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**REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY INSPECTION COMMITTEE ON THE  
APPLICATION OF THE CLASSIFICATION SCALE FOR CARCASSES  
OF ADULT BOVINE ANIMALS AND SHEEP**

**(ARTICLE 42(2) OF REGULATION (EC) No 1234/2007)**

**CONTROL VISIT CARRIED OUT IN:**

**GREAT BRITAIN (UNITED KINGDOM)**

**22 – 26 APRIL 2013**



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The programme of the control visit in the United Kingdom from 21 to 26 April 2013 is shown in Annex 1. During this mission, visits were made to cattle abattoirs,

The choice of the abattoirs visited was partly determined by the fact that in the UK it is common that abattoirs hip-suspend carcasses after their weighing and classification. This complicates severely the monitoring of the classification results in the chillers, particularly on conformation. The abattoirs visited do not apply this hip-suspension or agreed not to do so for the time of the control visit.

## **1. CARCASS CLASSIFICATION**

### **1.1. Introduction**

General information about beef carcass classification in Great Britain (legislation, control, statistics) is provided in Annex 3. Beef carcass classification in England and Wales is under the direct control of the Rural Payments Agency (hereafter RPA) who is also responsible for issuing the licences to classifiers. RPA is an Executive Agency of Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (hereafter DEFRA) and is responsible for administering the Beef Carcass Classification (BCC) scheme in England and Wales on behalf of DEFRA and the Welsh Government. In Scotland carcass classification is controlled by the Scottish Government, Food and Drink Industry Division.

Carcass classification is compulsory carried out in slaughterhouses with an average throughput in excess of 75 adult bovine animals per week, i.e. currently in 63 plants in England and Wales and 12 plants in Scotland. Control bodies also inspect premises slaughtering 75 or less bovines per week (small scale operators) where operators choose to be part of the BCC scheme. These small scale operators are required to adhere to the same requirements as those above the 75 animal threshold. There are 6 small scale operators in England and Wales and 2 small scale operators in Scotland

Employees of a slaughterhouse can carry out classification or the services of the Meat & Livestock Commercial Services Limited (hereafter MLCSL) can be utilised, MLCSL being the only organisation offering such a service to the slaughtering industry in Great Britain.

The classifiers must have successfully completed a classification competence test, before they can be issued with a licence. To obtain a classification licence, applicants must, after adequate training, demonstrate their technical ability and competence by classifying 40 carcasses under test conditions. The pass rate is a minimum accuracy of 80% with no classification differences exceeding more than one full class for either conformation or fat, and no category errors. All tests in England and Wales are under the control of the RPA who is also responsible for issuing and controlling the use of the classification licences. In the case of non-MLCSL classifiers these tests are held at the centre where they are normally employed, however with MLCSL classifiers it will be held either at their standardisation exercises or at the plant where they usually undertake classification duties.

In the case of Scotland, prospective classifiers are tested by classification inspectors of Scottish Government, Food and Drink Industry Division before being licensed. The test involves the classification of 20 carcasses only. Successful candidates are allowed no

more than a 20% error on the assessment of the carcass conformation and fat level. There is no error allowed on the category of the carcass.

Senior Technical Inspectors who are part of the RPA Inspectorate in England and Wales and inspectors of Scottish Government, Food and Drink Industry Division in the case of Scotland, undertake twice quarterly controls of each slaughterhouse. Classification results are checked twice quarterly during visits but this may not be the case for individual classifiers as it will depend on working pattern and the results checked.. All visits are unannounced. Subsequently, a classification report (BCC2 Ver. 6.0 – RPA form) is completed. The report includes: a verification of the classifier's licence; the type of carcass dressing in use; whether the labels are in the correct locations and contain the relevant information; a sample check weighing of carcasses is made to ensure this is being correctly carried out; whether the information passed back to suppliers accurately reflects the information shown on the slaughter record (not the case for Scottish form). Moreover, the results of the carcasses classified, which must be a minimum of 25 in respect of small scale operators for whom checks are only required once per quarter, or 40 carcasses for those subject to checks twice per quarter, are recorded on the report form (BCC2 Ver. 6.0 – RPA form). The form gives the individual details of each carcass checked and any differences found with the category and classification. A twenty percent error rate is acceptable for both conformation and fat. A follow-up visit is made in case the error rate is greater. No category errors are allowed. If the classifier fails two consecutive checks, the licence may be withdrawn and will require a further test before reinstatement.

In England and Wales where there is evidence that an offence has been committed under the national Regulations, the Secretary of State for England or the Minister for Natural Resources and Food for Wales, may issue an informal written warning, saying that an offence has been committed, advising what steps should be taken and warning of possible future action.

In addition, the regulations provide for three kinds of formal enforcement action:

- enforcement notice;
- penalty notice; and
- criminal prosecution.

The enforcement and penalty notices are relatively new having only been in operation with RPA since the beginning of 2012 and apply to Beef Carcass Classification and Dead Weight Price Reporting in England and Wales.

The Senior Technical Inspectors hold standardisation exercises up to twice per year. Forty carcasses are used for each exercise. Representatives of the Scottish Meat & Livestock Inspectorate and senior inspectors of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) Northern Ireland attend standardisation exercise(s) with RPA Inspectors.

For England and Wales the classification key is set by the RPA Inspectorate and discussed with a representative of the MLCSL senior management after the managers individually classify the carcasses.

In Great Britain, abattoirs registered under the BCC must ensure that adult bovine carcasses are dressed in line with one of the three recognised dressing specifications namely: Standard Specification, EC Reference Specification or UK Specification. All three are in operation in GB with the high throughput abattoirs favouring the UK Specification and the small scale operators using both the UK and Standard Specifications. The abattoirs where beef carcass classification is applicable use three carcass presentations, i.e.:

	Cod/ Mammary (Udder)	Topside (Crown) fat	Flank (Bed) fat	Brisket fat	Thin skirt
"Standard specification"	On	On	On	On	On
EC reference specification	Off	Off	On	On	Off
"UK specification"	Off	Off	Off	Off	Off

The 28 abattoirs that participate in the price reporting use the "UK specification" (20 price reporting abattoirs in England - recently reduced from 21, 7 in Scotland and 1 in Wales).

In the five plants visited, carcass marking and identification was carried out by means of labelling, all the labels seen were of the luggage and adhesive types.

Carcass classification in Great Britain is based on the EUROP beef classification grid. Sub-divisions are used for some classes. For conformation the classes P, O and U are sub-divided into two sub-classes (i.e. P-, P+, O-, O+, U- and U+). The fat classes 4 and 5 are sub-divided into L (low) and H (high). The introduction of sub-classes for all conformation and fat classes has been considered since last visit of the Committee (8 years ago), particularly in view of the possible use of automated grading techniques in the future.

The Community inspection committee uses all sub-classes available in the EUROP grid in order to make a sound comparison with the British classification and to help ensure uniformity within the committee and to identify possible trends in classification. During the control visit, the EU classification standard is an agreed standard, initially between the two experts representing the European Commission, and subsequently with the whole Committee. This agreed standard is then compared with the original classification results of the abattoirs visited. For borderline cases (e.g. where a carcass is O+, R-), it is only fair, particularly to the local classifier, to allow a tolerance. Out of the 200 carcasses used on the exercises during this control visit, four carcasses can be considered as borderline cases for conformation and five carcasses for fat assessment.

The detailed results of the classification exercises carried out in each abattoir are shown in the summary graphs (see below). They reflect differences between the classification given by the Committee and that declared by the classifiers in the abattoirs. In all cases, the comparison is made in main classes only, as sub-classes are not used in Great Britain for all classes in the EUROP grid.

1.2. Findings

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act  
2000
- *'Commercial Interests'*



### 1.3. Conclusions and recommendations

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- *'Commercial Interests'*

- (3) The Committee was informed that purchases of cattle in Great Britain are generally carried out on the basis of dead weight and classification. Abattoirs generally use a price grid with a reference price for the class R 3/4L. This was the case in the abattoirs visited for purchases of steers, heifers and young bulls. Abattoirs use price grids, with prices differing depending on factors such as the weight range, classification, animal's age, breed, etc. Conversely, prices were determined following live weight and age for most of the cows and mature bulls, mainly purchased from live markets. Price information related to these animals may account in some of the abattoirs visited for around 10-15% of the total volume depending of the season. In previous visits, the Committee also noticed purchases of cattle from live markets. Authorities are asked to provide information regarding the current importance of cattle purchasing from live auction markets since no satisfactory explanation was provided for not including these quotations in the participation of the price reporting. The Committee stresses that if abattoirs were to purchase a considerable number of cattle from live markets, it would be necessary to include related information from live auction markets in their price reporting in order to improve representativeness.
- (4) The Committee stresses that, in accordance with Article 7 of Regulation (EC) No 1249/08, abattoir should provide feedback to their suppliers on the conformation and fat cover classification, including the carcass category and carcass presentation, irrespective on which basis purchases are made. To deprive producers of this information would clearly go against the aim of the SEUROP classification system.
- (5) Moreover, Article 7(2) of Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008 requires that the category of the carcass is communicated to the supplier by means of the corresponding letter (A, B, C, D or E). These letters should be distinguished clearly in the invoices from other marketing information on bovine categories following domestic jargon.
- (6) The Committee continues to recommend British authorities the introduction of the full range of 3 sub-classes allowed per class by the SEUROP grid: i.e. +, - and = subclasses. In fact, irrespectively of possible price differentials between sub-

classes, there is no obvious reason why the suppliers should not receive this detailed feedback when there are a remarkable presence of carcasses classified in R and 3 classes. While one of the aims of the carcass classification system is to encourage an improvement in the quality of beef production, it is obvious that limiting accuracy on carcass classification and price information would impede full transparency about market demands on quality of the carcasses.

