

# STRONG NI DEADWEIGHT CATTLE TRADE CONTINUES

Base quotes this week from the major processing plants in Northern Ireland for in spec U-3 grading steers and heifers ranged from 384-394p/kg with the majority of the processors quoting in the upper range of this scale. These base quotes have firmed in recent weeks and remain well ahead of

previous years during the same period. While some cattle are bought at these quoted base prices they generally act as a starting point for negotiation between the individual producer and the processor.

With base quotes improving in recent

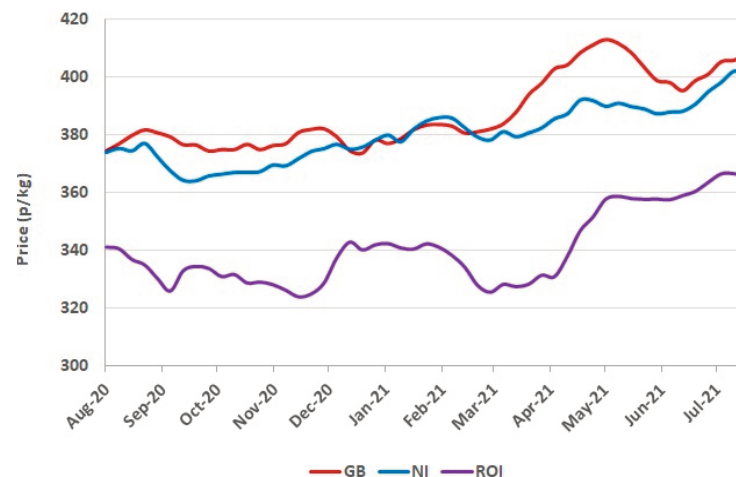
weeks the prices paid in Northern Ireland have also been steadily improving however these declined last week after six consecutive weeks of increasing. Last week's R3 steer price in NI was 401.1p/kg which has decreased slightly from the previous week. This brings the differential between last week's R3 steer price and the same price last year to 29.4p/kg which equates to an additional £103 on a 350kg steer carcase.

The R3 steer price has been used for comparative purposes as they are the most commonly price reported type of prime cattle in NI. Analysis of R3 steer prices therefore provides to most representative indicator of the overall trade for prime cattle in the region.

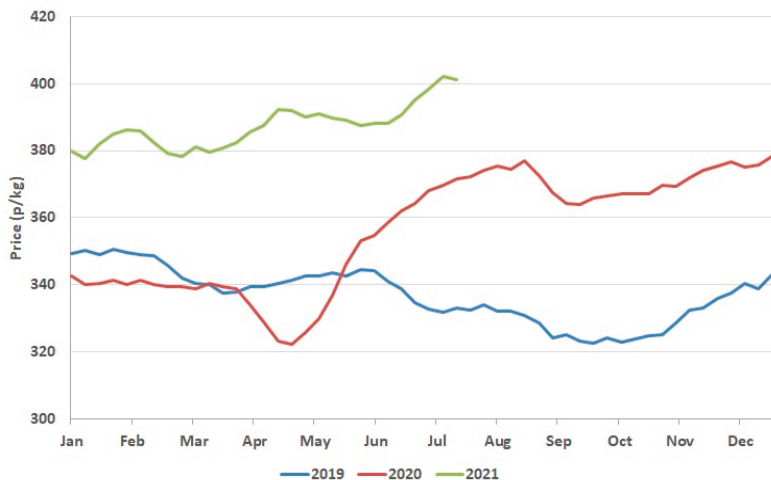
## Great Britain

The deadweight cattle trade in GB has been ahead of NI during the majority of 2021 to date with the highest differential between these two regions this year reported in early May at 23p/kg as outlined in **Figure 2**. The R3 steer price in Great Britain increased

**Figure 2: Weekly R3 steer prices in NI, GB and ROI during the last 52 week period.**  
Source: LMC, DAFM, AHDB



**Figure 1: Weekly R3 steer price in Northern Ireland during 2021, 2020 and 2019.**  
Source: LMC Deadweight Cattle Price Reporting



this week from the previous week to 408p/kg. This is up 2.2p/kg from the previous week when the R3 steer price was 405.8p/kg. This brings the differential between Northern Ireland and Great Britain to 6.9p/kg which equates to £24 on a 350kg steer carcase.

