# HCC Market Bulletin

February 2022

"As shown by HCC's 'Beef Supply Update' in July, the tight supply of animals onto the market – both here and around the world – has been a key factor in driving price trends. This month's Market Bulletin looks at new figures which give a hint that we may have an increased supply of cattle further down the line."

Glesni Phillips – Data Analyst

New data from the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) shows that calf registrations during 2021 were strong, with both beef and dairy registrations up on last year. The total number of calf registrations in Wales in 2021 stood at 396,200 head – 2.3% (or 8,700 head) higher than in 2020, and a 4.3% increase in registrations when compared to 2019. During recent years,

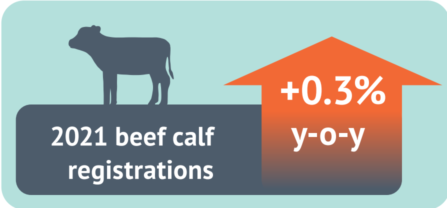
**2021**
**Calf Registrations in Wales**
**+2.3% y-o-y**

beef calf registrations – as opposed to dairy - have accounted for a smaller proportion of total registrations year-on-year, making up 66% of the total in 2021, down from 68% in 2019.

**Calf registrations in Wales (2021):**

- Beef females **+0.4%** year-on-year
- Beef males **+0.2%** year-on-year
- Dairy females **+9.1%** year-on-year
- Dairy males **+0.7%** year-on-year

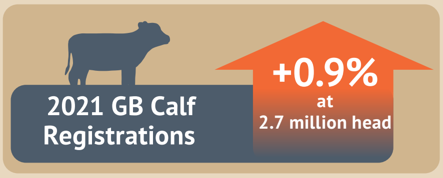
Looking at **beef** calf registrations only; males and females combined were up 0.3% on the year, and up 1.8% when compared to 2019. Males accounted for the majority (51%) which is an ongoing trend seen in recent years. There was a significant increase of 4.5% in the number of registrations during Quarter 3 (Q3) of 2021, however registrations during Q3 were similar to the 5-year average. The number of registrations recorded during Q1 and Q4 of 2021 increased by 8.4% and 3.9%, respectively, when compared to the 5-year average. This would suggest there has been an increase in the number of producers in Wales having a more defined Spring and Autumn calving block, instead of calving all year round.