- (7) The abattoirs report weekly to the Agriculture & Horticulture Development Board Meat Services (ADHB) the following data per carcass: date of slaughter; carcass presentation; bovine category; cold weight; classification grades; price in pence per kilogramme; kill number. The reported price relates to the gross price before any deductions are made for example for the state levy, meat inspection levy, slaughter fee, classification costs, insurance, etc.
- (8) The Committee was informed that all abattoirs reporting prices in GB use the UK dressing specification for the carcass presentation. The Committee was also informed that ADHB converts the calculated cold weight from UK dressing specification to the EC standard specification equivalent by applying the correction coefficients for fat class defined in Annex III of Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008. The Committee welcomes the uniformity in the carcass presentation used by all abattoirs to ensure price transparency towards EU suppliers and facilitates the price reporting. However, since several dressing specifications are allowed in UK, the Committee recommends strongly to the authorities to continue closely monitoring that the abattoirs correctly apply the carcass presentation at the weighting and classification point on the slaughter line. Beyond this point, abattoirs can obviously trim the carcasses further if they wish to do so, for instance in view of specific client requirements, local habits, etc. A correct application of the carcass presentation has a direct influence on the payment of the suppliers.

Furthermore, the Committee has not information on how many animals are slaughtered with a different presentation from the UK specification. As mentioned during previous missions, the variety of correction factors depending on the category of the bovine can be a cause for concern that severely complicates the price reporting from the abattoirs. The UK authorities are invited to clarify the reasons of not reporting prices for the other two presentations allowed in UK.

- (9) During the mission, the Committee noticed that bovines slaughtered under contract killing occurred in several of the abattoirs visited. However, price reporting from these animals and from animals slaughtered relating to third parties and factory owned killing are not taken into account. To this end, the prices reported on the factory owned animals should be precisely controlled to apply rules of article 15.2 of Commission Regulation (EC) 1249/2008 to avoid over or under estimation per bovine category or per carcass dressing. Also, slaughtering by contract killing should be controlled per operator and natural/legal person to ensure that the minimum throughput required to record prices (Article 15.1 of Commission Regulation (EC) 1249/2008) are not reached.

Therefore, the Committee welcomes that ADHB receives an indication from the weekly slaughtering returns of the supplier for each individual killed bovine under contract to ensure the control of yearly throughput levels. In this sense, having the prices reported from all stakeholders data segregation are facilitated for further weight adjustment between certain classes of conformation and fat cover.

- (10) Also, the Committee was informed that flat prices were only used to a limited extent in the abattoirs visited. The Committee welcomes that abattoirs when reporting prices to ADHB do flag carcasses purchased with flat prices to ensure that the above-mentioned rules on flat rate purchases are effectively applied in case these account for 35% or more of the national slaughtering.
- (11) At present, animals are not live-weighted in the abattoirs before slaughtering and there is not a harmonized criteria between abattoirs in Scotland and England/Wales for sending price information on the younger bull and heifer carcasses with a minimum dead weight or age. Therefore, it is not clear to the Committee how ADHB can ensure that prices recorded for A and E categories are related only to carcasses of adult bovines.
- (12) The Committee welcomes receiving price information for a more complete range of the category and class concerned in Article 14 (1) of Commission Regulation (EC) N° 1249/2008 to increase on a wider basis the confidence in the carcass classification and price reporting system.
- (13) The Committee was informed that the transportation of cattle from the farms to the slaughterhouse is arranged either by the farmers, agents or the abattoirs. During the visits the Committee noted that in several cases an adjustment is needed to relate to the price quoted at the abattoir gate. Therefore, the authorities should examine for each of the abattoirs involved in the price reporting whether such an adjustment of the prices is necessary, and hence ensure that, where necessary, that adjustment is indeed made. To this end, an average adjustment factor (cost per kilogram carcass weight) should be calculated and added to the average price. The authorities can decide whether the abattoirs/intermediaries or ADHB themselves shall apply this correction.
- (14) Authorities have to check carefully if any supplementary payments that are reported in the supplier invoice has to be introduced in price reporting following article 16.6 (c) of Commission Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008.
- (15) The UK authorities are again invited to clarify the calculation formula to calculate the average prices per category for Great Britain, a series of regional weighting coefficients are used that are based on fixed slaughter statistics. From what has been reported during the mission, the authorities have not changed their methodology since the previous control visit of this Committee when fixed weighting coefficients were established for heifers, steers and young bull slaughtering in England-Wales and Scotland. While one of the factors used in the formula is the number of animals per class, the carcass weights are apparently not taken into account for the determination of the average prices. The Committee is of the opinion of using the weekly slaughter volumes in tonnes of the respective correspondents for all adult bovine categories as the weighting factor rather than a fixed coefficient. So, as previously commented, the formula used for the calculation of the average prices continues to be incorrect in order to obtain weighted average prices. Furthermore, it is not clear the reason of given the same weighting share for England and Wales.
- (16) The ADHB sends the average prices for Great Britain to the European Commission by means of the NewIDES system.

- (17) In addition to the carcass classification controls, inspectors of the RPA and Scottish Office monitor the price reporting of the abattoirs. In principle this price monitoring is made once per quarter for each price reporting abattoir and covers a sample check on 10% of the prices for one week. However, where the checks reveal discrepancies in the initial sample the check is increased to 20%, and to 100% where further errors are found in the extended check. A comprehensive standard form is used to report on this monitoring. Examples of a control report per abattoir visited are shown in Annex 8. As suggested in previous missions, the Committee recommended that for each control visit the abattoirs receive a copy of the control report always available for cross-checking purposes which were not the case during the mission.
- (18) In order to complete the price monitoring, it is appropriate to include also a periodic verification of the calculation of the average national prices carried out by the ADHB. The findings during this visit illustrated the need for such a periodic monitoring (e.g. as regards ineligible classes; the correction coefficient for the carcass presentation; the up-to-date list of price reporting abattoirs, etc.). In particular, correction coefficients applied by ADHB to calculate average weighted prices following different dressing specifications should be also cross-checked by other institutions (i.e. RPA, Scottish Government or DEFRA) to ensure price transparency between UK operators under different dressing specifications. Also, this need of monitoring was illustrated by the findings of previous abattoir visits in GB and NI. To this end, the prices reported on the basis of weekly slaughtering output should be precisely controlled to avoid over or under estimation per bovine category, per carcass dressing and per region.
- (19) Furthermore, in order to make the monitoring on the price reporting more effective, the Committee encourages the various competent authorities concerned to examine possibilities to reinforce administrative cooperation among them at national and regional level. Rotational checks from central inspectors should be also clearly established for prices reported on each region. Central authorities might also extend the formation exercises to price reporting for local classifiers and stakeholders. Additionally, that would enable the authorities to provide further explanations or clarifications to the correspondents on how the reporting should be carried out in accordance with Union legislation.

## **2.2. Conclusions and recommendations**

The price reporting system in Great Britain is satisfactory and should provide a good reflection of the carcass prices for adult bovine. However, representativeness can be improved by recording prices from animals purchased in live markets, slaughtered under contract killing or from any natural or legal person who sends bovines for slaughtering. Certain adjustments should be made in order to ensure correct calculation of regional average prices and the Committee recommends authorities to obtain from slaughterhouses the full range of accessible carcasses for price reporting.

Further, price correcting following transport costs is needed in some cases to get prices paid to the supplier upon delivery of the animal to the slaughterhouse.

The Committee was pleased to note that the abattoirs visited provide very comprehensive information for the communication of the classification result as required under EU

legislation. However, the abattoirs are also obliged to indicate that information to suppliers when the animal is purchased from live markets.

