

LMC REPLIES TO DAERA'S FUTURE FOOD STRATEGY FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION

The LMC has officially responded to DAERA's Future Food Strategy Framework. The public consultation has given stakeholder groups and individuals the opportunity to shape the future of Northern Ireland's most important private sector industries.

"This is a process that kicked-off two years ago," Commission chief executive Ian Stevenson confirmed. "It has developed into a wide ranging exercise that looks at the role of farming and food within society as a whole.

"And LMC totally supports the food systems whole of government approach proposed in the strategy. Agriculture and food play critically important roles in meeting the nutritional needs of consumers.

"Both sectors also play a central role in determining our health agenda. And the environmental benefits that can be delivered by the farming industry are more than obvious."

But as Ian went on to point out, Northern Ireland's farming and food sectors produce enough calories to feed 10m people.

He continued: "So it's important that a future food strategy framework also has a very strong focus on the needs of consumers in the markets that we serve at home and externally.

"It is crucially important therefore that the messages delivered here at home, with regard to farming and food's role at the core of society, are communicated with equal vigour on existing and potential export markets."

Ian went on to relate the absolute necessity of future food framework policies having a soil to society approach. He also stressed the need for objective science and evidence to shape every policy formulated on behalf of the farming and food industries.

"This is already a contentious issue in the context of the climate change debate taking place at the present time," he commented. "Moreover, the policy decisions taken by our politicians must be totally transparent."

The LMC representative also pointed to the need for the current debate on the environment to be conducted in tandem with an equal focus on food security. "These issues are two sides of the one coin," he said.

"The consultation outlines a complex policy framework within which food plays a central role and it is important that this is recognised and a whole of government approach is important however, it is critical that the various strategies are not contradictory.

"For example, if the strategy encourages environmentally sustainable food production in Northern Ireland this should not be undermined by a food procurement policy that is focussed solely on economic sustainability and cheaper food imported from outside of Northern Ireland.

The risk of UK trade policies that permit food produced to lower standards to enter Great Britain and Northern Ireland is significant to the sustainability of Northern Ireland's agri-food industry."

LMC is also highlighting the need for future public procurement policies to reflect the quality and sustainability-related criteria associated with home produced food.

"And this is an issue that must resonate throughout the UK, where the interests of food businesses in Northern Ireland are concerned.

"Public procurement bodies, including government departments, schools, hospitals and prisons, must be made fully aware of the tremendous investments made by farm and processing operations here over many years to produce food of the highest quality.

"And they must be actively encouraged by Westminster to support those businesses that

are producing sustainable food of such high quality on their very doorsteps.

"This was not possible prior to Brexit. But it is a more than feasible way forward now." An overarching theme to the LMC's food strategy framework submission relates to the need for Northern Ireland to be recognised as an 'exemplary' food producing region.

Ian Stevenson concluded: "The ambition of the framework strategy must reflect this reality. The current wording of the ambition within the draft strategy document wants to see Northern Ireland recognised as a world class food region but in LMC's view this needs to be clearer in terms of food production as the current ambition could potentially be achieved by producing food locally or by importing it.

The ambition must recognise Northern Ireland's ability to produce high quality, sustainable food for the people of Northern Ireland but also for millions of other consumers world-wide."

PROGRESS MADE ON GRASS FED BEEF PGI STATUS

According to Livestock and Meat Commission (LMC) chief executive Ian Stevenson, the international market for grass fed beef is to increase in value by up to US\$6.3 billion dollars over the next decade.

He added: “These figures were contained in a report published by Future Market Insights. The current grass fed beef market globally is valued at US\$11.6 billion.” Not surprisingly, the LMC representative believes these potential developments as representing a good news story for beef producers in Northern Ireland.

The timing of the report also coincides with a recent announcement from Charlie McConalogue T.D., Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, that progress has been made toward achieving PGI status for Irish Grass Fed Beef.

Ian Stevenson continued: “There has been a long standing willingness on the part of the Commission and the Irish government that Northern Ireland can, and will work to be, included within the geographic scope of the PGI.

