

INCREASED LEVELS OF ABERDEEN ANGUS AND HEREFORD CATTLE IN THE NI SLAUGHTER MIX

The proportion of Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle in the NI slaughter mix has continued to increase during 2022, with positive market signals in the form of bonuses at point of slaughter increasing demand for Aberdeen Angus steers and heifers for finishing.

Calf Registrations

The local dairy herd provides a valuable source of beef to the NI beef industry in the form of cull cows and beef cross calves. These beef bred calves offer producers and processors alike a quality product through their advantage of hybrid vigour, increasing their on farm performance and subsequently their environmental impact.

Aberdeen Angus continues to be the most popular beef sire used by NI dairy producers with 49,686 Aberdeen Angus calves registered to dairy cows during 2022 to the close of September. **Figure 1** shows this is an increase of 1,669 head from the 48,017 Aberdeen Angus cross calves registered in the same period in 2021. Aberdeen Angus calves accounted for 47 per cent of all beef sired calves registered to dairy dams during 2022 to date. This proportion has increased from 2020 levels when Aberdeen Angus calves accounted for 45 per cent of beef calf registrations to dairy dams.

Strong demand for Aberdeen Angus cross calves, ease of calving due to

smaller birth weights, and the shorter gestation period have encouraged NI producers to use Aberdeen Angus bulls.

Hereford sired calves registered to dairy cows during 2022 to date totalled 12,861 head and accounted for 12 per cent of all beef sired registrations to dairy dams. This was a slight decrease from the same period in 2021 when a total of 13,452 Hereford calves were registered to dairy cows, which accounted for 13 per cent of the price reported cattle kill. 2022 levels also reported a decline from 2020 when Hereford calves accounted for 15 per cent of beef calf registrations to dairy cows from January to September.

Aberdeen Angus Throughput

The increase in Aberdeen Angus calf registrations in recent years has resulted in an increase in the number of Aberdeen Angus cattle presented for slaughter in local plants as shown in **Figure 2**. During the first nine months of 2022 there was 50,444 Aberdeen Angus cattle in the price reported prime cattle kill in Northern Ireland, equating to 24 per cent of the total price reported prime cattle kill. This is a notable increase of 7,352 cattle from the same period in 2021 when the numbers of Aberdeen Angus cattle in the NI price reported kill totalled 43,092 head, and accounted for 23 per cent of the total prime kill. This equates to an increase of 17 per cent year on year.

Moreover, the level of Aberdeen Angus bred prime cattle in the 2022 slaughter mix equates to a 19.8 per cent increase from the 42,101 head recorded during the relative period in 2020, which comprised 21 per cent of the total price reported prime cattle kill in NI. This is a notable shift in a two year period and reflects how local beef producers are shaping the production base to supply cattle that are in high demand. Furthermore, an increase in Aberdeen Angus slaughterings was reported across all categories during 2022.

Steers

During the period from January to September 2022, the number of Aberdeen Angus steers in the price reported prime cattle kill totalled 25,114 head. Comparatively, during the same period in 2021, 22,160 Aberdeen Angus steers were reported in the price reporting slaughter mix, an increase of 2,954 head year on year. 2022 levels were also up by 3,428 head from the corresponding period of 2020.

The average age of price reported Aberdeen Angus steers during the 2022 period was 740 days. This is similar when compared to the corresponding period of 2021, however this is a decline of seven days from the same period in 2020, when the average age at slaughter of Aberdeen Angus steers was 747 days as outlined in **Table 1**.

Heifers

Aberdeen Angus heifers recorded the largest increase in numbers by category during 2022, with levels up by 3,429 head from 2021 levels. This is a similar increase to that seen from 2020 levels, with levels of heifers in the price reported slaughter mix during 2022 up by 3,455 head. Combined this is a significant increase in Aberdeen Angus heifer slaughterings by 6,884 head in the two year period.

The average age at slaughter of price reported Aberdeen Angus heifers during 2022 was 741 days. This is a decline from 743 days during 2021, and a more significant decline of nine days from 2020, when the average age at slaughter of Aberdeen Angus heifers in NI was 750 days as outlined in **Table 1**.

Young Bulls

The levels of Aberdeen Angus young bulls processed in local plants during 2022 also increased year on year. During January to September 2022, the number of these animals in the price reported slaughter mix totalled 3,148 head. This was an additional 969 Aberdeen Angus young bulls processed between January and September 2022 from 2021 levels. This category recorded the largest percentage increase from the same period of 2020 up by 86.5 per cent from 2020 levels when 1,688 were processed.

Table 1: Overview of Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle in the NI slaughter mix during January to September 2020 - 2022.
Source: LMC Deadweight Price Reporting.