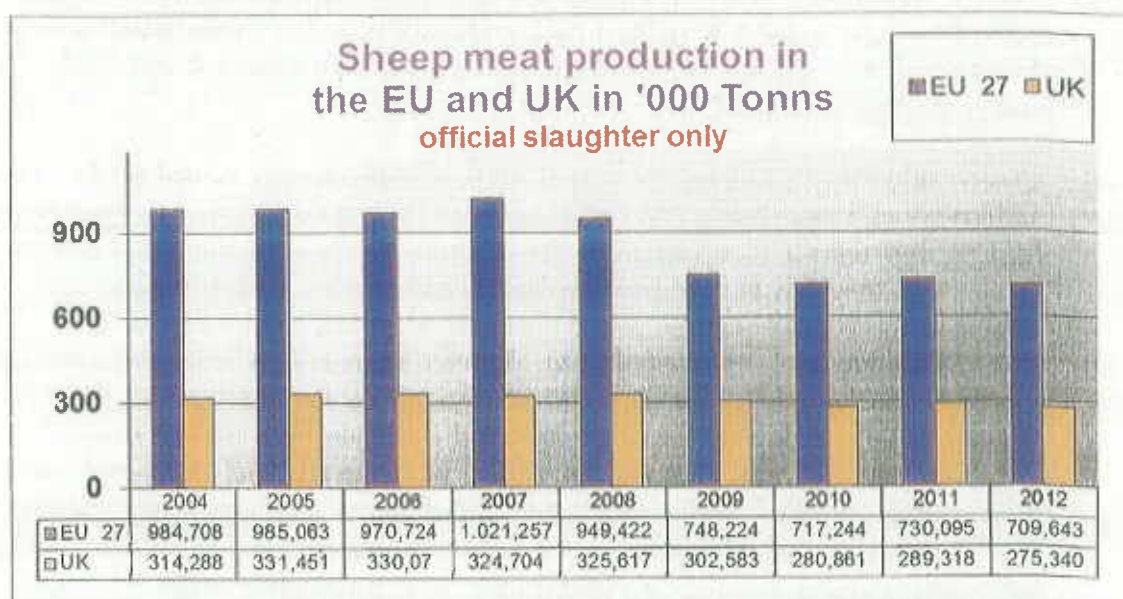
The Committee encourages the authorities to continue the close monitoring of the price reporting from the abattoirs in order to ensure the accuracy of the reported prices. Nevertheless, the Committee recommends that the monitoring of the price reporting is not limited to a verification of the reporting by the abattoirs, but also includes a periodic check by the UK authorities on the calculation of the average national prices.

Finally, the Committee suggests keeping a copy in the slaughterhouses always available for cross-checking purposes. The Committee encourages the authorities to pay more attention to these aspects that were raised in previous missions.

The authorities are invited to inform the Commission services on any measures taken or envisaged regarding price reporting in view of the Committee's findings and recommendations set out above.

### 3. SHEEP SECTOR

The UK has by far the largest sheep sector within EU and any changes in the Great Britain (GB) and Northern Ireland (NI) on sheepmeat output will inevitably have a significant impact on the overall European Union market (see chart below).



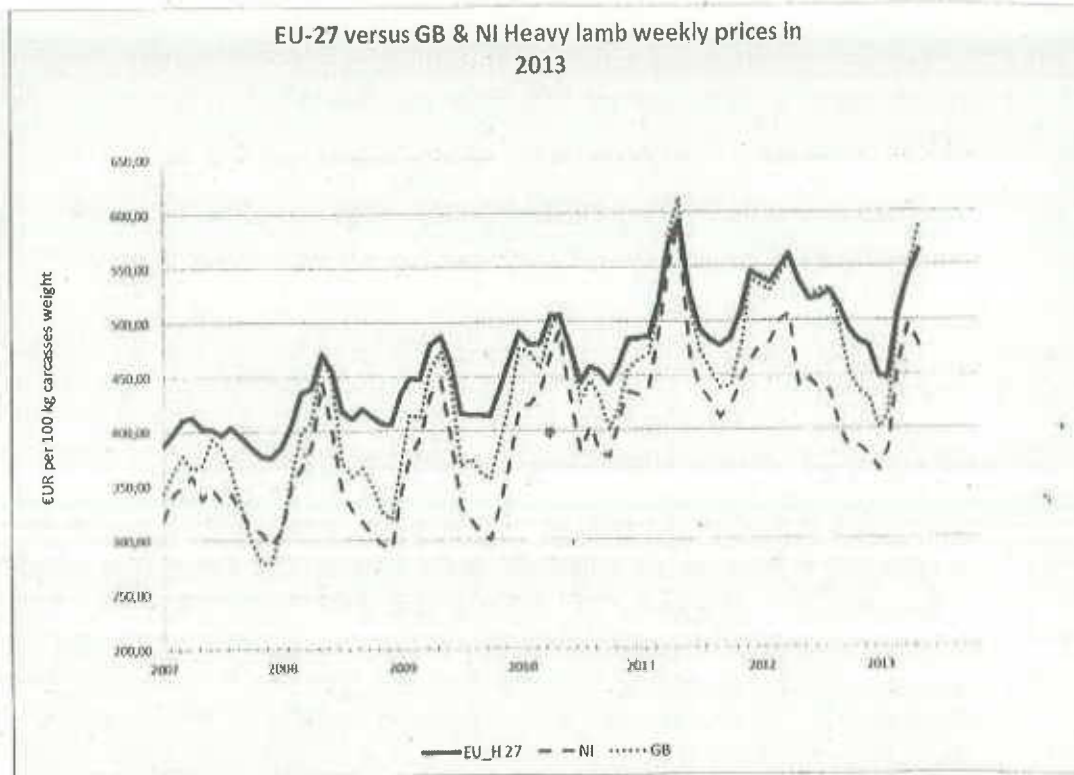
Sheep production systems are many and diverse, due to the varied conditions under which sheep are kept (Hills, Uplands or Lowlands) and the multiplicity of breeds and crosses available with wool types, milk breeds, hardy rustic breeds and those that have

focused on meat production.

### 3.1 Findings.

- (1) Following Eurostat data for UK, sheep slaughtering in 2012 totalled 13,77 million heads translated into a sheep meat production of around 276,000 tonnes (-5% drop on year earlier levels). However, the Committee was informed that 10,3 and 3,5 million heads were slaughtered in England and Wales respectively while slaughtering amounted 6,74 million heads in Scotland. Authorities are invited to clarify that discrepancy.
- (2) Sheep carcass classification is not compulsory in the UK. However, the use of some type of grid (called MLCSL sheep carcass classification scheme) is widespread between main plants slaughtering sheep. The Committee was informed that 23 plants in England, 15 plants in Scotland and 6 plants in Wales have performed sheep classification during 2012 with 3,3 and 3 million of sheep heads being classified in England and Wales respectively whereas 1,33 million heads classified in Scotland.
- (3) In fact, the British experts and premises visited admitted that the grading system currently in use in the UK is the EUROP classification for conformation and for fatness with the numeric (1-5) assessment subdivided in classes 3 and 4 into 3L (low), 3H (high), 4L and 4H.
- (4) Classification in UK abattoirs is carried out by graders, mainly trained by the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLCSL) services. Abattoirs can buy in services from MLCSL but remain independent of the abattoir. Some companies use in-house graders who they may have trained themselves and who are not supervised.
- (5) The Committee was informed that in abattoirs from UK at least two dressing specifications agreed by the industry are applied on sheep carcasses: "MLCSL standard": kidneys, kidney fat, diaphragm and cod/udder fats are left with tail on and "tail removed specification" as above with the tail off. However, other specifications recorded as company specification can be also used on the slaughter line before the carcass is weighed and classified. Authorities are requested to clarify how many dressing practices are being used, their importance on the UK market, and if they are officially recognised by UK administrations, either at national or regional level. During the mission, the Committee observed that presentations adopted in the three abattoirs were the EU standard presentation with or without kidney and kidney fat and sometimes the tail being removed at 5<sup>th</sup> sacral vertebra.
- (6) The Committee also was informed that the result of the classification process is indicated normally through labels attached to the half-carcass (see the three examples attached in Annex 9.1). This marking appears not to be in line with Community SEUROP grid that includes the indication of the age categories: L under 12 months and S above (see article 30.3 of Regulation (EC) No 1249/2008).

- (7) Farmers produce lamb on a year round basis and supply to the market seasonally. Therefore, the lamb market is subject to seasonal fluctuation of quotations, with prices highest in April and May and falling in June (see chart below). Due to poor season in 2012, lambs were finished later and arrived to the market even into early 2013 with a considerable increase of slaughtering (+3%).



