

TRUTH ABOUT BEEF 'AD' CAMPAIGN HITS OUR TELEVISION SCREENS ONCE AGAIN

The Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) has confirmed that the third burst of the 'Good Honest Food - Truth about Beef' advertising campaign has launched this week. The campaign has been specifically developed to help consumers make informed decisions, where the purchase of beef and lamb are concerned, by providing the facts on health, provenance and sustainability. According to LMC's Marketing and Communications Manager, Lauren Patterson, the initiative will act to promote the many beneficial attributes of Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured (NIFQA) beef and lamb that consumers have come to expect.

She added: "We know from independent research that those who have picked up on the first two instalments of the campaign are significantly more likely to purchase NIFQA beef and lamb.

"Consumers have also consistently confirmed that NIFQA beef and lamb are nutritious, they are produced in a very sustainable manner and that they are both of the highest quality." The travelogue style of the Commission's latest 'ad' campaign follows local Chef James Devine as he travels around Northern Ireland, meeting experts Dr. Steven Morrison and Dr. Ruth Price amongst others, to ask the questions our consumers want answers to.

Steven is head of Sustainable Livestock Production at AFBI Hillsborough while Ruth is the Clinical Trials Manager in the School of Biomedical Sciences at Ulster University. The new advertising campaign will be live for the next three months across television, radio, and on a

wide range of outdoor sites. It will also have a heavy presence on digital and social channels.

Lauren Patterson again: "It is important that we increase our presence on social channels such as Facebook and TikTok, as well as on the increasingly popular digital streaming platforms, including Spotify. "We know that this approach will allow us to reach consumers of all demographics. "It will also build positively on the success achieved courtesy of the campaign's first two tranches. According to Lauren, January is often a time when the food industry and the meat sector in particular, becomes a target for negative press.

This is often backed by false claims, and is specifically put into the public domain at a time when consumers are considering changing or adapting their eating behaviours and lifestyles. "It is hugely important that we are proactive in leading the conversation with impartial facts and can show consumers the benefits of including NIFQA beef and lamb as part of a healthy balanced diet," Lauren stressed

The ongoing 'Good Honest Food - Truth About Beef' campaign will be shown on Channel 4, UTV, Sky Adsmart. It will be broadcast on Cool FM, Downtown, Downtown Country, U105, Q radio. Outdoor activity will be placed across the province and in the areas of local retailers. By their very nature, advertising campaigns are expensive to both produce and fund across a range of media outlets. The good news for local livestock farmers is that the first two tranches of the Commission's 'Good Honest Food' campaign

have registered very positively with consumers here. And it's all about the figures.

The most recent meat consumption trends contained within a survey commissioned by LMC indicate that all the relevant consumer metrics, where red meat consumption trends are concerned, are moving in the right direction. Specifically, they confirm that 2021 was marked by a decrease in reports of consumers describing themselves as vegan or vegetarian, relative to the previous year. Similar to 2019 trends, only 1% reported to be vegan.

In addition, the regularity of beef purchasing in Northern Ireland increased during 2021, compared to 2020. Lamb consumption remained the same with 60% of respondents consuming or purchasing lamb at least once a week. Lauren Patterson confirmed an extremely high level of awareness, where Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured (NIFQA) beef and lamb are concerned. She said: "The latest figures confirm that 80% of all consumers in Northern Ireland recognise the NIFQA logo. This is a notable uplift on previous years, with awareness strongest in the 25-65 age group."

Lauren added: "Encouragingly, 83% of consumers are aware of the NIFQA label on beef products, which is on the increase. Of these respondents, 90% were also aware of the 'truth about beef' campaign. The significance of this relationship is extremely encouraging and it is promising to see that LMC marketing and communication activities continue to positively impact a large proportion of our local

consumers." According to the Commission's Marketing and Communications Manager, there is a significant increase in the percentage of consumers always trying to buy beef and lamb with the NIFQA logo on it, compared to 2020. Consistent with 2020 trends, almost three quarters of consumers (73%) were in agreement that NIFQA beef is a natural source of vitamins and minerals with two thirds (68%) believing that NIFQA beef has health benefits.