		2020		2021		2022	
Total Price Reported Cattle kill (Head)	Aberdeen Angus	42,101		43,092		50,444	
	Hereford	14,216		13,561		14,687	
		AA	Her	AA	Her	AA	Her
Average Age at Slaughter (Days)	Steers	747	772	738	761	740	768
	Heifers	750	774	743	770	741	770
	Young Bulls	488	494	486	487	494	494
Average Carcase weight (Kg)	Steers	346	350	347	351	349	351
	Heifers	307	307	307	310	308	308
	Young Bulls	335	329	339	332	330	327

This is arguably the most significant increase in the use of Aberdeen Angus genetics, considering young bulls are not eligible for current Aberdeen Angus bonus schemes. This is an efficiency advancement within the NI beef industry, with producers opting to use Aberdeen Angus genetics which is enabling them to finish these animals at 494 days old. This is reducing the animals time on farm and allowing producers to deliver bulls for slaughter which are compliant with the specification for young bulls less than 16 months old.

Hereford Throughput

Throughput of Hereford bred cattle in the price reported cattle kill has increased in NI from previous years. During January to September 2022, Hereford slaughterings totalled 14,687 head, and Hereford cattle accounted for seven per cent of the price reported prime cattle kill in NI. This was an increase of 1,126 cattle from 2021 levels when the number of prime Hereford cattle in the price reported prime cattle kill totalled 13,561 head.

Despite the increase in numbers, the proportion of Hereford cattle in the total price reported prime cattle kill in NI was unchanged from 2021. In comparison to the corresponding nine month period of 2020, the levels of Hereford prime cattle processed in NI have also increased by 471 head. However the proportion of Hereford cattle in the price reported slaughter mix also remains unchanged when compared to 2020 levels.

The majority of the NI price reported Hereford kill during the first nine months of 2022 was comprised of steers and heifers. Steers were responsible for 52 per cent of the price reported Hereford kill, while 40 per cent were heifers, meaning only a small eight per cent were young bulls. These

levels were similar to the corresponding period of 2020. However, this was a shift in the proportions of Hereford steers and heifers in the price reported prime cattle slaughter mix compared to 2021, when 55 per cent of hereford slaughterings were steers and 37 per cent were heifers.

Carcase Weights

Both Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle are traditional breeds which tend to finish at lower carcass weights than continental bred cattle. However, analysis of the price reported kill shows the average carcass weight of prime Aberdeen Angus and Hereford steers and heifers has increased over the two year period from 2020. While the average carcass weights of both Aberdeen Angus and Hereford young bulls decreased during January to September 2022, the increased levels of these native bred cattle finished as young bulls is significant.

The Aberdeen Angus young bulls in the price reported kill on average were slaughtered at 494 days old, with an average carcass weight of 330kg. This is 246 days younger on average than their steer counterparts, with a carcass weight of just 19kg less on average. Moreover, the average carcass weight of Hereford bred young bulls in the price reported kill were on average 274 days younger than their steer counterparts with a carcass weighing just 24kg less.

The overall performance of price reported Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle has increased year on year. This demonstrates the benefit of using high genetics. Analysis of the price reported data also reveals the importance of decision making, and assessing the benefits of how cattle are finished. This is particularly important with current high, and rising, costs of production on NI farms.

Figure 1: The proportions of Aberdeen Angus and Hereford calf registrations to dairy cows in NI from January to September 2020 - 2022.
Source: APHIS

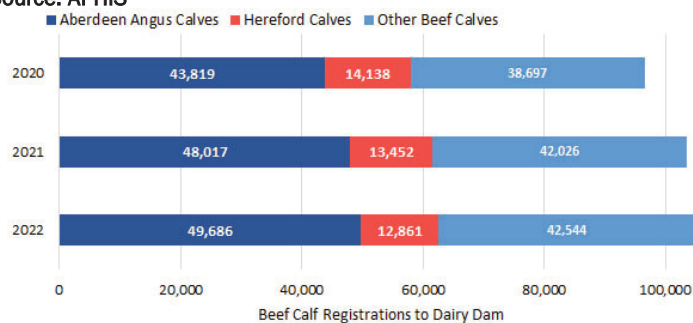
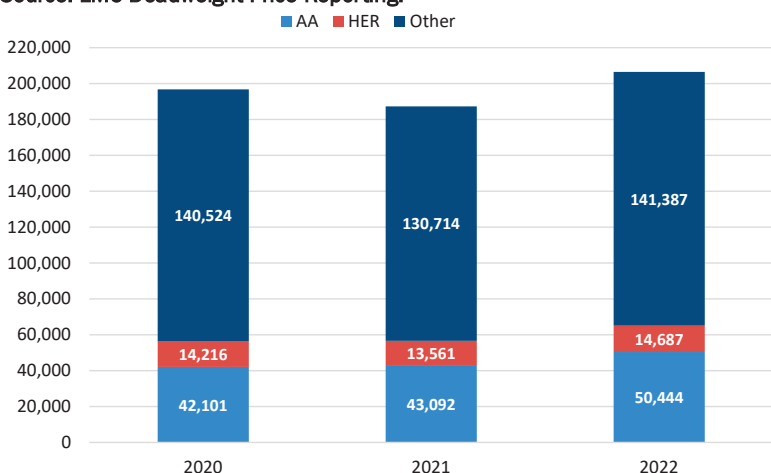