- (8) The sheep farmer's direct consumer is the lamb buyer based either at a livestock market or at an abattoir if selling deadweight. Following data published by Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), around 53% of finished lambs are sold in England through livestock markets whilst the other 47% are sold to abattoirs on a deadweight basis. However, no information was available for England, Scotland and Wales on how many direct sales were done via auction market or via slaughterhouses. Authorities are invited to complete these figures if the information is available.
- (9) The MLCSL provided in the past comprehensive guidance for payments based on a classification grid which forms at present the basis of payment for many outlets. Therefore, processing plants operate different payment grids where in many of them the EUROP grid is been used as the pricing basis (lamb R3L as target). Most buyers specify an acceptable weight range, with a maximum weight accepted for payment as 21,5 kg carcass weight and do not buy lambs outside this range. The fatness range is also fixed but buyers may be prepared to accept poorer conformation if the market is under-supplied. The Committee was informed that selling by classification is favoured by those abattoirs seeking to coordinate regular supplies to meet export and large retailer needs.
- (10) The Committee found that comparing pricing between visited plants were rather complicated. In the examples analysed, prices from deadweight selling were often based on published auction market prices with agreed scales of penalties/premiums set relating to carcass classification results, however in practice real



penalties/premiums applied can differ from agreed scales and real price can differ from auction price. Therefore this would undermine comparability of prices and reliability of any price reporting system, either public or private one. Deadweight selling can also involve either a fixed price per lamb or an agreed price per kg that may also take the carcass classification into account. See examples attached in Annex 9.2 and 9.3.

- (11) Furthermore, it makes more difficult to compare prices offered by abattoirs when dressing practices vary between kill plants and there are no correction coefficients applied.
- (12) The abattoirs do not apply a standard hot/cold rebate calculated per carcass side

This can have a greater impact on the producer return compared to cattle because the lower carcass weight means that any reductions in weight through dressing and rebates have a greater proportional effect on overall value. Furthermore, the Committee noted that suppliers are not always informed of these rebates and discounts.

- (13) The Committee was informed that are reporting deadweight based prices on a classification related to the SEUROP grid. Besides, the Committee noted from published figures reported by EBLEX (depending on ADHB), that the sample size for lambs classified and paid following classification is rather small and therefore representativeness can be challenged. However, there is no information available for knowing how much the prices reported represent approximately of all slaughtering in GB. Authorities are invited to clarify, if the information is available, how many sheep carcasses are classified in these premises and possibly paid based on classification scale related to the SEUROP grid.
- (14) The establishment reporting to ADHB indicates the category of the animal, the cold weight, conformation and fat grading and prices paid by Kg. However, information on the adjustments done for hot/cold rebate and dressing specification is not given.
- (15) ADHB confirmed to the Committee that the prices reported to the Commission for GB is an average price for lambs classified on the basis of a classification scale related to the SEUROP system.. Also, an average price of classified lambs is reported for NI (see weekly examples attached in Annex 9.5). However no indication is available on the average price on a weight basis for each quality of lamb classified. .
- (16) On the basis of the reporting, ADHB calculates weekly average prices at national level. The Committee was not able to verify this calculation, but was informed that

Great Britain is to consider as a region in itself. However, the Committee is not aware on the regional weightings applied for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland according to the relative importance of the markets and carcass categories concerned.

- (17) The Committee observed that there are no controls on the reporting in it of the prices either at plant level or ADHB premises.
- (18) On the margin of the Committee's activity itself, the Commission experts remind authorities that the basis for live sheep price reporting for the survey of prices of fresh or chilled carcasses on representative markets in the EU is the Regulation (EC) No 315/2002 of 20 February 2002 on the survey of prices of fresh or chilled carcasses on representative markets in the Community. According to Article 1 of this Regulation, the MS shall communicate the prices of the different markets and carcass categories if their annual production exceeds 200 tonnes. Since UK fulfils that requirement, average prices for sheep carcasses shall be collected throughout the different representative markets defined in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. However, ADHB reports to Commission services only prices collected from main Northern Irish markets. The Commission has requested to UK to send the information omitted from other markets of UK. During the mission, the Committee was informed that there are for sheep 70 and 37 live auction markets in England and Wales and 15 in Scotland. A summary of sheep auction markets in GB published in The British Farmer Journal are attached to the report (see Annex 9.6) Therefore, the Commission Experts urge authorities to ensure without further delay that ADHB reports to Commission average prices from the most representative markets of GB.
- (19) Moreover, authorities of UK are invited to answer accordingly the price reporting questionnaire attached in Annex for England, Wales and Scotland, in particular the chapter related with Regulation (EC) No 315/2002, regulation that is the basis for prices of fresh or chilled carcasses on representative markets in the EU. Also, the authorities are asked to confirm if it is still valid the fixed coefficient of 7,13% used from 2003 by the Commission to weight the Northern Irish prices for the calculation of the UK average price.
- (20) During the final meeting some members of the Committee pointed the absence of guidance from the Commission on the implementation of the SEUROP grid in UK. The Commission members of the Committee confirmed that due to the non-existence of national law governing sheep classification in UK the Committee could not intervene on how the current method of assessment using a non-official grid was being applied.

### **3.3 Conclusion**

The Committee needs a clear statement from British authorities if UK has decided to apply or not the Union scale for sheep classification system. On the one hand it is said that the grid is not officially applied, and on the other hand it is observed that it is a common practise. If the EUROP grid is not officially approved, the Committee do not see the reason to continue reporting prices from sheep classified in GB and NI. Furthermore, the lack of feedback of payment details from the larger abattoirs that voluntary classified sheep undermines the representativeness of these prices reported to the Commission.

At the same time, it is difficult to envisage an improvement of the transparency of the market if authorities are not involved for controlling the accuracy of price information and the standards applied during sheep dressing, classification and weighing. In particular, the large number of sheep carcass dressings, the different calculation of the hot/cold rebates and the rounding down of weights are pointed out in this report as main sources of concern.

Finally, Commission experts consider that prices from live sheep purchased from representative markets (i.e. auction markets) of Wales, Scotland and England needs to be urgently reported to comply with Regulation (EC) No 315/2002.

#### **4. FINAL STATEMENT**

The Committee appreciated the organisation, intensive fieldwork and the open exchange of views and experiences with the participants throughout the entire duration of the visit.

## Annex 1: Programme of the mission

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*

**Annex 2: List of participants and premises visited**

*List of participants*

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 40 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Personal Information*

**Annex 3: Beef carcass classification and price reporting in the United Kingdom  
(Great Britain)**

**Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs**

**BOVINE CARCASS CLASSIFICATION & DEADWEIGHT PRICE REPORTING: COMMUNITY INSPECTION COMMITTEE VISIT TO GB 21-26 APRIL 2013**

OVERVIEW PRESENTATION (v 1.0)

**Beef Carcass Classification (BCC)**

**Applicable Legislation**

- Council Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003 & Commission Regulation (EC) No 1831/2003
- Beef & Pig Carcass Classification (England) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1426)
- Beef & Pig Carcass Classification (Wales) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1426)
- Beef & Pig Carcass Classification (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (SI 2012/1426)

**Overview**

- The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is an Executive Agency of Defra and is responsible for administering the BCC scheme in England and Wales on behalf of Defra and the Welsh Government. Scottish Government is responsible for administering the BCC scheme in Scotland. The purpose of the scheme is to ensure uniformity of classification and to guarantee producers a fair payment for cattle delivered to abattoirs.
- RPA and Scottish Govt undertake unannounced inspections at all abattoirs in England, Wales and Scotland which slaughter more than 75 adult heavy animals per week on a yearly average basis. They also inspect premises slaughtering 75 or less bovine per week (small scale operators) where operators choose to be part of the BCC Scheme. These small scale operators are required to adhere to the same requirements as those above the 75 average threshold.
- There are a total of 69 BCC premises in England and Wales, 63 slaughter more than 75 adult bovine per week and 6 are small scale operators. There are 12 live throughput abattoirs in Scotland and two small scale operators. RPA and Scottish Govt inspect premises slaughtering more than 75 bovine or total bovine per quarter and three slaughtering 75 or less once a quarter.

**BCC Licensing Arrangements**

- Carcass classification is completed within abattoirs based on category, conformation and fat. Classification can be completed by either a manual or an automated process. However, the automated process is not currently used in GB. A manual classifier must be licensed by RPA / Scottish Govt and must pass a classification test set by RPA / Scottish Govt.
- All premises are classified by RPA / Scottish Govt before trading. This involves the classification of 40 carcasses (a minimum of 20 for small scale operators). Successful applicants are allowed to classify more than a 20% rate in each of the conformation and fat categories. There is no limit allowed on the category level of the carcasses.
- There are no appeals against the day of inspection. An objection is part of the RPA / Scottish Govt inspection regime. If a manual classifier is found to be unable to classify carcasses correctly then consideration will be given to issuing the relevant classifier a notice. If received, the classifier is subject to a mandatory course before they can classify again. There are 31 licensed classifiers in Scotland and 14 in England and Wales.