Some three in five respondents agreed that the farm management protocols espoused by the Northern Ireland Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme, resulted in NIFQA beef that was kind to the environment, increasing from the 57% recorded last year. Lauren concluded: "Encouragingly, 82% of the people taking part in the survey regarded NIFQA beef as a high quality meat while 75% felt that it is a naturally produced food. These results are hugely reassuring with consumers showing outward support of our local NIFQA beef and lamb farmers, who should be proud to produce world class beef and lamb."

Image 1: Good Honest Food campaign photo with James Divine and Pearson Morris



BVD REQUIREMENTS FOR FUTURE CATTLE EXPORTS FROM NI ARE ABOUT TO CHANGE

Animal Health and Welfare NI (AHWNI) is confirming that additional BVD control measures are likely to be required shortly for farmers from Northern Ireland exporting breeding cattle or cattle to be finished to the Republic of Ireland (ROI).

These measures have been introduced in EU legislation to promote the competitiveness and trading of animals by preventing and eradicating specific animal diseases, including BVD.

The changes will be implemented because of the remarkable progress that has been made in the ROI's BVD Programme and the fact that the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine (DAFM) in Dublin intends to apply for official recognition of the Programme in 2022.

Levels of BVD have fallen dramatically in the ROI, thanks to a suite of measures that have been introduced over the past few years, notably financial supports, herd restrictions, veterinary herd investigations and follow up testing.

In contrast, overall progress in reducing BVD in Northern Ireland over the past year has levelled off, with a small increase in numbers of initial

positive results detected since February 2021.

Once the ROI Programme is approved, cattle from Northern Ireland may need to have additional blood testing carried out within particular time frames or they may need to spend 21 days in approved quarantine facilities, depending on whether the exporting herd is given a BVD-free herd status.

To attain BVD-free herd status, one option under the EU Regulation is that the establishment must not have had a confirmed case of BVD in the previous 18 months and that all cattle must have a direct or indirect negative status as a result of virus antigen testing. If BVD-free herd status is recognised in exporting herds, then the pre-export requirements are likely to be less significant and to incur lower costs. Almost 75% of all NI herds meet criteria previously set for BVD low risk herds.

There is a growing need for herd level BVD statuses to be introduced, herd owners can benefit, so that the current programme can be enhanced and to allow official EU recognition of the programme to be applied for at the appropriate time.

Industry, through the BVD Implementation Group, continues to make requests to DAERA for a range of measures to be provided under current and new legislative provisions. BVD vaccinated animals will still be permitted to move until BVD Free Status is achieved (possibly in 2023) by the authorities in ROI.

However, once country-level freedom is achieved, BVD vaccinated animals will no longer be eligible for export. According to AHWNI, other restrictions on vaccination protocols may be introduced. It is important to be aware that vaccination is a vital part of disease control at present in many herds. BVD vaccination can prevent transplacental infection of the foetus with the BVD virus and is an effective method of preventing spillover of the virus into subsequent crops of calves.

BVD vaccination should not be stopped without consulting with the farm's veterinary practitioner, to talk through any risks to the herd that may still be present, such as the risk that the virus is circulating in the herd and the chance that the BVD virus could be introduced on to the farm.

Livestock and Meat Commission Chief Executive

Ian Stevenson reiterated the need for farmers to take action to deal with persistently infected cattle.

He commented: "It makes no sense for farmers to keep Persistently Infected (PI) cattle within their herds. The only option is to have these euthanized and disposed of. They represent a significant threat of disease spread and must be removed from the system. "The plants will no longer slaughter PI cattle and those farmers deciding to retain these cattle will be suspended from membership of the Beef and Lamb Farm Quality Assurance Scheme until the matter is rectified.

