNI and DAERA websites.

For calves that meet all of the eligibility criteria of the scheme the rate of compensatory payment is determined using the calf's breed and sex information as held on APHIS. Beef calves receive a payment of £160, dairy females a payment of £130 and dairy males a payment of £50. Farm businesses can claim payment for up to six test positive animals during the lifetime of the scheme.

On a positive note 70 per cent of the claims received and processed by LMC to date under the BVD PI Removal Incentivisation Scheme have been successful and payments have been distributed for these animals over the past few weeks. For the other 30 per

cent of claims there have been a variety of reasons identified which made them ineligible for payment. Of the reasons identified there are two which have occurred most frequently and that can be addressed by producers before any subsequent claims are submitted.

For those claims deemed ineligible 44 per cent of the calves did not have a date of death recorded on APHIS online or notified to DAERA using an MC1 form within seven days of the animals declared date of death. This was the most common reason identified for ineligibility for payment under the scheme to date. Producers should be aware that it is a legal requirement for producers to notify DAERA of bovine deaths within this timeframe. It should also be noted that it is the responsibility of the keeper to notify any deaths to DAERA and not the responsibility of the disposal agent or rendering plant.

During the lifetime of the scheme to date 36 per cent of ineligible claims were for calves that had not been humanely destroyed within the timeframes required by the scheme. For animals to be deemed eligible for payment a date of death needs to be recorded on APHIS within four weeks of

the keeper receiving a positive test result for BVD. Where a keeper opts to get a calf retested the date of death must be recorded on APHIS within six weeks from the date the keeper received their first positive test result.

Making a claim

Producers who may have an animal eligible for payment under the BVD PI Removal Incentivisation Scheme will receive a claim form from AHWNI following a positive test for BVD. Producers are encouraged to complete this form and return it to LMC for processing once the animal in question has been humanely destroyed and had its death registered on APHIS. Claim forms are also available on the LMC and AHWNI websites.

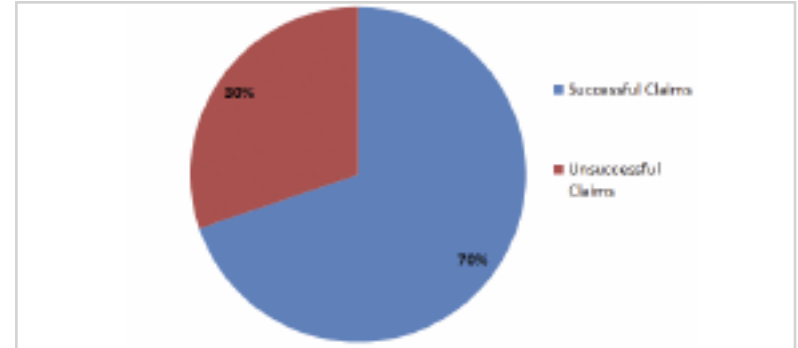
SCHEME CONTACT DETAILS

Queries relating to making a claim and for further information regarding scheme eligibility should contact LMC on 028 9263 3000.

Queries relating to the testing of animals and accessing test results should be directed to AHWNI on 028 7963 9333.

Queries relating to recording and confirming birth and death information on APHIS should be directed to the DAERA helpline on 0300 200 7840.

Figure 1: Breakdown of claims for compensation received and processed by LMC to date under the BVD PI Removal Incentivisation Scheme



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

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WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 10/04/17	Next Week 17/04/17
Prime		
U-3	342 - 348p	344 - 350p
R-3	336 - 342p	338 - 344p
O+3	330 - 336p	332 - 338p
P+3	280 - 296p	282 - 298p
Including bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3 & better	250 - 254p	250 - 254p
Steakers	140 - 170p	140 - 170p
Blues	120 - 130p	120 - 130p

Cow quotes vary depending on weight and grade.
Pricing policies vary from plant to plant. Producers are advised to check pricing policies before presenting cattle for slaughter.

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 08/04/17	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	354.0	355.7	341.9
R3	350.3	349.7	346.2
O+3	342.3	341.0	330.5

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 08/04/17	Wgt <220kg	Wgt 220-250kg	Wgt 250-280kg	Wgt >280kg
P1	165.9	175.8	184.0	215.8
P2	180.4	201.6	226.4	236.7
P3	193.7	216.5	235.2	247.0
O3	220.0	233.9	251.9	263.6
O4	-	252.0	259.5	266.5
R3	290.0	-	-	281.8

Deadweight Cattle Trade

QUOTES from the major NI processing plants for U-3 grade prime cattle this week remained fairly steady with most plants quoting 346-348p/kg. Similar quotes are expected for early next week however with reports of higher prices available producers should use these base quotes as a starting point for negotiation. Quotes from the plants for good quality O+3 cows have also remained steady at 250-254p/kg with a similar trade expected early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in NI last week totalled 6,424 head, an increase of 547 head from the previous week and similar to the corresponding week in 2016. Cow throughput last week totalled 1,497 head, the second consecutive week in which the NI cow kill has been under 1,500 head with reports indicating a tightening in the availability of cows for slaughter.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 313 head, the highest weekly import of cattle for direct slaughter since late February 2016. This accounted for five per cent of prime cattle throughput last week. A total of 89 cows were also imported from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants, the highest weekly import since July 2016. Meanwhile exports from NI for direct slaughter in ROI last week totalled 109 head and these were predominantly cows. Imports of cattle from GB last week for direct slaughter in local plants were similar to the previous week with 37 prime cattle and 103 cows imported. No cattle were exported from NI for slaughter in GB plants last week.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in NI last week generally remained steady with the average steer price almost unchanged at 342.9p/kg while the R3 steer price increased marginally to 353.5p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week was back by 1.2p/kg to 344.3p/kg while the R3 heifer price increased by 0.6p/kg to 351.7p/kg. The average cow price in NI last week recorded a decrease of almost a penny to 241.5p/kg while the O3 cow price was up by 2.2p/kg to 262p/kg.

