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LOCAL CATTLE KILL WELL AHEAD OF PREVIOUS YEARS

While there was a year on year increase in local beef production during the first quarter of 2022 increased levels of output have continued. Recent processing figures have reported an increase in beef production in Northern Ireland during the first half of 2022 when compared to both 2021 and 2020 figures during the same period.

Cattle Slaughterings

Cattle slaughterings during the first six months of 2022 totalled 252,505 head which is up 14.7 per cent from the corresponding period in 2021 and 14.8 per cent when compared to the relative period in 2020 as outlined in **Table 1**.

The NI prime cattle kill totalled 191,197 head during the six months ending 02 July 2022, accounting for 75.7 per cent of Northern Ireland cattle slaughterings. This is an increase of 22,270 head from the same period in 2021 and an increase of 22,407 head from 2020 when 168,790 prime cattle were processed locally.

There was an increase in the number of slaughterings across the prime cattle categories during the first half of the year when compared to previous years. Steer throughput in NI during this period totalled 93,970 head an increase of 12 per cent relative to 2021 and a more significant 15 per cent relative to 2020.

The number of heifers processed in NI plants during the first six months totalled 76,406 head which was a 8,892 head increase from the relative period in 2021. This equates to a 13 per cent increase year on year. Meanwhile, heifer processings have increased by 11 per cent or 7,347 head when compared to 2020 figures.

Young bull processings in NI during January to the close of June totalled 20,821 which was an increase of 3,347 head or 19 per cent from 2021 figures. Meanwhile this was a 3,091 head or 17 per cent increase relative to the same period in 2020.

Cow throughput in NI during the first six months of 2022 increased by 9,090 head from 2021 to total 55,224 cows. This was an increase of 9,355 head from 2020 levels, which equates to a 20 per cent increase in cow throughput during 2022 from both 2021 and 2020 levels.

Calf slaughterings increased during the first six months of 2022 to total 3,237 head up by 21 per cent from 2021 and 12 per cent from 2020 levels. Mature bull throughput was up by 16 per cent from 2021 levels and increased by a more significant 21 per cent relative to 2020. It should be noted that both calf (bovine animals under 12 months old) and mature bull processings are very low in comparison to the number of prime cattle and cows processed locally.

Table 1: Numbers of beef cattle processed in NI meat plants by category during the first six months of 2022 compared to 2021 and 2020. Source: DAERA

NI Cattle Throughput (Head)					
(Six months ended 02/07/22 compared to six months ended 03/07/21 and 27/06/20)					
	2022	2021	2020	2022/21 % Change	2022/20 % Change
Steers	93,970	83,939	82,001	+12%	+15%
Heifers	76,406	67,514	69,059	+13%	+11%
Young Bulls	20,821	17,474	17,730	+19%	+17%
Total Prime Cattle	191,197	168,927	168,790	+13%	+13%
Calves	3,237	2,678	2,890	+21%	+12%
Cows	55,224	46,134	45,869	+20%	+20%
Mature Bulls	2,847	2,459	2,350	+16%	+21%
Total Cattle	252,505	220,198	219,899	+15%	+15%

Carcase Weights

The average carcase weight of prime cattle increased by 0.75kg relative to 2021 and 3kg compared with 2020. Meanwhile the average cow carcase weight has decreased by more than 6.5kg when compared to 2021 and over 5kg compared to the same period of 2020. The decline in cow carcase weights is largely attributable to the increase in the number of cows from the dairy herd, as producers avail of the improved cull cow rates available during the first six months of the year. The increase in prime carcase weights alongside the increase in throughput across all categories has attributed to an overall increase in beef production in NI.

Overall beef production during the six months ending 02 July 2022 totalled 85,311 tonnes an increase of 14 per cent compared to the corresponding period in 2021. Prime cattle account for the majority of beef production in Northern Ireland. During the first six months of 2022 66,359 tonnes of beef came from this source accounting for 77.8 per cent of total beef output.