"However, if it turns out that voluntary measures do not resolve the PI-related issue then I see no reason why statutory instruments cannot be introduced to deal with the problem. It is also clear that farmers can only reduce the risks that are within their control and it is therefore critical that DAERA acts on the BVD Implementation Group requests for additional statutory instruments without delay"

FQAS Helpline

If you have had a recent inspection and need help and advice to rectify any non-conformances, contact the FQAS helpline:
Tel: 028 9263 3024

Answerphone Service

Factory base quotes & Mart results
Updated 5pm Daily
Tel: 028 9263 3011

Text Service

Free weekly base quotes sent to your mobile phone
Email: bulletin@lmcni.com
Tel: 028 9263 3000

WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS



CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 10/01/22	Next Week 17/01/22
Prime		
U-3	388 - 394p	388 - 394p
R-3	382 - 388p	382 - 388p
O+3	376 - 382p	376 - 382p
P+3	320 - 332p	320 - 332p
Including bonus where applicable		
Cows		
O+3	260 - 290p	260 - 290p

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 prime cattle continued to range from 388-394p/kg this week with similar quotes for both steers and heifers expected early next week. Quotes for O+3 grade cows continue to range from 260-290p/kg. With such a range in quotes, producers are encouraged to shop around and use these quotes as a starting point for negotiation.

Prime cattle throughput in local plants last week totalled 5,827, up 682 from the previous week when 5,145 cattle were processed locally. In the corresponding week in 2021, cattle throughput totalled 6,040 head. Cow throughput in local plants last week totalled 1,655 head, up 522 head from the previous week. However, this is back 325 head when compared to the same week last year when 1,980 cows were processed locally.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter in NI last week consisted of 72 head with 24 cows also imported. Meanwhile there were no cattle imported from GB for direct slaughter locally last week. Exports from NI to ROI consisted of five prime cattle and 45 cows with no cattle exported from NI to GB for direct slaughter.

The deadweight trade for prime cattle in NI last week generally improved from the previous week. The average NI steer price and R3 steer price both held firm and remained unchanged from the previous week's prices to 396.4p/kg and 405.5p/kg respectively. The average NI heifer price remained steady at 397.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price decreased by 0.9p/kg to 404.4p/kg. In the corresponding week in 2021 the R3 heifer price was 377.3p/kg, 27.1p/kg behind current levels. The average young bull price in NI last week decreased by 2.2p/kg to 378.8p/kg while the R3 young bull price increased by 3.4p/kg to 393.4p/kg. Meanwhile the NI deadweight cow trade reported a mixed performance last week with the average cow price back 6.9p/kg to 271.3p/kg and the O3 cow price back by a penny to 298.8p/kg.

In GB last week the average steer price decreased marginally to 409p/kg while the R3 steer price was back by 0.2p/kg to 415.5p/kg. This places the R3 steer price in GB at 10p/kg above the equivalent price in NI. Last week the average heifer price was back 1.8p/kg to 407.5p/kg while the R3 heifer price as up 0.5p/kg to 415p/kg. This places the R3 heifer price in GB at 10.6p/kg above the same price in NI. The GB cow trade remained firm last week with the average cow price up 0.7p/kg to 266.2p/kg and the O3 cow price up 0.8p/kg to 287.7p/kg. This was 11.1p/kg behind the O3 cow price in NI.

In ROI last week the deadweight trade for prime cattle continued to remain under pressure with the majority of reported prices back from the previous week. The R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 361.4p/kg, back 3.4p/kg from the previous week. The R3 heifer price in ROI was back by 3p/kg to the equivalent of 365.1p/kg, 39.3p/kg below the current price in NI.

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

	W/E 08/01/22	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	407.1	368.9	412.7	416.8	422.1	418.9	417.9
	R3	405.5	361.4	417.8	416.8	415.6	411.3	415.5
	R4	404.1	361.7	418.3	421.1	411.5	415.4	417.6
	O3	393.6	351.2	405.5	405.0	393.9	393.9	398.2
	AVG	396.4	-	414.5	411.7	406.7	402.4	409.0
Heifers	U3	408.5	375.4	418.4	421.2	427.8	421.8	423.1
	R3	404.4	365.1	415.1	417.3	416.3	411.1	415.0
	R4	402.5	366.3	414.7	419.7	414.6	412.9	415.7
	O3	394.2	358.2	400.5	408.0	388.8	390.6	394.5
	AVG	397.5	-	412.5	415.3	403.1	398.7	407.5
Young Bulls	U3	392.1	352.2	396.8	416.8	415.7	420.0	406.9
	R3	393.4	346.6	402.5	404.4	409.1	405.4	406.5
	O3	374.0	335.0	372.5	383.3	383.5	364.7	379.4
	AVG	378.8	-	392.4	393.5	396.7	371.4	392.4
Prime Cattle Price Reported	4066	-	4292	4828	5844	3592	18556	
Cows	O3	298.8	298.6	291.2	285.6	289.4	284.6	287.7
	O4	301.7	296.7	293.3	290.5	289.5	284.8	289.2
	P2	260.3	269.4	249.4	236.6	245.9	242.4	244.4
	P3	281.0	285.1	262.0	264.8	264.8	263.9	264.4
	AVG	271.3	-	285.9	278.8	264.0	254.3	266.2