## Republic of Ireland

The deadweight cattle trade in the Republic of Ireland continues well below Northern Ireland with last week's R3 steer price the equivalent of 365.8p/kg. This price is 35.3p/kg behind NI equating to £124 on a 350kg carcase.

# PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT REPORTED FOR NI PRIME CATTLE

Analysis of deadweight cattle in NI has indicated the average steer carcase weight during the last six weeks has remained similar to the same period in 2020. During the six weeks ending 17 July 2021 the average steer carcase weight in NI was 360.3kg. This is a slight increase from the same period in 2020 when the average carcase weight of steers was 360kg.

While the average steer carcase weight has increased the average age of slaughter during this period has

declined. During the six week period the average age of slaughter for steers in NI was 24.5 months which is a 0.6 month decline from the same period last year.

The average carcase weight of processed heifers in NI has improved in recent weeks relative to the same period last year. During the six weeks ending 17 July 2021 the average carcase weight of heifers was 326.2kg. This is an increase from the same period in 2020 when the average

carcase weight of heifers was 321.9kg.

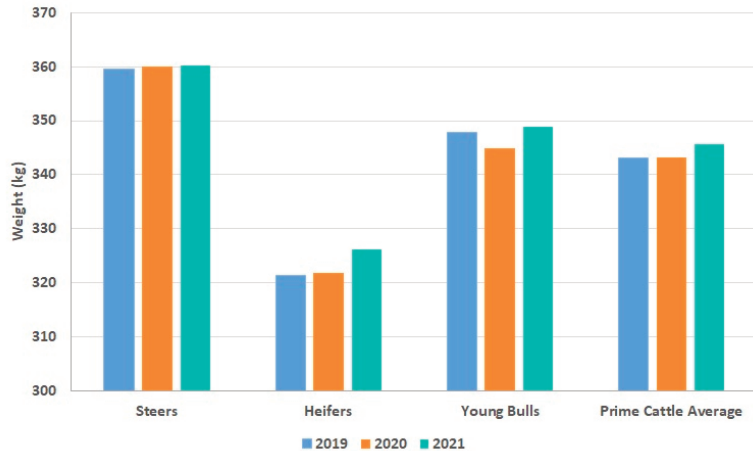
Similar to steers, the average age of slaughter for heifers in NI has decreased during the last six weeks to 25.1 months. This is back 0.4 months from the same period in 2020.

This analysis indicates producers are more efficiently getting cattle to slaughter weights at younger ages which is favourable as the agricultural industry looks for ways to improve productivity and focuses on becoming more sustainable.

The average slaughter weight of young bulls has also increased during the last six weeks to 348.9kg. This is up just over 4kg from the corresponding six weeks in 2020 when the average carcase weight of young bulls processed in NI was 344.9kg.

However young bulls have not followed the same downward trend in average age of slaughter as steers and heifers. During the last six weeks the average age of slaughter of these animals in NI plants was 15.2 months which is up slightly from the same period last year when the average age of slaughter was 15 months.

Figure 3: Average prime cattle weights during the last 12 weeks compared with the relative period in 2020 and 2019. Source: DAERA



# GREATER NI PRIME CATTLE THROUGHPUT

Prime cattle throughput in local processing plants last week totalled 5,220 head. This takes prime cattle throughput in NI during the last 12 weeks to 77,362 head. This is an increase of 9.8 per cent from the corresponding 12 week period last year and a 1.8 per cent increase from 2019.

It should be noted these figures compare back to the period in 2020 in which COVID-19 restrictions were in place which caused a major disruption

to the foodservice market and created difficulties for local processors in finding market outlets for beef.

This increase in cattle throughput is supported by figures from APHIS which have indicated an increase of five per cent in cattle aged between 18-24 months for beef production on NI farms at the end of June 2021 when compared to the same period in 2020. These cattle numbers have also increased by 5.8 per cent relative to the same period in 2019.