“The technicalities associated with the attainment of this objective are linked to the commencement of the opposition procedure, which could soon be set in motion by Brussels over a three month period. “In essence, this is a technical process, one which will allow all the member states of the EU and other countries

around the world to register their opinions on the merit of the proposed PGI. “It is within this context that the argument for Northern Ireland’s inclusion within the PGI can be officially made.”

“DEFRA will be the body authorised to submit the case for Northern Ireland in this regard.” Ian Stevenson stressed that the assessment of the PGI is in no way a political process.

He further explained: “At this stage the European Commission is only interested in the technical requirements linked to the PGI application and how the specification can be formally verified.

“The issue of Northern Ireland being included within the geographic scope of the PGI has already been acknowledged in principle.” Assuming Brussels gives the green light to an Irish Grass Fed Beef PGI, that encompasses the entire island of Ireland, the relevant bodies – north and south – will have to come up with a detailed product specification for the envisaged scheme.

This will then be submitted to Brussels for consideration by the European Commission. The final, all-island document, will both define the technical and management parameters to be included in the proposed scheme and the verification measures that will be put in place to ensure that the PGI standards are being adhered to at all times.

Ian Stevenson again: “A Sustainable Beef Project Steering Group, comprising representatives from the LMC, NIMEA, UFU, AFBI, DAERA and CAFRE, is currently liaising on these matters with representatives from Bord Bia and the Irish government.

Image 1: Cattle Grazing in a field



At the heart of the work being undertaken by the membership of the group is the development of a scheme to define the compatibility of cattle produced in Northern Ireland in the context of the PGI application.

LMC’s Industry Development Manager Colin Smith addressed these matters courtesy of his presentation to the fourth beef sustainability webinar, recently hosted by a wide range of Northern Ireland’s livestock sector stakeholder organisations.

Significantly, Colin believes that it will be possible for beef producers to have their farm’s grass fed credentials verified at the same time as a NIBL FQAS inspection.

“DAERA’s APHIS database is uniquely valuable in delivering important and accurate traceability information in relation to every bovine animal and this is a critical part of the Grass Fed Beef calculation,” he said.

“The Irish Grass Fed PGI represents a wonderful opportunity for Northern Ireland beef sectors to develop their presence in existing and new export markets.

“I am very confident that it will be possible for all the groups concerned to develop a scheme that can work across the island of Ireland as a whole.”

Ian Stevenson concluded: “Everyone involved with the PGI submission wants the project to work and to secure Northern Ireland’s full participation within it. “All of this bodes well for the future.”

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 29/11/21	Next Week 06/12/21
Prime		
U-3	386 - 394p	388 - 394p
R-3	380 - 388p	382 - 388p
O+3	374 - 382p	376 - 382p
P+3	320 - 332p	322 - 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.

REPORTED NI CATTLE PRICES - P/KG

W/E 27/11/21	Steers	Heifers	Young Bulls
U3	406.5	408.8	394.7
R3	400.2	402.3	391.3
O+3	392.9	396.6	382.3

*Prices exclude AA, HER and Organic cattle

REPORTED COW PRICES NI - P/KG

W/E 27/11/21	Weight Bands			
	<220kg	220-250kg	250-280kg	>280kg
P1	195.2	209.6	214.4	230.2
P2	215.0	238.8	255.0	271.2
P3	223.2	254.1	275.9	282.3
O3	260.0	278.6	293.7	297.3
O4	-	268.5	276.3	299.8
R3	-	310.0	-	314.9

Deadweight Cattle Trade

Quotes for in spec U-3 grade prime cattle continued to range from 386-394p/kg this week, with quotes of 388-394p/kg expected for early next week. Quotes from the plants for good quality O+3 grade cows remained steady ranging from 260-290p/kg.

Throughput of prime cattle in NI plants last week totalled 7,393 head. This is back slightly from the previous week, however up 593 head from the 6,800 prime cattle processed locally during the corresponding week in 2020. Cow throughput in NI last week totalled 2,640, back 241 head from the previous week. In the corresponding week in 2020 2,501 cows were processed locally.