MINISTER POOTS EXTENDS DEADLINE FOR THE SOIL NUTRIENT HEALTH SCHEME

Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Edwin Poots has extended the period for farmers in Zone 1 to register online for the new Soil Nutrient Health Scheme (SNHS). **The closing date for registration is now extended to 31 August 2022.**

Farmers can register for the SNHS via DAERA online services at https://www2.dardni.gov.uk or they can authorise their agent to apply on their behalf. Alternatively, they can book an appointment in their local DAERA office where trained Customer Service Branch staff will complete the application for them.

TIGHTENING BEEF SUPPLIES ON NI FARMS

The latest available data on local cattle populations from APHIS has indicated some tightening in the number of slaughter ready cattle when compared to June 2021 levels as shown in **Figure 1.**

At the end of June 2022 cattle for beef production in Northern Ireland (all beef sired cattle and dairy males) totalled 118,497 head in the 24-30 month age category. This is a reduction of 794 head or 0.7 per cent from the previous year.

Cattle for beef production in the 18-24 month category also saw a decrease in numbers from June 2021 levels. Cattle in this age category totalled 108,587 at the end of June 2022, back by 2,305 head. This equates to a decrease of 2.1 per cent year on year. It should also be noted, although the decrease in numbers is concerning within the 18-24 month category, these levels show a 2.8 per cent increase from 2020 levels.

Cattle in the 12-18 month category totalled 241,293 head in June 2022. This is back by 2,713 head or 1.1 per cent from 2021 levels. However, the number of cattle in this age category has increased 3.8 per cent when compared to 2020 levels.

An improvement in beef sired calf registrations in Northern Ireland during 2021 has contributed to an increase in the number of cattle for beef production in the 6-12 month age category. Cattle in this category is up by just over 5,300 head or 3.6 per cent from year previous levels.

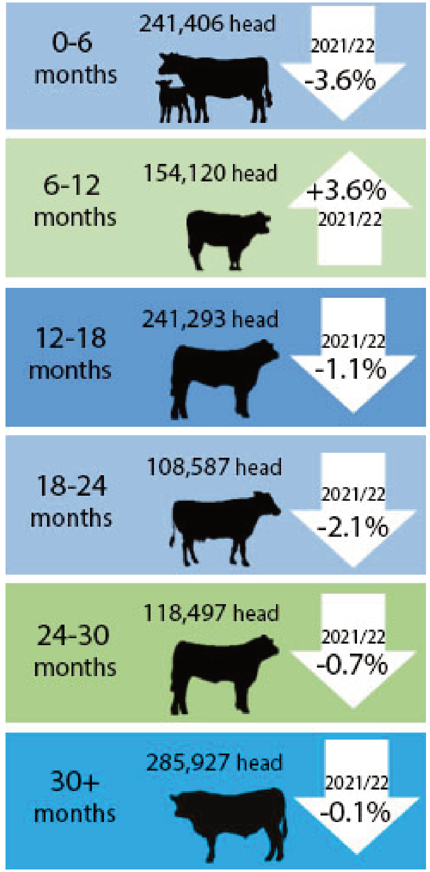
Comparatively, cattle numbers in the 0-6 month category are back 8,910 head from June 2021 levels to total 241,406 head. This equates to a 3.6 per cent decline from 2021 levels and up 10 per cent when compared to 2020 levels.

The number of dairy sired male cattle in the 0-6 month age category recorded the largest decline at 30 June 2022 with a 24.3 per cent decrease from June 2021 levels. In the 6-12 month category, 14.1 per cent less dairy males were on NI farms compared to 2021 levels.

Other age categories recorded smaller increases in dairy male numbers ranging from a 0.3 per cent increase in the 12-18 month category, to a three per cent increase in the 18-24 month category.

An increase in the use of beef bulls on the dairy herd has been a contributing factor to the increase in the number of beef sired cattle currently on NI farms. With less dairy cows mated using dairy bulls this trend will also have been a contributing factor behind the declining number of dairy sired males on NI farms.