Figure 4: Weekly prime cattle throughput in NI processing plants during 2021, 2020 and 2019. Source: DAERA



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# WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



## CATTLE TRADE

### NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 19/07/21	Next Week 26/07/21
<b>Prime</b>		
U-3	384 - 394p	380 - 394p
R-3	378 - 388p	374 - 388p
O+3	372 - 382p	368 - 382p
P+3	318 - 332p	314 - 332p
	Including bonus where applicable	
<b>Cows</b>		
O+3	275 - 302p	275 - 302p

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.

### Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for in spec U-3 grade steers and heifers remained steady this week ranging from 384-394p/kg across the local plants. The cow trade has also continued to remain steady this week with quotes for good quality O+3 cows ranging from 275-302p/kg with similar quotes expected for early next week.

Prime cattle throughput in NI plants last week totalled 5,220 head, a decrease of 923 head from the previous week. However this is an increase of 260 head when compared to the 4,960 prime cattle processed in the same week in 2020. Meanwhile a total of 1,396 cows were processed in NI plants last week, a decrease of 565 cows from the previous week and 234 head less than the 1,630 cows processed in NI plants in the same week in 2020.

Cattle imports from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants last week consisted of 263 prime cattle and 106 cows. Meanwhile exports from NI for direct slaughter continue at very low levels with one heifer, 33 cows and one bull exported to plants in ROI while no cattle were exported to GB for direct slaughter.

The NI deadweight trade for prime cattle last week remained strong with increases across many grades. The average steer price was 393.5p/kg, up a penny from the previous week while the R3 steer price was back just over a penny to 401.1p/kg. Meanwhile the average heifer price in NI last week was up by 1.6p/kg to 396.1p/kg with the R3 heifer price decreasing by 0.4p/kg to 402.3p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week increased by 3.5p/kg to 386.7p/kg with the R3 young bull price up by 1.5p/kg to 394.3p/kg. The cow trade in NI reported a strong increase in the average cow price up by almost 7p/kg from the previous week to 300p/kg while the O3 cow price was up by 0.6p/kg to 315.2p/kg.

In GB last week the majority of deadweight prime cattle prices strengthened from the previous week. The average steer price was up marginally to 401.2p/kg with the R3 steer price up 2.2p/kg to 408p/kg. This puts the GB R3 steer price at almost 7p/kg above the same price in NI. The average heifer price in GB last week increased by 1.4p/kg to 401.3p/kg while the R3 heifer price was up by 2.4p/kg to 408.6p/kg. This puts the GB R3 heifer price 6.3p/kg higher than the same price in NI. Meanwhile the GB average cow price decreased by 0.6p/kg to 291.7p/kg last week with the O3 cow price back by a similar margin to 313.9p/kg.

In ROI last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle reported increases with most grades. However a weakening in the euro against sterling last week has resulted in decreases in prices from the previous week. The R3 steer price and R3 heifer price in ROI last week both decreased by the equivalent of 0.8p/kg to 365.8p/kg and 369.5p/kg respectively. Meanwhile the O3 cow price in ROI last week remained steady at 300.9p/kg which places it 14.3p/kg less than the same price in NI. This puts the differential in value of a 300kg O3 grading cow carcass at £43 between ROI and NI.

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

	W/E 17/07/21	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	402.4	373.7	414.4	412.1	414.0	417.3	414.3
	R3	401.1	365.8	414.5	406.2	406.1	406.6	408.0
	R4	402.9	367.5	418.3	407.0	406.5	406.5	410.8
	O3	391.9	354.7	398.1	391.5	384.9	385.5	388.7
	AVG	393.5	-	412.3	400.0	397.0	396.1	401.2
Heifers	U3	407.2	380.5	423.0	415.3	417.8	414.0	418.3
	R3	402.3	369.5	415.4	408.8	406.1	405.6	408.6
	R4	400.3	370.5	417.6	407.0	408.5	405.0	410.9
	O3	395.6	361.8	395.1	393.3	384.3	386.8	388.9
	AVG	396.1	-	413.3	400.8	395.7	394.2	401.3
Young Bulls	U3	397.6	366.3	411.0	406.7	408.2	404.9	409.0
	R3	394.3	355.0	408.8	398.2	401.8	399.0	403.9
	O3	376.0	337.4	386.5	367.6	373.4	386.7	376.4
	AVG	386.7	-	406.8	395.8	392.5	391.5	397.5
	Prime Cattle Price Reported	4242	-	5983	6425	7154	4386	23948
Cows	O3	315.2	300.9	316.7	311.2	315.8	313.1	313.9
	O4	318.9	301.2	322.2	317.1	316.2	314.0	316.8
	P2	280.7	273.1	281.0	264.5	269.2	278.4	271.8
	P3	294.9	292.3	286.1	273.8	288.8	293.0	287.3
	AVG	300.0	-	313.4	295.8	287.2	285.7	291.7