Figure 2: The proportions of Aberdeen Angus and Hereford cattle in the price reported prime cattle kill in NI during January to September 2022.
Source: LMC Deadweight Price Reporting.



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WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 17/10/22	Next Week 24/10/22
Prime		
U-3	414 - 426p	414 - 426p
R-3	408 - 420p	408 - 420p
O+3	402 - 414p	402 - 414p
P+3	346 - 358p	346 - 358p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3	320 - 350p	314 - 370p

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 this week continued to range from 414-426p/kg, with similar quotes expected early next week. Base quotes for good quality O+3 grade cows also held steady this week, ranging from 320-350p/kg. The seven major processors have given preliminary quotes for O+3 grading cows early next week ranging from 314-370p/kg. With a range of 56p/kg in quotes for O+3 grade cows expected, producers are encouraged to shop around the plants to secure the best possible deal for their cattle.

Imports of prime cattle from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants last week totalled 437 head with 90 cows also imported. This brings the total number of prime cattle imported from ROI for direct slaughter during the last six week period to 2,568 head. There were no cattle imports from GB for direct slaughter in NI plants. Exports from NI to ROI for direct slaughter consisted of three prime animals, 36 cows and one bull, with no cattle exported from NI for direct slaughter in GB last week. This brings the total number of prime cattle exported from NI for direct slaughter in ROI to 81 head during the six week period.

Last week the average steer price in NI increased marginally from the previous week bringing it to 425.4p/kg with the R3 steer price up 0.6p/kg to 435.6p/kg. Meanwhile the average NI heifer price was back 0.4p/kg to 427.7p/kg last week, with the R3 heifer price up 1.8p/kg to 438p/kg. The average young bull price in NI last week increased by 3.3p/kg to 415p/kg, while the R3 young bull price was back by 0.6p/kg to 425.3p/kg. The deadweight cow trade in NI came under some pressure from the previous week with the average cow price back 0.4p/kg to 326.1p/kg and the O3 cow price back by 2.2p/kg to 357.6p/kg.

The average steer price in GB last week was 440.9p/kg, up just over a penny from the previous week, while the R3 steer price was up marginally to 447.7p/kg. This places the R3 steer price in GB at 12.1p/kg above the same price in NI. Last week the average heifer price in GB was up 2.6p/kg to 440p/kg, with the R3 heifer price up 0.4p/kg to 446.3p/kg. This narrowed the differential between the R3 heifer price in GB at 8.3p/kg above the same price in NI. Meanwhile the GB cow trade came under pressure across all regions compared to the previous week. The average cow price was back 1.1p/kg to 343.3p/kg, while the O3 cow price was 373.8p/kg, a decrease of 1.2p/kg from the previous week.

In ROI last week the deadweight prime cattle trade came under pressure in euro terms. The R3 steer price in ROI last week was the equivalent of 403.3p/kg, back 4p/kg from the previous week. This puts the R3 steer price in ROI at 32.3p/kg behind the same price in NI. The R3 heifer price in ROI was back 2.3p/kg to the equivalent of 408p/kg. This puts the R3 heifer price in ROI 30p/kg below the same price in NI. Meanwhile, the cow trade in ROI also came under pressure last week with the O3 cow price recording a decrease of 5.9p/kg bringing it to the equivalent of 358.8p/kg, 1.2p/kg above the same price in NI.