In GB last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle also remained relatively steady with the average steer price almost unchanged at 345.2p/kg while the R3 steer price increased marginally to 356.3p/kg. This puts the differential in R3 steer prices between NI and GB at just 2.8p/kg or £10 on a 350kg carcass. In the corresponding week in 2016 the differential was 14.7p/kg or £51 on a 350kg carcass. The average heifer price in GB last week was up by 0.7p/kg to 348p/kg while the R3 heifer price was almost unchanged at 356p/kg. The differential in R3 heifer prices last week between NI and GB was 4.3p/kg or £14 on a 320kg carcass. In the same week in 2016 the differential was also notably wider at 15.4p/kg.

Reports from ROI last week indicated steady deadweight cattle prices in sterling terms however a strengthening in euro terms. The R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 333.8p/kg, almost unchanged from the previous week while the R3 heifer price was also almost unchanged at the equivalent of 351.7p/kg. The O3 cow price in ROI last week remained steady at the equivalent of 273.7p/kg.

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

W/E 08/04/2017	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	354.8	342.3	362.8	354.9	355.0	357.8
	R3	353.5	333.8	363.1	350.9	351.1	356.3
	R4	350.8	334.7	364.5	360.0	347.5	357.1
	O3	340.8	318.6	338.9	320.5	323.9	324.2
	AVG	342.9	-	359.6	344.0	336.4	339.6
Heifers	U3	357.3	356.4	374.0	359.6	364.9	366.4
	R3	351.7	343.4	361.8	347.9	352.8	356.0
	R4	349.5	344.3	363.7	355.4	350.7	356.1
	O3	343.6	328.3	336.9	328.6	331.0	332.3
	AVG	344.3	-	361.1	346.4	341.5	340.6
Young Bulls	U3	342.3	336.6	353.9	346.7	348.1	348.5
	R3	346.7	325.6	342.9	338.7	334.2	337.4
	O3	326.9	311.4	307.1	298.4	308.6	306.0
	AVG	327.4	-	323.3	320.7	319.5	326.7
Prime Cattle Price Reported	5431	-	6700	7429	7027	4687	25843
Cows	O3	262.0	273.7	266.0	259.4	261.5	260.9
	O4	266.3	275.7	266.7	258.7	260.8	260.4
	P2	224.0	247.0	208.4	222.4	206.1	211.1
	P3	243.0	267.5	227.5	243.2	223.1	231.3
	AVG	241.5	-	253.7	235.6	223.1	229.3

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.51p 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 08/04/17	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	201	212	205	180	200	190
Friesians	145	156	150	120	140	132
Heifers	200	213	207	170	199	185
Beef Cows	136	214	150	105	135	120
Dairy Cows	109	143	117	70	108	90
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	225	277	250	200	224	212
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	210	250	225	180	209	195
Bullocks over 500kg	209	228	219	175	208	192
Heifers up to 450kg	200	250	225	170	199	185
Heifers over 450kg	202	225	213	165	200	185
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	240	340	290	130	238	185
Continental Heifers	200	340	265	100	198	155
Friesian Bulls	100	160	130	60	98	80
Holstein Bulls	75	155	115	10	72	40

SHEEP TRADE

SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 10/04/17	Next Week 17/04/17
Hoggets	405-410p > 22kg	405-410p > 22kg

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 25/03/17	W/E 01/04/17	W/E 08/04/17
NI Hoggets L/W	362.7	363.2	359.9
NI Hoggets D/W	397.9	400.8	406.5
GB Hoggets D/W	399.1	414.0	417.1
ROI D/W	406.5	418.5	424.1

Deadweight Sheep Trade

QUOTES from the major NI processors this week for R3 grade hoggets ranged from 405-410p/kg with plants paying up to 22kg. Similar quotes are expected for early next week. Some of the plants are killing small numbers of spring lambs with quotes in the region of 460p/kg up to 21kg. A total of 5,688 hoggets/lambs were killed in local plants last week compared to a total of 4,054 head killed locally in the same week last year. This accounts for a 29 per cent increase year on year. Exports of sheep to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 6,421 head, an increase from the 5,733 head exported to ROI in the corresponding week last year. The average deadweight hogget price in NI last week was 406.5p/kg, a 5.7p/kg increase from the previous week.

This week's marts

THERE was a slightly quieter trade across some of the marts this week with smaller numbers of hoggets passing through the sale rings compared to the previous week. A small number of spring lambs have also passed through some of the marts this week. In Swatragh last Saturday 550 hoggets sold from 328-411p/kg compared to 600 hoggets last week selling from 330-421p/kg. In Massereene on Monday 771 hoggets sold from 340-390p/kg compared to 1,025 hoggets last week selling from 360-395p/kg. In Ballymena this week 1,060 hoggets sold from 330-383p/kg (avg 345p/kg) compared to 1,196 hoggets last week selling from 335-400p/kg (avg 350p/kg). The ewe trade remained firm this week with a top reported price of £136 in Omagh last Saturday.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS

From: 07/04/17		Hoggets (P/KG LW)			
To: 13/04/17		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	564	364	409	-
	Swatragh	550	328	411	-
Monday	Kilrea	350	356	395	-
	Massereene	771	340	390	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	297	350	423	-
Wednesday	Ballymena	1060	330	383	345
	Enniskillen	395	338	372	-
	Markethill	350	330	385	-
	Armoy	442	350	408	-

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