**BCC Slaughter Specifications**

- GB abattoirs registered under the BCC must ensure that adult bovine carcasses are processed in line with one of the following 'approved' dressing specifications: Heavy, Standard Specification, EC, Welfare or Specialisation. UK specifications are those in operation in GB with the high throughput abattoirs following the full Specification and the small scale operators using both the UK and Welfare Specifications.
- Details of the various dressing specifications are available in the RPA Beef Carcass Classification Scheme Guidance on Dressing Specifications and Carcass Classification which is issued to all BCC abattoirs in England and Wales. Similar guidance is issued in Scotland.

The diagram illustrates the classification process for beef carcasses. It shows a carcass being classified into different categories based on conformation and fat. The categories include Heavy, Standard, and Welfare. The resulting classification grades are shown as percentages of the total carcasses classified. The diagram also includes a table of classification grades and their corresponding percentages.

The diagram illustrates the classification process for beef carcasses. It shows a carcass being classified into different categories based on conformation and fat. The categories include Heavy, Standard, and Welfare. The resulting classification grades are shown as percentages of the total carcasses classified. The diagram also includes a table of classification grades and their corresponding percentages.

**BCC Inspections - General**

- BCC inspections are carried out by unannounced RPA / Scottish Govt inspectors (see in total for England and Wales and two in Scotland) who undertake testing in a live animal environment in excess with other UK inspectors. Quality checks are regularly performed during and following inspections, covering performance and paperwork produced. Inspectors must be in possession of a valid warrant card to perform inspections under the relevant legislation.

**BCC Inspection Content**

- The inspection at each abattoir will include a documentation check, accuracy of classification, marking identification (stamping or labelling), category, conformation, fitness, dressing specification and weighing. The inspector will also check that the classification is being undertaken by a licensed classifier.

**2012 BCC Inspection Results (England & Wales)**

- Total number of inspections completed = 532
- Total number of unannounced inspections = 42
- Total number of unannounced plants = 26
- Total number of operators inspected by BCC = 21/263
- The average concordance for conformation = 92.5%
- The average concordance for fat = 91.9%

**2012 BCC Inspection Results (Continued)**

- Total number of inspections completed = 144
- Total number of animals inspected = 4
- Total number of animals inspected = 4
- Total number of animals inspected by Scottish OIE = 4 (55)
- Total number of animals inspected by OIE = 16%
- Total number of animals inspected by OIE = 16%

**Bovine Dead Weight Price Reporting (DWPR)**

**Applicable Legislation**

- Control of Pesticides (2002) & Control of Pesticides (2002) Act
- Control of Pesticides (2002) & Control of Pesticides (2002) Act
- Control of Pesticides (2002) & Control of Pesticides (2002) Act
- Control of Pesticides (2002) & Control of Pesticides (2002) Act

**DWPR Overview**

- The DWPR is responsible for reporting DWPR to the European Commission on a weekly basis. RPA develops the system of gathering price data from GB farmers and reporting to the AHDB (Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board).
- The relationship between RPA and AHDB is governed by a Service Level Agreement with performance review and regular quarterly supplemented by an annual AHDB performance statement.
- Animals who slaughter more than 20,000 carcasses annually are required to report price data to the AHDB. These data are used to provide to AHDB. These data are used to provide to AHDB. These data are used to provide to AHDB.

**DWPR Reporting Requirements**

- In addition to the price information it also reports on the classification of the animal according to the EUROP grid, its sex, weight and sex (young bulls, dry cows, 24 months, store, cows and heifers) and the individual identifier.
- The prices reported are those that are paid to the producer of the animal, delivered to the slaughter in a standard form. All prices reported are in a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form.
- Animals who are required to report to the DWPR are those that are slaughtered and delivered to the slaughter in a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form.
- Animals who are required to report to the DWPR are those that are slaughtered and delivered to the slaughter in a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form, based on a standard form.
- If errors are reported between the DWPR and the AHDB, the DWPR should be able to identify the error and report it to the AHDB.

**DWPR Reporting System**

- RPA and AHDB inspectors conduct quality checks at price reporting slaughter in England and Wales to check the accuracy of the information they are providing to AHDB. These visits are unannounced. Scottish OIE and AHDB inspectors undertake similar inspections in Scotland. In respect of price information provided to AHDB, under the terms of the SLS with RPA.
- England and Wales: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- Wales: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- Scotland: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- RPA follow up all satisfactory inspections with the slaughter in writing, pointing out the issues found and what correction action needs to be undertaken. This subsequent response will be checked as part of the next quality inspection at a later date.

**BCC & OIE - Additional Enforcement Measures in England & Wales**

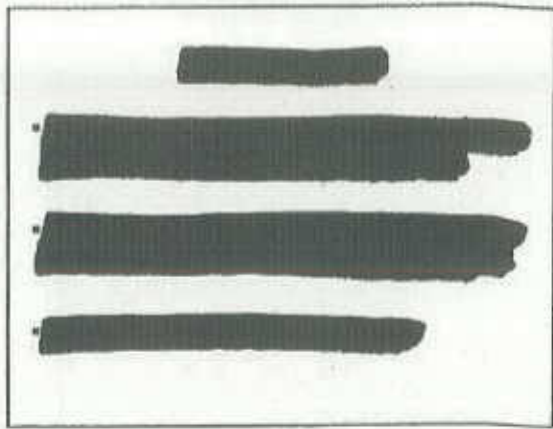
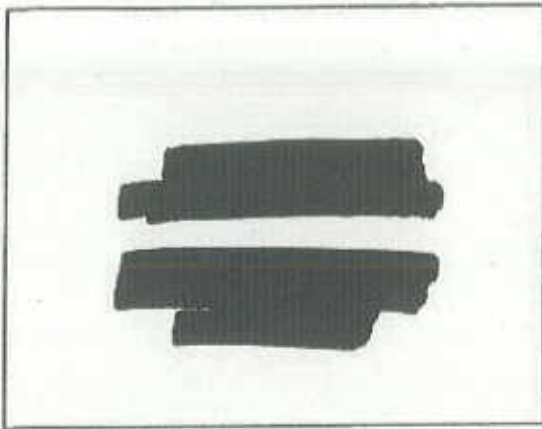
- Where there is evidence that an offence has been committed under the Regulations, the Secretary of State for England or the Minister for Rural Pesticides and Food for Wales, may take any action which is necessary for the purpose of enforcing the Regulations, including any action which is necessary for the purpose of enforcing the Regulations.
- In addition, the Regulations provide for the imposition of further enforcement measures:
  - any person who is guilty of an offence under the Regulations, may be liable to a fine of up to £5,000.
  - any person who is guilty of an offence under the Regulations, may be liable to a fine of up to £5,000.
- The enforcement role in the DWPR is provided by RPA, and the role of the OIE is to provide the data to the AHDB. The role of the OIE is to provide the data to the AHDB. The role of the OIE is to provide the data to the AHDB.
- There will be three basic levels of food penalty depending on the results of the OIE conducted. These are £100, £500 and £1,000 per animal in an individual flock.
- The enforcement and penalty system is currently being reviewed by the OIE in conjunction with RPA since the beginning of the enforcement of the BCC and OIE in England and Wales.

**BCC & OIE - Enforcement Measures in Scotland & Wales**

Level	Weight Category	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty
Level 1	Weight Category	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty
Level 2	Weight Category	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty
Level 3	Weight Category	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty	Maximum Penalty

- Level 1 offence: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- Level 2 offence: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- Level 3 offence: 18 of the 18 slaughterhouses in the country are required to report price data to the AHDB.
- Where there is evidence that an offence has been committed under the Regulations, the Secretary of State for England or the Minister for Rural Pesticides and Food for Wales, may take any action which is necessary for the purpose of enforcing the Regulations, including any action which is necessary for the purpose of enforcing the Regulations.
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- The enforcement and penalty system is currently being reviewed by the OIE in conjunction with RPA since the beginning of the enforcement of the BCC and OIE in England and Wales.