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

	W/E 15/10/22	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	438.6	413.0	456.0	449.3	451.6	453.0	452.7
	R3	435.6	403.3	455.9	450.1	443.2	443.3	447.7
	R4	432.9	402.9	456.8	451.2	442.3	442.7	451.7
	O3	424.4	387.1	442.1	435.0	426.9	423.7	429.9
	AVG	425.4	-	453.2	443.6	434.4	431.2	440.9
Heifers	U3	441.1	419.9	461.2	454.0	453.0	453.6	455.8
	R3	438.0	408.0	454.3	447.4	444.4	441.3	446.3
	R4	434.4	406.6	458.6	450.4	442.9	441.4	452.0
	O3	426.7	398.0	439.7	437.7	423.1	419.4	427.9
	AVG	427.7	-	455.4	444.3	430.2	426.3	440.0
Young Bulls	U3	430.4	397.4	448.2	446.3	449.4	447.4	448.1
	R3	425.3	390.0	436.6	440.4	436.3	438.5	437.2
	O3	407.2	376.5	411.8	411.8	416.6	414.6	414.5
	AVG	415.0	-	435.1	427.7	427.0	419.7	428.2
Prime Cattle Price Reported	6,570	-	6,384	7,037	7,282	4,980	25,683	
Cows	O3	357.6	358.8	380.3	370.0	376.8	366.2	373.8
	O4	360.3	359.9	382.2	373.2	374.1	363.1	372.9
	P2	320.3	319.8	333.2	324.1	337.0	331.4	333.0
	P3	336.8	344.0	347.4	344.0	354.9	347.8	350.5
	AVG	326.1	-	375.4	344.0	338.2	331.5	343.3

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=87.32p 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 15/10/22	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	438.1	441.0	430.5
R3	433.5	436.3	425.2
O+3	425.9	429.4	413.1

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 15/10/22	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	250.8	264.8	271.3	289.8
P2	260.9	299.3	315.2	331.8
P3	289.5	317.3	322.6	341.7
O3	284.0	350.0	348.5	358.6
O4	283.2	-	350.1	361.9
R3	-	-	-	377.2

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 17/10/22	Next Week 24/10/22
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	505 - 510p	510-515p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 01/10/22	W/E 08/10/22	W/E 15/10/22
NI L/W Lambs	450.6	454.3	461.8
NI D/W Lambs	494.2	496.6	497.5
GB D/W Lambs	522.4	519.9	524.1
ROI D/W	548.9	531.4	533.5

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Base quotes from the major processing plants ended this week at 510p/kg with plants paying up to 21kg. Next week quotes are expected to be up and range from 510-515p/kg up to 21kg. Meanwhile, 7,191 lambs were exported to ROI for direct slaughter last week, similar numbers to the previous week. In the same week last year 7,844 lambs were exported to southern plants for processing. The average NI deadweight lamb price increased by almost a penny to 497.5p/kg last week. In ROI last week the average deadweight lamb price was the equivalent of 533.5p/kg, up 2.1p/kg from the previous week. This widens the differential in the average lamb price between ROI and NI to 36p/kg, or £7.56 on the value of a 21 kg lamb carcass.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Good numbers of lambs passed through local marts this week with generally a stronger trade to last week. In Swatragh last Saturday 1,305 lambs sold from 458-510p/kg compared to 1,595 lambs selling from 393-480p/kg the previous Saturday. In Kilrea on Monday 980 lambs sold from 457-500p/kg compared to 600 lambs selling from 444-482p/kg last week. This week in Saintfield 550 lambs sold from 460-543p/kg compared to 555 lambs last week selling from 448-525p/kg. On Wednesday in Enniskillen 1,202 lambs sold from 421-490p/kg compared to 1,020 lambs last week selling from 430-495p/kg. The trade for cull ewes remained firm this week across the marts with top reported prices ranging from £132-196.

LATEST LIVELWEIGHT CATTLE MART PRICES NI

	W/E 15/10/22	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
		From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)							
Steers		250	276	265	200	249	222
Friesians		170	216	198	139	165	152
Heifers		235	266	245	200	234	218
Beef Cows		212	270	224	175	211	188
Dairy Cows		140	166	152	90	139	115
Store Cattle (p/kg)							
Bullocks up to 400kg		250	307	275	200	249	225
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg		240	309	260	185	239	212
Bullocks over 500kg		225	289	245	170	224	200
Heifers up to 450kg		240	274	260	200	239	220
Heifers over 450kg		230	266	250	170	229	200
Dropped Calves (£/head)							
Continental Bulls		395	500	425	300	390	340
Continental Heifers		330	405	370	225	325	275
Friesian Bulls		140	285	210	50	115	85
Holstein Bulls		85	160	110	4	80	40

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 15/10/22		Lambs			
To: 20/10/22		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	1230	471	511	-
	Swatragh	1305	458	510	-
Monday	Kilrea	980	457	500	-
	Massereene	787	460	488	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	550	460	543	-
	Rathfriland	754	460	535	476
Wednesday	Ballymena	1979	425	473	448
	Enniskillen	1202	421	490	-
	Armoy	470	430	495	-
	Markethill	1480	445	488	-

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