Prime cattle imports from ROI for direct slaughter last week totalled 177 head, a decrease of 160 head from the previous week. A further 98 cows were imported last week from ROI for direct slaughter in NI plants. Meanwhile exports from NI to ROI consisted of six prime cattle and 47 cows with no cattle exported from NI to GB for direct slaughter.

Deadweight prime cattle prices in NI last week reported a mixed performance. The average NI steer price last week was up 1.5p/kg to 393.3p/kg from the previous week while the R3 steer price increased by 1.2p/kg to 403.9p/kg. The average heifer price in NI last week was back 0.9p/kg to 396.2p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back 1.3p/kg to 403.9p/kg. In the same week last year the R3 heifer price was 374.4p/kg, 29.5p/kg behind current levels. The average NI young bull price last week decreased by 1.8p/kg to 375.8p/kg while the R3 young bull price increased by 0.4p/kg to 387.9p/kg. Meanwhile the NI cow trade came under pressure with prices back across all grades from the previous week. The average NI cow price last week was back 3.8p/kg to 267.7p/kg with the O3 cow price back 4.6p/kg to 296.6p/kg.

The average steer price in GB last week increased marginally by 0.1p/kg to 413.6p/kg while the R3 steer price increased by 0.8p/kg to 422.3p/kg. This puts the differential in R3 steer prices last week between NI and GB to 18.4p/kg. In the same week in 2020 the R3 steer price differential was 6.8p/kg. The average heifer price in GB last week was back 0.7p/kg to 410.9p/kg while the R3 heifer price was back 0.6p/kg to 421.0p/kg. This places the differential in R3 heifer prices last week between NI and GB at 17.1p/kg, while in the corresponding week in 2020 it was 7.0p/kg. The GB cow trade remained under pressure last week with the average cow price back 0.9p/kg to 256.7p/kg. The O3 cow price was back 1.8p/kg to 282.3p/kg, 14.3p/kg behind the same price in NI.

Last week in ROI the cattle trade showed signs of improvement across the majority of price reported grades. The R3 steer price increased by the equivalent of 1.4p/kg to 354.6p/kg, almost 50p behind the R3 steer price in NI. The R3 heifer price increased by 1.2p/kg to 359.5p/kg while the R3 young bull price increased by 1.1p/kg to 341.4p/kg. The O3 cow price in ROI last week recorded an increase of 0.9p/kg to the equivalent of 290.6p/kg, 6p/kg below the same price in NI.

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

	W/E 27/11/21	Northern Ireland	Rep of Ireland	Scotland	Northern England	Midlands & Wales	Southern England	GB
Steers	U3	406.1	362.5	420.9	425.2	426.4	428.4	424.3
	R3	403.9	354.6	424.3	424.2	421.5	417.3	422.3
	R4	399.2	353.6	423.4	426.6	420.0	409.8	423.1
	O3	392.9	342.1	409.4	409.6	396.8	396.3	402.7
	AVG	393.3	-	419.0	416.8	410.4	403.9	413.6
Heifers	U3	409.5	367.2	426.4	432.8	433.9	427.3	430.0
	R3	403.9	359.5	423.4	421.6	421.7	417.1	421.0
	R4	403.2	360.6	421.5	424.2	419.3	414.4	420.9
	O3	393.7	352.2	412.5	404.2	394.0	396.1	398.8
	AVG	396.2	-	419.4	415.2	406.3	400.9	410.9
Young Bulls	U3	394.8	349.5	404.9	417.8	418.7	409.5	413.9
	R3	387.9	341.4	409.2	412.7	414.3	407.6	412.4
	O3	368.8	329.6	394.1	382.6	394.2	369.8	389.5
	AVG	375.8	-	398.8	397.1	403.1	377.7	399.5
Prime Cattle Price Reported	5970	-	6652	6978	6976	4472	25078	
Cows	O3	296.6	290.6	279.3	285.3	282.7	279.1	282.3
	O4	297.6	290.1	284.8	288.5	283.3	278.7	284.1
	P2	258.8	260.0	228.8	243.3	242.0	236.1	239.9
	P3	278.1	277.7	248.9	260.6	260.4	255.7	258.2
	AVG	267.7	-	269.3	267.1	252.8	249.2	256.7