### The Key Role of the Meat & Livestock Inspectorate

- Beef Carcase Classification Scheme
- Deadweight Price Reporting
- Pig Carcase Classification Scheme
- Beef Labelling Scheme
- Import Tariff Quota-Beef
- Processing & Marketing Grant Scheme
- Emergency Schemes

### Emergency Scheme Over Thirty Month Scheme

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total
Provision	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	100,000
Used	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	50,000
Balance	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	50,000
Carried	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	100,000
Exp	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	100,000
Income	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	50,000
Profit	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	50,000
Loss	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	50,000
Total	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	100,000
Total of Schemes	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	100,000

### Emergency Scheme Light Lamb Scheme

Scheme	Min 50000 Available	Revenue at Auction	Cost on Annual Change	Profit	Appx 1000 (1000)
1998	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
1999	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2000	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2001	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2002	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2003	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2004	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2005	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2006	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2007	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2008	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2009	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2010	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2011	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2012	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
2013	1,174	17,234	10	17	17
Total	1,174	17,234	10	17	17

Year	Revenue	Cost	Profit	Loss
1998	17,234	10	17	0
1999	17,234	10	17	0
2000	17,234	10	17	0
2001	17,234	10	17	0
2002	17,234	10	17	0
2003	17,234	10	17	0
2004	17,234	10	17	0
2005	17,234	10	17	0
2006	17,234	10	17	0
2007	17,234	10	17	0
2008	17,234	10	17	0
2009	17,234	10	17	0
2010	17,234	10	17	0
2011	17,234	10	17	0
2012	17,234	10	17	0
2013	17,234	10	17	0
Total	17,234	10	17	0

### Beef Intervention

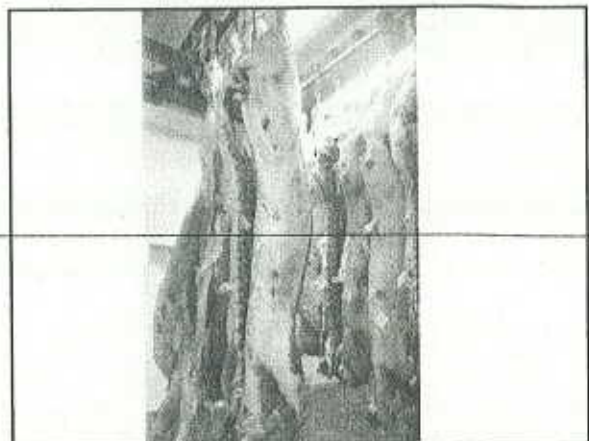
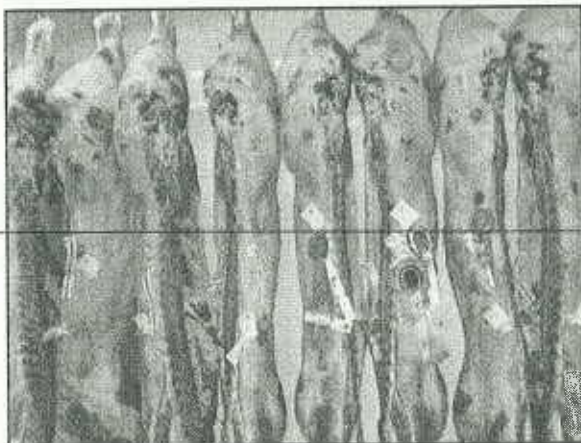
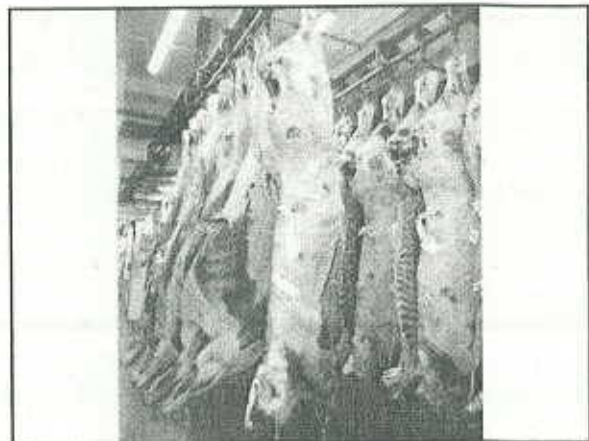
- Government Support Buying
- Abattoir
- Boning Plant
- Cold Store
- Sold on at reduced prices
- Triggered by deadweight price

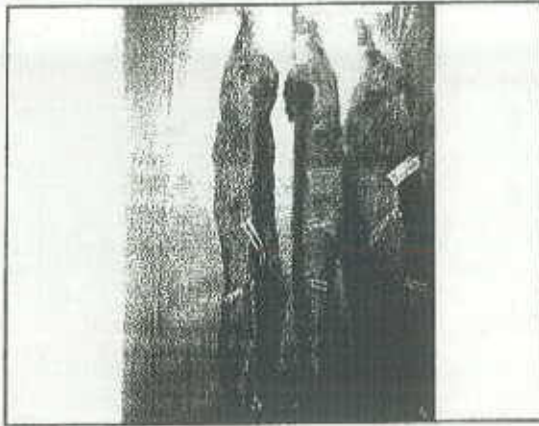
### Beef Carcase Classification Scheme

- Beef carcase classification is a visual quality assessment of beef carcasses in abattoirs.
- The carcasses can be assessed either independently by the abattoirs employees, or by the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) on contract to the abattoir. 31 full time and 8 part time classifiers.
- The overall controls of the scheme are enforced by the Scottish Government inspectorate.

### Base Price, Good Eating Quality, Marketable, Out with specification

-P1	-P2	-P3	-P4L	-P4H	-P5L	-P5H
P+1	P+2	P+3	P+4L	P+4H	P+5L	P+5H
-O1	-O2	-O3	-O4L	-O4H	-O5L	-O5H
O+1	O+2	O+3	O+4L	O+4H	O+5L	O+5H
R1	R2	R3	R4L	R4H	R5L	R5H
-U1	-U2	-U3	-U4L	-U4H	-U5L	-U5H
U+1	U+2	U+3	U+4L	U+4H	U+5L	U+5H
E1	E2	E3	E4L	E4H	E5L	E5H



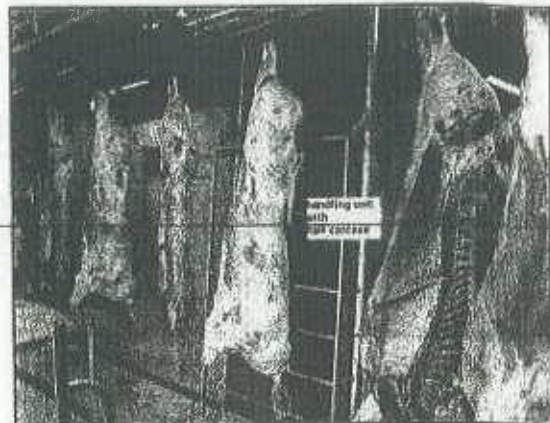
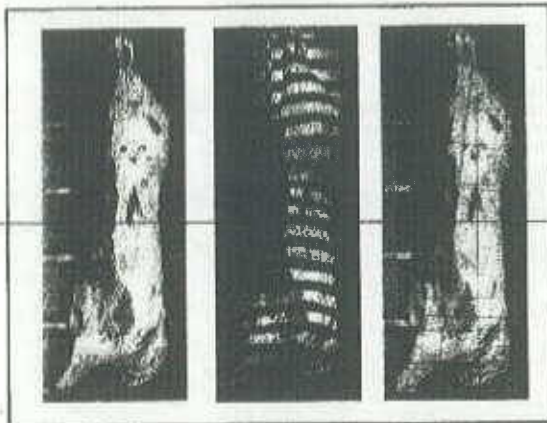
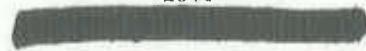


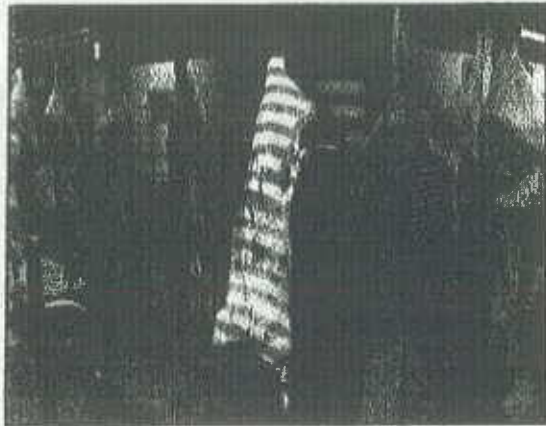
AMOUNT	12/04	16/04	22/04	29/04	05/05	12/05	19/05	26/05	01/06	08/06	15/06
TOTAL	114,000	108,000	110,000	112,000	115,000	118,000	120,000	122,000	125,000	128,000	130,000
Value	100,000	95,000	98,000	100,000	102,000	105,000	108,000	110,000	112,000	115,000	118,000
<b>AMOUNT PAID</b>											
	110	105	108	110	112	115	118	120	122	125	128
Amount	100,000	95,000	98,000	100,000	102,000	105,000	108,000	110,000	112,000	115,000	118,000
Balance	14,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000
Carry	14,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000
	14,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000	12,000	13,000	13,000	12,000

### Beef Carcase Classification Scheme-Benefits

- Marketing cattle through the classification grid allows farmers to evaluate quality, finishing timescales, and provides a system of fair payment
- It also allows wholesalers to select carcasses for their customers (retail butchers and supermarkets) specifications.
- It provides a transparent consistent method of marketing beef from farm to consumer.