Figure 1: All cattle for beef production on NI farms at 30 June 2022 by age category compared to 2021 levels. Source: APHIS



WEEKLY BEEF & LAMB MARKETS

LMC Livestock & Meat Commission

CATTLE TRADE

NI FACTORY BASE QUOTES FOR CATTLE

(P/KG DW)	This Week 04/07/22	Next Week 11/07/22
Prime		
U-3	424 - 430p	420 - 426p
R-3	418 - 424p	414 - 420p
O+3	412 - 418p	408 - 414p
P+3	356 - 362p	352 - 358p
	Including bonus where applicable	
Cows		
O+3	335 - 376p	335 - 376p

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 02/07/22	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	453.5	452.1	443.5
R3	445.6	446.4	437.9
O+3	436.7	436.3	429.0

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 02/07/22	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	275.2	290.3	294.1	315.3
P2	290.3	323.3	339.4	357.0
P3	317.7	341.4	360.5	366.5
O3	-	361.6	381.1	385.6
O4	262.0	-	384.0	387.7
R3	-	-	407.8	405.1

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Base quotes for in-spec U-3 grading prime cattle this week were back slightly to range from 424-430p/kg. Quotes are expected to be back early next week to range from 420-426p/kg. With a range in base quotes producers are encouraged to shop around to get the best possible deal for their cattle. The cow trade has held steady this week with base quotes of 335-376p/kg for good quality O+3 grading cows, and similar quotes are expected for early next week.

Some of the major processors have reported a decline in cattle availability in the last few weeks with 6,403 prime cattle processed locally last week. This was back 744 head from the previous week and was just 122 head behind the 6,525 prime cattle processed in NI during the same week last year. Cow throughput has remained strong in NI with 2,085 cows processed last week. This was similar to the same week last year when a total of 1,977 cows were processed locally, however throughput during June 2022 is 1,196 head above the same levels during the relevant period of 2021.

There were 308 prime cattle imported from ROI for processing in local plants last week. Imports of prime cattle have totalled 1,550 head during the last six weeks compared to 2,296 head in the same period in 2021. Last week there were 124 cows imported from ROI for direct slaughter in local plants with 664 cows imported during the last six weeks. Cow imports for direct slaughter were up marginally from 613 head during the corresponding period last year. Exports to ROI last week consisted of eight prime cattle, 54 cows and two bulls, and a consignment of 31 cows were exported from NI to GB for direct slaughter.

The deadweight cattle trade has come under some pressure in NI with the R3 steer price remaining steady at 446.8p/kg. Last week the average steer price was back 0.9p/kg from the previous week at 436.8p/kg. The R3 heifer price in NI increased only slighty by 0.3p/kg last week to 447.0p/kg while the average heifer price was up by 1.9p/kg to 438.7p/kg. The deadweight cow trade in NI has come back with the O3 cow price back by 2.2p/kg last week to 384.7p/kg. This placed NI 10.1p/kg behind the equivalent O3 cow price in ROI and 5.2p/kg behind the average GB price for O3 cows.

The deadweight cattle trade has seen some recovery in GB with many reported prices up from the previous week as indicated by the shading in the deadweight cattle prices table. The R3 steer price in GB last week was up by 1.7p/kg to 450.3p/kg, while the average steer price increased by 1.4p/kg to 444.5p/kg with Scotland being the only region to report a decline in the average steer price last week to 450.3p/kg. The R3 heifer price in GB last week was up by 1.8p/kg to 450.2p/kg, while the average heifer price was up by 2.1p/kg to 443.9p/kg with all regions reporting an increase in the average heifer price from the previous week.

In ROI last week deadweight cattle prices reported decreases across all grades. The R3 steer price in ROI was the equivalent of 445.9p/kg, back by 5.4p/kg from the previous week. This puts the ROI price at almost a penny below the R3 steer price in NI last week. The R3 heifer price was back by 4.1p/kg last week to 449.5p/kg, which puts the ROI price at 2.5p/kg above the same price in NI.