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=85.35p 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 10/07/21	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
		From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
<b>Finished Cattle (p/kg)</b>							
Steers		250	265	255	215	249	230
Friesians		190	204	196	170	189	186
Heifers		232	263	239	212	231	220
Beef Cows		190	243	201	148	189	168
Dairy Cows		136	156	142	114	135	125
<b>Store Cattle (p/kg)</b>							
Bullocks up to 400kg		250	308	270	220	249	235
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg		225	265	250	200	229	215
Bullocks over 500kg		220	255	230	185	219	202
Heifers up to 450kg		235	274	250	200	234	217
Heifers over 450kg		235	292	245	210	234	220
<b>Dropped Calves (£/head)</b>							
Continental Bulls up to 3 months		425	680	480	320	420	375
Continental Heifers up to 2 months		350	580	425	240	345	295
Friesian Bulls up to 2 months		155	190	175	80	150	115
Holstein Bulls up to 3 months		125	160	145	25	120	75

### REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 17/07/21	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	402.5	407.3	397.3
R3	399.2	401.3	394.4
O+3	392.9	396.2	382.4

\*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

### REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 17/07/21	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	209.6	221.7	230.9	249.7
P2	229.5	261.5	278.6	288.2
P3	251.6	271.0	294.1	299.5
O3	230.0	293.1	305.5	316.6
O4	-	286.1	309.4	319.7
R3	-	-	-	334.2

# SHEEP TRADE

## NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 19/07/21	Next Week 26/07/21
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	475 - 500p	465 - 470p

## REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 03/07/21	W/E 10/07/21	W/E 17/07/21
NI L/W Lambs	442.3	493.3	436.0
NI D/W Lambs	482.7	510.5	505.4
GB D/W Lambs	518.8	546.4	548.5
ROI D/W	530.1	531.1	540.4

## Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes for R3 grade lambs came under pressure mid week with the major NI plants quoting from 460-480p/kg up to 21kg. Quotes for early next week are expected to range from 465-470p/kg up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in local plants last week totalled 7,948 head well behind the previous week however this up 871 lambs when compared to the same week last year. Exports of lambs to ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 6,886 head, an increase of 2,053 head from the previous week when 4,833 lambs were exported to ROI for direct slaughter. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was back just over 5p/kg from the previous week to 505.4p/kg. In the same week in 2020 the NI deadweight lamb price was 466.6p/kg. In ROI last week the deadweight lamb price was the equivalent of 540.4p/kg, up 9.3p/kg from the previous week.

## Liveweight Sheep Trade

Strong numbers have passed through the marts this week with trade well back when compared to previous weeks. In Omagh last Saturday 785 lambs sold from 439-461p/kg. In Massereene on Monday 1,183 lambs sold from 410-435p/kg (avg 434p/kg) compared to 1,145 lambs selling from 465-545p/kg (avg 479p/kg). In Enniskillen on Wednesday 802 lambs sold from 412-506p/kg while in Markethill 750 lambs sold from 410-466p/kg compared to 1,250 lambs last week selling from 435-457p/kg. Top reported prices for cull ewes remain firm this week ranging from £128-£180 across the marts.

## LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 17/07/21		Lambs			
To: 22/07/21		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	785	439	461	-
	Swatragh	1700	430	469	-
Monday	Kilrea	600	408	467	-
	Massereene	1183	410	435	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	1012	400	447	-
	Rathfriland	1160	400	493	434
Wednesday	Ballymena	2602	400	465	413
	Enniskillen	802	412	506	-
	Armoy	475	419	476	-
	Markethill	750	410	466	-

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