### UK Visual Imaging Analysis Trials 2010





### Visual Imaging Analysis Advantages/Disadvantages

- Exact/no human error
- Transparent/the same in all abattoirs
- Pricing structure very detailed/farmer complaints

	MS14	MS14A	MS14B	MS14C	MS14D	MS14E	MS14F	MS14G	MS14H
MS14	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
MS14A									
MS14B									
MS14C									
MS14D									
MS14E									
MS14F									
MS14G									
MS14H									



### BEEF LABELLING SYSTEM

Compulsory and Voluntary  
Labelling

#### What is beef labelling?

- The beef labelling scheme is an EU system providing clear, reliable information for fresh or frozen beef and veal.
- The main purpose of the compulsory system is to allow the consumer to trace back to where the beef or veal originated without being misled.

#### Who do the rules apply to

- The compulsory beef labelling rules apply to all businesses selling fresh or frozen beef and veal.
- Slaughterhouses, cutting plants, repackaging centres, cold stores; shops market stalls, retail butchers, supermarkets and farm shops.

### Beef Labelling-Inspectorate Duties

- Scottish Government are responsible for the controls of the scheme.
- Meat and Livestock Inspectors audit licensed abattoirs and cutting plants.
- Local council EHO's enforce in the retail sector.

### Beef Labelling Compulsory Information

- Slaughtered in UK 1106
- Cut in UK 1106
- Origin UK
- Reference No. or batch code



### Voluntary Beef Labelling Scheme

- Regulations have been in place since 1997. It puts in to practice EU legislation which requires beef labelling information, apart from compulsory labelling, to be approved.
- This is approved by the authorities in the member state or states and audited by recognised verifiers.

### Voluntary Labelling

- What information needs to be approved.
- Examples are;
- Region or local region
- ~~Breed or cross breed~~
- Age or sex of the animal
- Method of production (farm assured, grass fed)
- Method of Slaughter (halal, kosher)
- Method or length of maturation

### Voluntary Claims

- "Direct from the Highlands" - Scottish beef slaughtered and processed in the Highlands.
- "Glen Fyne Beef - from herds born and bred in the Highlands of Scotland"
- "Ballindaloch" - All cattle are raised and finished within 30 miles of the Spey Valley.
- "Highland Cattle"
- "Millers Aberdeen Angus" - sired by Aberdeen Angus
- "Cairngorm Beef from the Highlands" - finished within the national park.
- "Scottish

### Voluntary Labelling

- You must prove the information you give to your customers is not misleading.

### Beef Label

- British beef
- 05/02/02/324694/3 - a reference number/code
- Rump Steak
- Weight 500 grams.
- Price £2.40
- Unit Price £4.80/Kilo
- Born in Orkney - UK
- Reared (or Fattened )in: Orkney and Aberdeenshire - UK
- Slaughtered in: Aberdeenshire - UK (2345)
- Cut in Abordeenshire - UK 2345/6789).

### Pig Carcase Classification Scheme

- An EU mandatory classification scheme for abattoirs slaughtering 200 pigs or more weekly.
- Participating abattoirs in Scotland at Vion Broxburn, Robertson's, Ardrossan, Rhinds, Elgin and SPM, Inverurie
- Vion slaughtered 77% of all Scottish pigs in 2010 from a total Scottish kill of 581,949.

### Import Tariff Quota-Beef

- Frozen beef imports from third countries are subject to an annual quota.
- All beef imported under this quota must be processed, either for ready meals such as lasagne, cooked meats or cooked pastries.



### Import Tariff Quota-Beef

- A high proportion of the beef imported comes from South America.
- This years quota approx 41,000 tonnes GB processed from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2011 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012.

### Import Tariff Quota-Beef-Inspectorate Duties

- Inspectorate duties include first licence audits to verify product, licence numbers, box totals and weights,
- Interim inspections to witness product processing and cooking.
- Final inspection to verify total processing.

**Annex 4: Comparative overview of the classification results in the abattoirs**

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*

**Annex 5: Example of labels used**

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*



## REDACTED

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*

Annex 7: Price reporting documents of abattoirs visited

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*

**Annex 8: Monitoring on price reporting: Examples of reports per abattoir visited**

**REDACTED**

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*

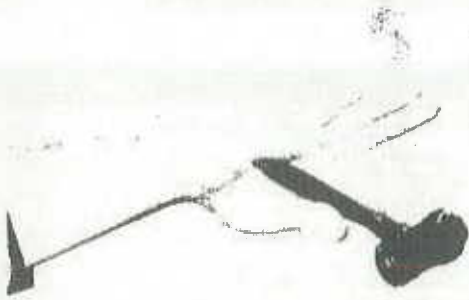
## REDACTED

Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
- Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*

*Annex 9.6: Markets of sheep in Great Britain*

# ingside it...



At Boswells Market, Roxburghshire Old season S00 lamb prices dropped by 15p/kg at Monday's (13 May) weekly sale, to average 206.1p/kg across 1,715 head. A Suffolk hogget claimed the top price of £127, with 44 new season lambs selling to £134 and averaging 275.5p/kg. Ewes averaged £53.59 across 751 head, with a Texel peaking at £127.

In the cattle ring, prices for the 112 primestock firmed slightly on the week, with bullocks averaging 232.4p/kg - 1.4p up on the week - and topping at 267p. Heifers settled at 226.8p/kg (up 2.8p/kg) and topped at 260p, while young bulls reached 218p and averaged 193.5p/kg.

Beef type over 30-month cattle averaged 154.7p/kg - 0.7p up on the week - and reached a peak of £1,566.

## SHEEP AUCTIONS

Week ending 14 May 2013

Throughput 85,350

GB Averages	Light 25-5-32kg		Standard 32.1-39kg		Medium 39.1-45.5kg		Heavy over 45.6kg	
	174.8	-4.0	184.9	-3.1	212.1	+2.7	204.8	+1.7

Region	Throughput	Light	Standard	Medium	Heavy	
Abingdon	179.6	-9.6	188.8	-2.0	211.8	199.1
Abingdon	245	-16.7	195.2	-8.0	209.8	227
Barnard Castle	179.7	-2.8	199.2	-1.0	203.8	217
Barnard Castle	180.7	-1.0	180.7	-0.8	214.7	195
Barnard Castle	179.7	-2.8	199.2	-1.0	203.8	217
Barnard Castle	180.7	-1.0	180.7	-0.8	214.7	195
Barnard Castle	179.7	-2.8	199.2	-1.0	203.8	217
Barnard Castle	180.7	-1.0	180.7	-0.8	214.7	195
Barnard Castle	179.7	-2.8	199.2	-1.0	203.8	217
Barnard Castle	180.7	-1.0	180.7	-0.8	214.7	195

## EWES

Prices quoted in £/head

Price Change

Total Entry

Region	Price	Change	Total	Entry
Abingdon	119.25	-1.24	162	162
Abingdon	57.10	-1.69	157	157
Abingdon	10.10	-1.4	152	152
Abingdon	10.95	-1.90	152	152
Abingdon	57.14	-1.27	149	149
Abingdon	55.05	-0.25	124	124
Abingdon	52.27	-0.80	87	87
Abingdon	54.47	-0.78	240	240
Abingdon	54.25	-0.27	163	163
Abingdon	53.30	-1.66	457	457
Abingdon	55.30	-1.24	28	28
Abingdon	63.60	-0.53	693	693
Abingdon	66.10	-1.35	47	47
Abingdon	61.20	-0.01	871	871
Abingdon	63.60	-1.32	754	754
Abingdon	60.70	-1.09	115	115

## EU REFERENCE PRICES

Commodity	w/e 05-05-13		w/e 05-05-11		w/e 05-05-12	
	Price	% Change	Price	% Change	Price	% Change
Belgium	270.6	-0.3	146.14	-1.7	128.7	-2.3
Denmark	411.1	0.3	310.2	-	-	-
Germany	318.9	-2.7	275.9	+1.0	319.4	+1.0
Greece	369.8	+0.0	367.2	-	-	-
Spain	275.1	-0.2	339.5	-0.8	160.1	-1.2
France	323.1	-0.3	325.6	+0.0	129.1	-1.9
Ireland	151.0	-1.2	134.1	-2.2	-	-
Italy	322.1	-2.3	310.7	-	-	-
Netherlands	337.0	-2.1	344.0	-	-	-
Netherlands	250.7	0.4	227.4	+0.0	229.0	+1.5
Sweden	413.4	-1.3	451.1	-1.5	116.5	-1.7
United Kingdom	262.6	-1.8	145.9	+0.0	141.5	-2.2
Portugal	314.7	-1.8	-	-	152.7	-
Finland	341.1	-1.8	-	-	355.3	-0.1
Sweden	140.4	-1.7	470.4	+1.8	157.6	-
UK	380.4	-1.1	339.9	-1.1	127.7	-1.2

## WEANERS

Region	Price	Change	Entry
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10

## SOWS

Region	Price	Change	Entry
Abingdon	105.00	-	10
Abingdon	105.00	-	10
Abingdon	105.00	-	10
Abingdon	105.00	-	10

## AUCTION PIGS

Region	Price	Change	Entry
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10

Region	Price	Change	Entry
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10

Region	Price	Change	Entry
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10
Abingdon	123.50	-	10
Abingdon	159	-	10



### MARKET REPORT

For more news & figures, including hourly and daily updates on livestock & grains, visit [fwi.co.uk/prices-trends](http://fwi.co.uk/prices-trends)  
 Latest sale and market reports on [fwi.co.uk/takingstock](http://fwi.co.uk/takingstock)

## MARKETS

...at a glance

Week ending 15 May 2013

## Pork spending rises in first quarter of 2013

Consumers spent 4% more on pork in the 12 weeks to 14 April, compared with the same time last year, according to analyst Kantar Worldpanel. However, higher prices meant volumes declined by 2%, as purchasers switched to fresh lamb on promotion. "In the latest four weeks, the picture looked more positive, with purchases up 1% year-on-year and spending up 4%," said a report by BPEX.