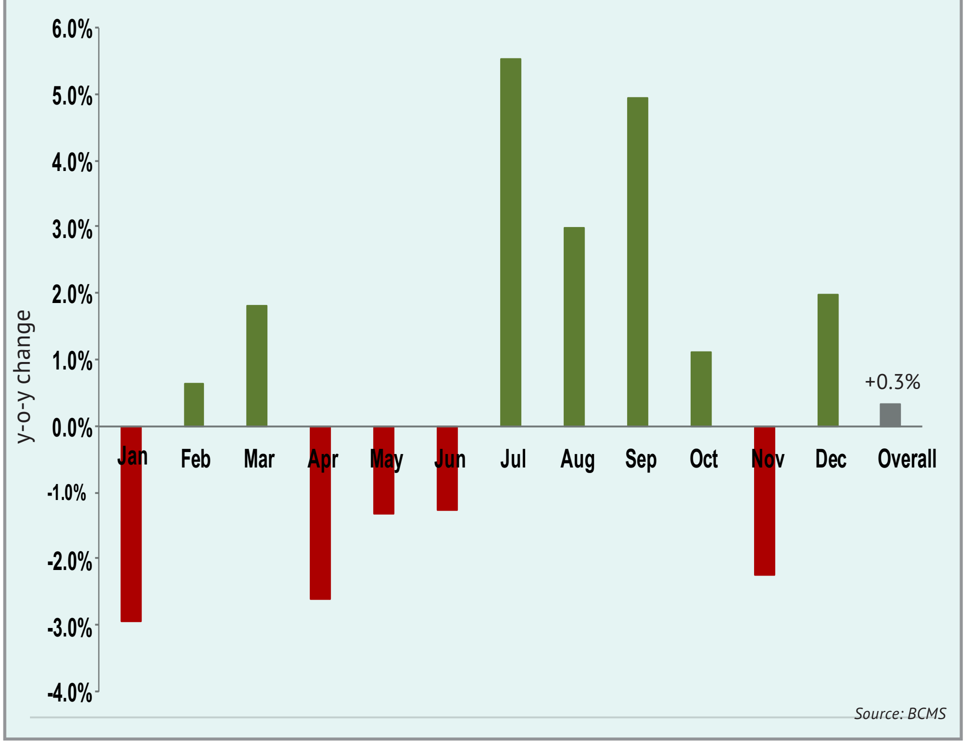



**Dairy** calf registrations also increased – up 6.2% on the year to total 134,650 head. When compared to 2019, this is a near 10% increase in the total number of dairy calf registrations in Wales. Unlike the relatively even split between sexes in the beef calf registrations; females accounted for 67% of the dairy calf registrations. This is an increase from 63% in 2019 and likely reflects the increased use of sexed semen within the industry.

## Looking Ahead

The suckler cow herd in the UK has been retracting in recent years and stood at 1.51 million head in June 2021 – 1.7% below 2020. Looking ahead, the herd shows no signs of re-building as prime heifer slaughterings during 2021 remained elevated when compared to the last decade at almost 800,000 head. Total calf registrations in Britain during 2021 were up marginally on 2019 (by 0.9%) at 2.7 million head. These figures would suggest that supply onto the domestic UK market may increase in the longer term as these animals mature and come onto the market.



## CATTLE

### Prices – week ending 12 February

The prime cattle average price at auction markets in England and Wales stood at **234.9p/kg**. This was:

- +2.9p on the previous week,
- +23p compared with year-earlier levels, and
- +41p than the 5-year average (2017-21 average: 193.6p/kg).

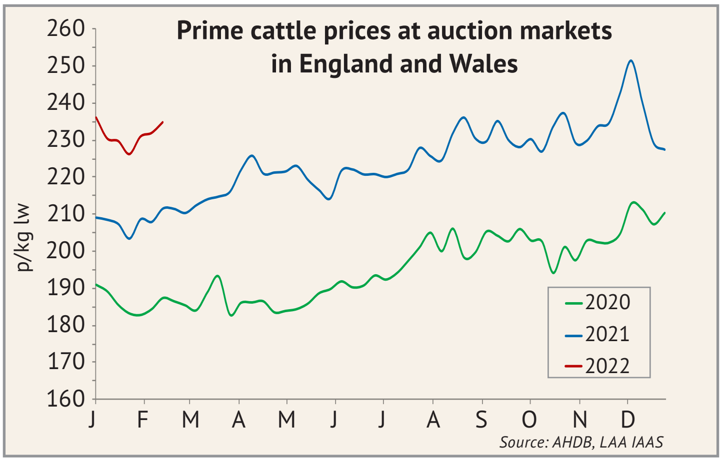
The average deadweight prices in England and Wales for steers stood at **403.9p/kg**. This was:

- -2.0p on the previous week,
- +31.6p above year-earlier levels.

The deadweight prices for heifers stood at 403.0p/kg (-2.0p on the week), young bulls at 385.2p/kg (-3.9p), and cull cows at 282.2p/kg (+6.5p).

### Throughput – January 2022

- Total cattle throughput at UK abattoirs = 212,900 head – down 7% on the year, and 11% lower than the same period in 2020.
- Total prime cattle throughput = 152,700 head - down 10% on the year.
  > *steers -12%, heifers -9%, and young bulls -1%.*
- Adult cattle throughput = 55,600 head - down 2% on the year.




**UK Beef & Veal Production**
January '22
71,500 tonnes
**-8% y-o-y**

## SHEEP

### Prices – week ending 12 February

The average prime lamb liveweight SQQ at auction markets in Wales stood at **262.1p/kg**. This was:

- +2.4p on the previous week,
- -10.5p compared with year-earlier levels, and
- almost 48p higher than the 5-year average of 214.7p/kg.