Notes: (i) Prices are p/kg Sterling-ROI prices converted at 1 euro=84.19p 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 27/11/21	1st QUALITY			2nd QUALITY		
	From	To	Avg	From	To	Avg
Finished Cattle (p/kg)						
Steers	242	266	250	208	241	223
Friesians	185	188	186	175	183	179
Heifers	226	270	235	185	225	205
Beef Cows	174	245	190	140	173	155
Dairy Cows	124	157	130	80	123	108
Store Cattle (p/kg)						
Bullocks up to 400kg	240	300	257	190	239	215
Bullocks 400kg - 500kg	220	260	238	175	219	198
Bullocks over 500kg	215	246	230	170	214	195
Heifers up to 450kg	230	267	242	185	229	205
Heifers over 450kg	210	247	225	170	209	195
Dropped Calves (£/head)						
Continental Bulls	360	460	400	235	355	300
Continental Heifers	250	340	300	150	245	205
Friesian Bulls	150	250	200	50	145	100
Holstein Bulls	120	190	140	1	115	60

SHEEP TRADE

NI SHEEP BASE QUOTES

(P/Kg DW)	This Week 29/11/21	Next Week 06/12/21
R3 Lambs up to 22kg	565-570p/kg	565-570p/kg

REPORTED SHEEP PRICES

(P/KG)	W/E 13/11/21	W/E 20/11/21	W/E 27/11/21
NI L/W Lambs	527.7	534.9	520.7
NI D/W Lambs	549.6	565.2	553.4
GB D/W Lambs	597.4	600.1	600.6
ROI D/W	585.2	598.6	584.1

Deadweight Sheep Trade

Quotes from the local processors for R3 grading lambs remained firm and ended the week ranging from 565-570p/kg up to 22kg. Lamb supplies increased last week with 9,126 lambs processed in local plants, up 1,170 head from the previous week. In the same week last year 8,992 lambs were processed locally. A further 6,074 lambs were exported from NI to ROI for direct slaughter last week, a notable decrease of 1842 head from the previous week. The deadweight lamb price in NI last week was 553.4p/kg, down 11.8p/kg from the previous week. The average deadweight lamb price in ROI last week was the equivalent of 584.1p/kg, down 14.5p/kg from the previous week.

Liveweight Sheep Trade

Many of the marts reported a decline in the number of lambs passing through the sale rings this week. In Swatragh on Saturday 900 lambs sold from 465-575p/kg compared to 1175 lambs sold from 526-607p/kg last week. On Monday in Kilrea 550 lambs sold from 530-549p/kg compared to 820 lambs sold from 538-584 the previous week. This week in Enniskillen 602 lambs sold from 509-575p/kg compared to 842 lambs sold from 485-570p/kg the previous week. In Markethill on Thursday 920 lambs sold from 530-567p/kg compared to 1360 lambs sold from 510-538p/kg last week. Top reported prices for culled ewes generally ranged from £140-£192, with a top reported price of £192 in Saintfield on Tuesday.

LATEST SHEEP MARTS (P/KG LW)

From: 27/11/21		Lambs			
To: 02/12/21		No	From	To	Avg
Saturday	Omagh	576	506	541	-
	Swatragh	900	465	575	-
Monday	Kilrea	550	530	549	-
	Massereene	702	500	560	-
Tuesday	Saintfield	555	505	584	-
	Rathfriland	625	502	590	526
Wednesday	Ballymena	1665	512	605	530
	Enniskillen	602	509	575	-
	Armoyle	536	520	585	-
	Markethill	920	530	567	-

Information supplied by LMC / DAERA/ AHDB/ DAFM

LMC does not guarantee the accuracy or completeness of any third party information provided in or included with this publication.

LMC hereby disclaims any responsibility for error, omission or inaccuracy in the information, misinterpretation or any other loss, disappointment, negligence or damage caused by reliance on third party information.

Not for further publication or distribution without prior permission from LMC

Contact us

T: 028 9263 3000
E: bulletin@lmcni.com
W: www.lmcni.com

