



JJ Morris January Sales

Fat Lambs – There is heavy competition for fat lambs from deadweight outlets and collection centres but where would their prices be if not for the trade set at auction marts?

2500 lambs were sold through our Cardigan and Whitland marts in January with a week still to go. The SQQ averages have ranged from 175ppk up to 185ppk and best prices have got over 190ppk on a weekly basis. All in all lambs have averaged £70/head, which they also did this time last year. Plenty of heavy lambs have got over £90 and your medium weight lambs that are possibly most in demand average over £80/head weekly. We urge everyone to support their local livestock markets to aid in improving and retaining the lamb prices through the year.

Store Cattle – Store prices are up £60/head from the same time last year. A promising start to the year with an average of £740/head; a figure that doesn't tell the whole story unless you've seen the sizes and ages of the cattle that were sold to achieve it. The number of young, and though shapely but relatively small in size, cattle through Whitlands' second store sale of the month that got over the £900 mark was simply astounding. Our Saturday sale seems to attract a lot of farming buyers who are always more prepared to pay more for cattle that suits their requirements. 259 store cattle were sold in two sales through Whitland in January and the trade should attract many more as the spring approaches.

Calves – Cardigan have seen good numbers of calves in January and a strong trade especially for the quality black and white bull calves that they have had. Friesian bulls have averaged £60/head in Cardigan through January getting to a top of £108.

Whitland calf section has seen a comparatively quieter January where numbers are concerned, but we are sure that February will be busier with the local spring calving pattern taking off. Plenty of anxious buyers are in attendance so the demand is there and the trade has been there also for both calves and weaned calves. Beef breed calves have averaged over £200/head in January with the top price of the month of £545 for three nice British Blue heifers 4 months old.

Crymych Mart – Crymych is without a doubt one of the busiest and best supported sheep centres in the three counties. Plenty of buyers for both cull ewes and store lambs and a very competitive trade. The best store lambs sell almost as well as in the fat section and the variety seen this January has returned an average of £45/head. Cull ewes have crossed the £100 barrier in each sale and averaged £47/head (£3 up on January 2017).

Breeding sheep – There have been some flock dispersals early in 2018 and the trade on in lamb ewes has been very dependent on weather. As we all know wet weather is not the shepherd's best friend and that is communicated quite clearly in the trade. The strong trade seen for two flocks sold before Christmas where we saw a top price of £178 and average of £118/head was not there in the wet January sales. Top prices got to £143 and the average was just below £90/head. We also saw the first ewe and lamb couples of the year and a ewe and single lamb sold at £150. The second sale of the month saw more couples entered and top price was £133 for a ewe with twins and 32 couples averaged £107/couple.