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

W/E 02/07/22		Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	453.6	453.6	453.5	451.1	456.2	459.0	454.5
	R3	446.8	445.9	452.3	450.2	449.9	448.9	450.3
	R4	444.9	446.5	457.0	454.5	450.0	461.3	455.2
	O3	433.7	434.2	440.4	433.6	428.8	429.2	432.0
	AVG	436.8	-	450.3	445.2	441.1	440.4	444.5
Heifers	U3	452.9	462.8	462.0	459.5	461.8	457.9	460.6
	R3	447.0	449.5	454.3	449.5	449.7	447.9	450.2
	R4	443.4	452.0	457.3	452.6	450.3	449.4	453.5
	O3	434.3	441.7	441.7	432.5	427.4	423.8	429.6
	AVG	438.7	-	454.0	445.2	440.9	434.3	443.9
Young Bulls	U3	442.9	448.3	449.2	452.9	454.3	451.5	451.5
	R3	438.0	438.1	444.3	442.7	447.3	443.5	445.3
	O3	423.5	419.7	419.2	417.4	421.5	413.8	419.4
	AVG	428.1	-	442.5	443.7	440.0	439.5	441.5
Prime Cattle Price Reported		5,303	-	6,611	6,684	7,172	4,731	25,198
Cows	O3	384.7	394.8	395.0	389.6	387.8	390.2	389.9
	O4	387.2	395.4	395.0	392.5	390.0	387.5	390.8
	P2	341.1	365.7	352.1	343.0	348.2	346.3	347.1
	P3	362.6	385.0	361.7	362.1	367.7	369.1	367.1
	AVG	360.2	-	390.3	374.0	362.3	358.2	367.3

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=86.30p 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 02/07/22	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	260	288	272	215	259	237
Friesians	200	227	212	167	199	185
Heifers	245	284	260	205	244	220
Beef Cows	230	266	240	180	229	205
Dairy Cows	145	179	165	100	144	122
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	250	319	280	210	249	225
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	245	295	260	200	244	220
Bullocks over 500kg	240	306	260	200	239	218
Heifers up to 450kg	255	295	275	200	254	230
Heifers over 450kg	230	259	245	180	229	210
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	375	495	425	275	370	320
Continental Heifers	280	360	325	180	275	220
Friesian Bulls	100	170	140	50	95	75
Holstein Bulls	80	120	100	2	75	50

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 04/07/22	Next Week 11/07/22
R3 Lambs up to 21kg	595-610p	600-605p

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 18/06/22	W/E 25/06/22	W/E 02/07/22
NI L/W Lambs	626.5	557.3	562.2
NI D/W Lambs	649.3	613.8	585.6
GB D/W Lambs	662.6	646.7	637.9
ROI D/W	687.9	654.1	630.4

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes from the NI processors improved this week to range from 595-610p/kg. Quotes for Monday are expected to be in the region of 600-605p/kg up to 21kg. Lamb throughput in NI has continued at levels below 2021 with 8,843 lambs processed in local plants last week compared to 11,040 lambs processed in the same week last year. A further 3,799 lambs were exported to ROI for direct slaughter last week, accounting for 30 per cent of total lamb output from the NI sheep flock. The average deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 585.6p/kg, back 28.2p/kg from the previous week. Deadweight prices have also decreased in GB and ROI last week by 8.8p/kg and 23.7p/kg respectively.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

The marts have reported good numbers of lambs passing through the sale rings with strong demand for good quality lambs. In Massereene on Monday an entry of 828 lambs sold from 580-636p/kg compared to 462 lambs last week selling from 550-583p/kg. In Saintfield this week an improved trade to the previous week saw 1,088 lambs selling from 570-630p/kg. In Ballymena this week a large entry of 2,103 lambs sold from 570-645p/kg (avg 582p/kg) compared to 1,314 lambs last week selling from 560-611p/kg (avg 580p/kg). In Markethill this week a firm trade saw 1,510 lambs selling from 550-600p/kg compared to last week when 800 lambs sold from 540-577p/kg. The cull ewe trade this week was back with top reported prices ranging from £140-245 across the marts.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 02/07/22		Lambs			
To: 07/07/22		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Swatragh	1023	585	655	-
Monday	Kilrea	800	588	609	-
	Massereene	828	580	636	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	1088	570	630	-
	Rathfriland	627	560	624	585
Wednesday	Ballymena	2103	570	645	582
	Enniskillen	729	550	592	-
	Armoy	504	550	595	-
	Markethill	1510	550	600	-

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