Cold weather was subduing EU demand for pork, with prices easing to €170.21/100kg in the week to 28 April. However, since mid-March UK prices had risen steadily in euro terms, suggesting an increasing preference for British pigs, while the strengthening pound had also benefited domestic prices. "As a result, the gap between UK and EU reference prices opened to over €14 by the end of April."

UK markets remained strong, with the EU-spec deadweight average pig price increasing to 162.8p/kg in the week to 11 May - 0.33p up on the week and 12.2p more than the same time last year. Throughputs dropped back to 102,792 head, with the average carcass weight at 79.13kg. Weaner values improved slightly, to £49.63 in the week to 18 May.

## CATTLE DEADWEIGHT

Week ended Saturday 11 May 2013

Average prices in p/kg dw for Great Britain - New UK specification Source: EBLEX

	3	4L	4H	3	4L	4H	3	4L	4H
U	406.2	406.7	406.5	405.0	406.2	402.2	396.3	394.6	390.3
R	402.1	404.7	410.6	388.6	399.8	398.9	384.2	386.4	374.9
O+	399.8	404.4	412.5	391.5	390.1	395.0	372.9	371.1	361.3
O	377.1	377.6	377.4	368.9	377.4	375.2	361.6	359.3	
Average	400.1			395.8			377.2		

	Southern		Central		Northern		Scotland	
	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L
U	403.7	402.5	404.8	404.2	402.5	403.8	412.0	413.4
R	396.8	394.5	395.0	395.9	403.3	409.4	411.8	412.5
O+	381.0	385.8	392.4	389.8	407.8	412.9	405.2	412.6
O	367.7	387.5	371.4	370.8	381.3	381.4	379.6	384.5
Average		384.9		394.7		403.2		408.8

	Southern		Central		Northern		Scotland	
	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L
U	399.5	402.7	404.3	404.1	404.4	401.9	410.8	413.0
R	391.7	395.6	395.6	395.2	401.1	399.2	403.7	406.9
O+	385.1	389.6	385.9	383.0	397.0	407.0	396.6	405.6
O	362.4	366.0	359.3	365.3	394.2	390.5	354.5	370.9
Average		384.6		392.3		400.8		404.1

	Southern		Central		Northern		Scotland	
	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L
U	392.6	394.0	395.6	394.0	390.9	389.9	404.4	406.7
R	387.2	383.8	385.4	382.1	379.9	382.2	391.9	393.0
O+	379.5	371.1	373.4	376.6	361.4	362.8	377.1	386.0
O	362.5	365.8	358.1	362.5	357.8	355.3	362.9	367.0
Average		378.6		381.7		367.2		385.6

	Southern		Central		Northern		Scotland	
	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L	3	4L
U	300.0	325.0	334.2	330.3	332.5	327.0	340.0	341.0
R	300.7	311.4	322.6	321.0	324.1	321.6	334.3	334.4
O+	291.1	299.6	303.3	302.5	314.3	315.9	320.2	322.1
O	283.3	284.0	295.6	297.6	295.2	299.2	309.2	312.7
Average		291.0		298.6		298.2		303.3

\*Deadweight Cattle Prices are based on the new UK carcass dressing specification implemented from January 2009. Key: Conformation U - very good, R, Good, O+ and O. Fat level 3, average, 4L and 4H, High

## LAMB DEADWEIGHT

Week ended Saturday 11 May 2013

Prices in p/kg dw for GB S00 12-21 5kg (DLO season lambs)

	No. sold	p/kg	No. sold	p/kg	No. sold	p/kg	No. sold	p/kg
E	50	501.1	68	496.3	14	486.6	4	468.9
U	488	494.7	919	495.6	293	493.2	25	459.2
R	1638	485.2	5394	483.5	1488	480.1	205	465.6
O	3607	466.5	3192	468.2	532	467.4	41	464.4

All grades sold 21670 average price 472p/kg

## PIGS DEADWEIGHT

Week ended Saturday 11 May 2013

Prices in p/kg dw England and Wales Pence change Great Britain Pence change

Up to 59.9	152.06	+1.07	152.06	+1.07
60-69.9kg	163.90	-0.41	163.90	-0.41
70-79.9kg	163.87	-0.32	163.87	-0.32
80-89.9kg	162.87	-0.31	162.97	-0.31
90kg and over	155.81	-0.82	155.81	-0.82
All pigs	162.79	-0.33	162.79	-0.33

Prices by weight and lean meat percentage - Great Britain  
 Estimated LM% 60-69.9kg 70-79.9kg 80-89.9kg over 90kg

50 and over	164.20	164.40	163.90	157.71
50	163.39	163.30	161.41	157.39
55	162.45	162.92	161.22	151.33
57	161.58	156.79	157.74	151.45
56	154.33	152.64	152.75	139.69
55	149.54	147.63	147.94	141.04
54	142.90	142.65	140.88	129.46
All pigs	163.90	163.87	162.97	155.81
GB DAPP (EU)	162.79	-0.33		
GB DAPP (UK)	159.86	0.32		

NFU will no longer be producing average Scottish deadweight prices. This is because the number of plants contributing to the Scottish price has declined to the extent that to publish a Scottish price would be misleading.

## Livestock

	This week	Last week	Oregon ago
Finished steers R4L p/kg dw (GB)	404.2	404.2	344.8
All finished steers p/kg dw (GB)	214.9	214.2	184.9
Finished heifers p/kg dw (GB)	211.5	216.2	188.8
Young bulls p/kg dw (GB)	195.5	193.7	176.1
Continental x bull calves £/head (E&W)	244.8	233.4	271.5
Freelan x bull calves £/head (E&W)	55.2	47.8	89.5
Dairy cows £/head (E&W)	1289	1320	1268
Finished lambs DW (Old season) p/kg (GB)	483.5	471.9	426.0
Finished lambs S00 (Old season) p/kg (GB)	204.0	203.8	182.9
Cull cows p/kg dw (GB)	64.6	63.6	76.9
DAPP p/kg dw GB average	162.8	162.5	148.4

## Arable

	This week	Last week	Oregon ago
Feed wheat	188.5	188.5	166.3
Milling wheat	200.5	201.1	171.0
Feed barley	173.2	173.2	162.1
Oilseed Rape	369.5	367.8	355.2
Feed peas	263.0	261.0	208.6
Feed beans	286.0	282.0	210.6

## NFU FARMERS

[www.fwi.co.uk/nfu-ipm](http://www.fwi.co.uk/nfu-ipm)

Product (March)	Price
RED DIESEL P/LITRE (AVERAGE)	21.59
RED DIESEL P/LITRE (HIGH)	25
RED DIESEL P/LITRE (LOW)	20
KEROSENE P/LITRE (AVERAGE)	N/A
KEROSENE P/LITRE (HIGH)	N/A
KEROSENE P/LITRE (LOW)	N/A
IMPORTED AM. NITRATE £/T	N/A
GRANULAR UREA £/T	N/A

These figures are from the NFU/Farmers Weekly Inputs Price Monitor, derived from farmers who take part in our monthly on-line survey. If you would like to take part, log on to [www.fwi.co.uk/nfu-ipm](http://www.fwi.co.uk/nfu-ipm). For full results see [www.fwi.co.uk](http://www.fwi.co.uk)

## SLAUGHTERING

United Kingdom 1000 head	Feb 2013 4 weeks	Mar 2013 4 weeks
Stewers	76	72
Heifers	51	52
Young bulls	19	19
Cows and adult bulls	49	47
Calves	9	10
Other sheep & lambs	897	895
Ewes & Rams	159	148
Clean pigs	286	267
Sows and Boars	20	21

\*Livestock slaughtered under the Older Cattle Disposal Scheme  
 \*\*Includes sheep and lambs slaughtered for the purpose of producing wool, and other animals slaughtered for the purpose of producing skins and other products

## REDACTED

### Exemptions applied:

- Section 41 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Information provided in confidence'*
  - Section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000  
*'Commercial Interests'*
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