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=83.66p 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 08/01/22	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	405.1	410.5	391.6
R3	402.1	402.5	391.6
O+3	393.9	396.2	379.8

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 08/01/22	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	193.9	209.8	219.8	229.8
P2	220.0	241.2	256.1	272.1
P3	221.6	261.6	273.0	284.4
O3	-	281.1	282.0	299.9
O4	251.0	-	291.5	303.0
R3	-	-	-	318.1

LATEST LIVEWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

W/E 08/01/22	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	239	255	241	205	238	221
Friesians	181	203	186	167	180	176
Heifers	225	257	232	180	224	200
Beef Cows	185	218	195	140	184	165
Dairy Cows	124	164	130	95	123	115
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	250	317	270	200	249	220
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	235	279	245	200	234	215
Bullocks over 500kg	220	246	229	180	219	200
Heifers up to 450kg	230	266	245	180	229	200
Heifers over 450kg	215	231	225	170	214	190
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	340	440	380	230	335	285
Continental Heifers	350	450	380	200	345	260
Friesian Bulls	150	255	180	80	145	105
Holstein Bulls	80	150	115	10	75	45

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 10/01/22	Next Week 17/01/22
R3 Hoggets up to 22kg	560 - 570p/kg	555 - 560p/kg

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 25/12/21	W/E 01/01/22	W/E 08/01/22
NI L/W Hoggets/Lambs	524.8	525.6	514.5
NI D/W Hoggets/Lambs	549.9	545.2	557.3
GB D/W Hoggets/Lambs	608.3	616.5	614.2
ROI D/W	593.4	591.2	588.0

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Base quotes from the plants started this week ranging from 560-570p/kg for R3 grade hoggets up to 22kg. Quotes ranging from 555-560p/kg are expected for early next week. Hogget throughput last week totalled 6,770 head, this is an increase of 1,211 head from the previous week when 5,559 hoggets were processed locally. In the corresponding week in 2021 8,019 hoggets were processed locally. The deadweight hogget price in NI last week was 557.3p/kg, up 12.1p/kg from the previous week. In ROI last week the deadweight hogget price was back 3.2p/kg to the equivalent of 588p/kg.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Many of the marts reported higher number passing through the sale rings this week with a firm trade continuing to be reported. In Kilrea on Monday 620 hoggets sold from 502-556p/kg compared to 580 hoggets sold from 516-549p/kg last week. On Tuesday in Saintfield 595 hoggets sold from 488-552p/kg compared to 390 hoggets sold from 505-563p/kg. In Enniskillen on Wednesday 622 hoggets sold from 485-525 compared to 392 hoggets sold from 498-522p/kg last week. On Thursday in Markethill 1050 hoggets sold from 500-527p/kg compared 850 hoggets sold from 520-560p/kg the previous week. Top reported prices for culled ewes this week ranged from £142-£236.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 08/01/22		Hoggets			
To: 13/01/22		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	710	486	536	-
	Swatragh	800	471	516	-
Monday	Kilrea	620	502	556	-
	Massereene	614	500	525	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	595	488	552	-
	Rathfriland	389	510	580	526
Wednesday	Ballymena	2101	500	543	511
	Enniskillen	622	485	525	-
	Armoyle	485	490	540	-
	Markethill	1050	500	527	-

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