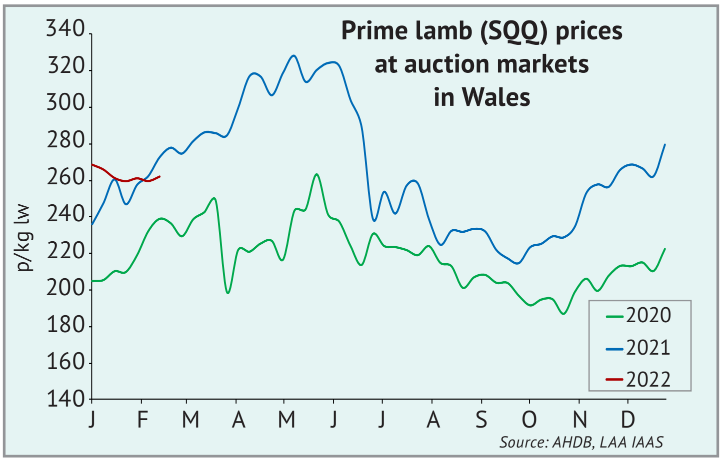
Cull ewe prices at auction markets in Wales averaged **£79.40/head**. This was:

- +£2.20 on the previous week, and
- £8.80 higher than year-earlier levels.

GB deadweight lamb prices averaged 587.9p/kg (-5.4p on the year).

### Throughput – January 2022

- Total sheep throughput at UK abattoirs = 1.0 million head – up 6% on the year.
- Lamb throughput = 908,700 head – up 4% on the year.
- Average lamb carcase weights = 20.6kg (0.6kg heavier).
- Cull ewe and ram throughput = 94,500 head – up 21% on the year.




**UK Sheep Meat Production**
January '22
21,200 tonnes
**+9% y-o-y**

## PIGS

### Prices – week ending 5 February

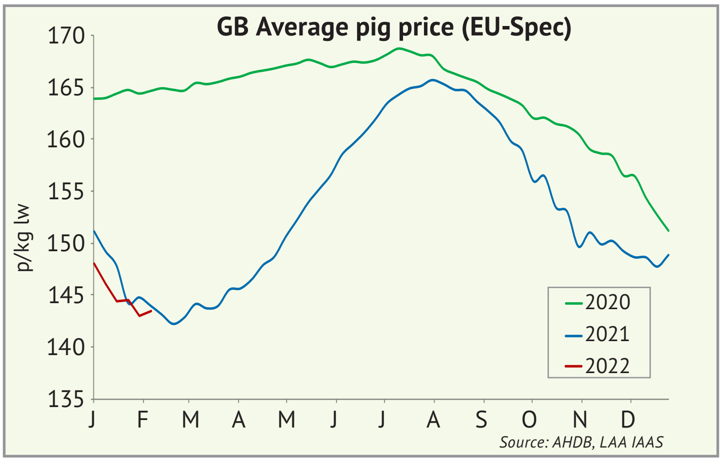
The EU-spec All Pig Price (APP) in GB stood at **143.5p/kg**. This was:

- +0.5p on the previous week,
- -0.5p compared with year-earlier levels, and
- 7.3p lower than the 5-year average (2017-21 average: 150.8p/kg).

Industry reports suggest that a number of challenges within the sector is putting pressure on the market – with limited processing capacity at some plants reducing throughput. Throughput figures for January demonstrate heavier pigs being processed as a result of many being on farm for longer than anticipated.

### Throughput - January 2022

- Total pig throughput at UK abattoirs = 895,400 head – up 3% on the year.
- Sow and boar throughput = 22,800 head – up 59% on the year, but similar to historic levels.
- Clean pig throughput = 872,600 head – up 2% on the year.
- Average clean pig carcase weights = 94.3kg, 4kg heavier on the year (reflecting the backlog of pigs which remain on farm).




**UK Pork Production**
January '22
85,500 tonnes
**+8% y-o-y**