

**East of  
England**  
FARMING  
CONFERENCE  
2015



**Guy Smith**  
**NFU Vice President**



Cambridge

Bury St Edmunds

Ipswich

Felixstowe

Harwich

Colchester

Stansted Airport

Chelmsford

 *St Osyth Priory*

London

# Essex 'desert' changes tack to beat the drought

Dry conditions have created a virtual desert in one part of Essex. **Edward Long** finds out how one combineable crops farmer is responding

CHANGES in the seasonal weather pattern and a severe lack of rain are forcing an Essex farm to change its strategy and tailor cropping to the new arid conditions.

Between 1964 and 1982 the average annual rainfall measured at an official weather station at Lee Wick Farm, St Osyths, part of Wigboro Wick Farm, was just 513mm (20.2in). That was low enough for it to gain a listing in *The Guinness Book of Records* as the driest farm in the country.

"But since then we have had even less rainfall," says Guy Smith, who, with brother Philip and father Andrew, farms 520ha (1300 acres) of combineable crops and potatoes on the coast near Clacton. "Last year we recorded just 12.3in, the lowest rainfall total for over 40 years and far worse than the 1976 drought year when 19in fell.

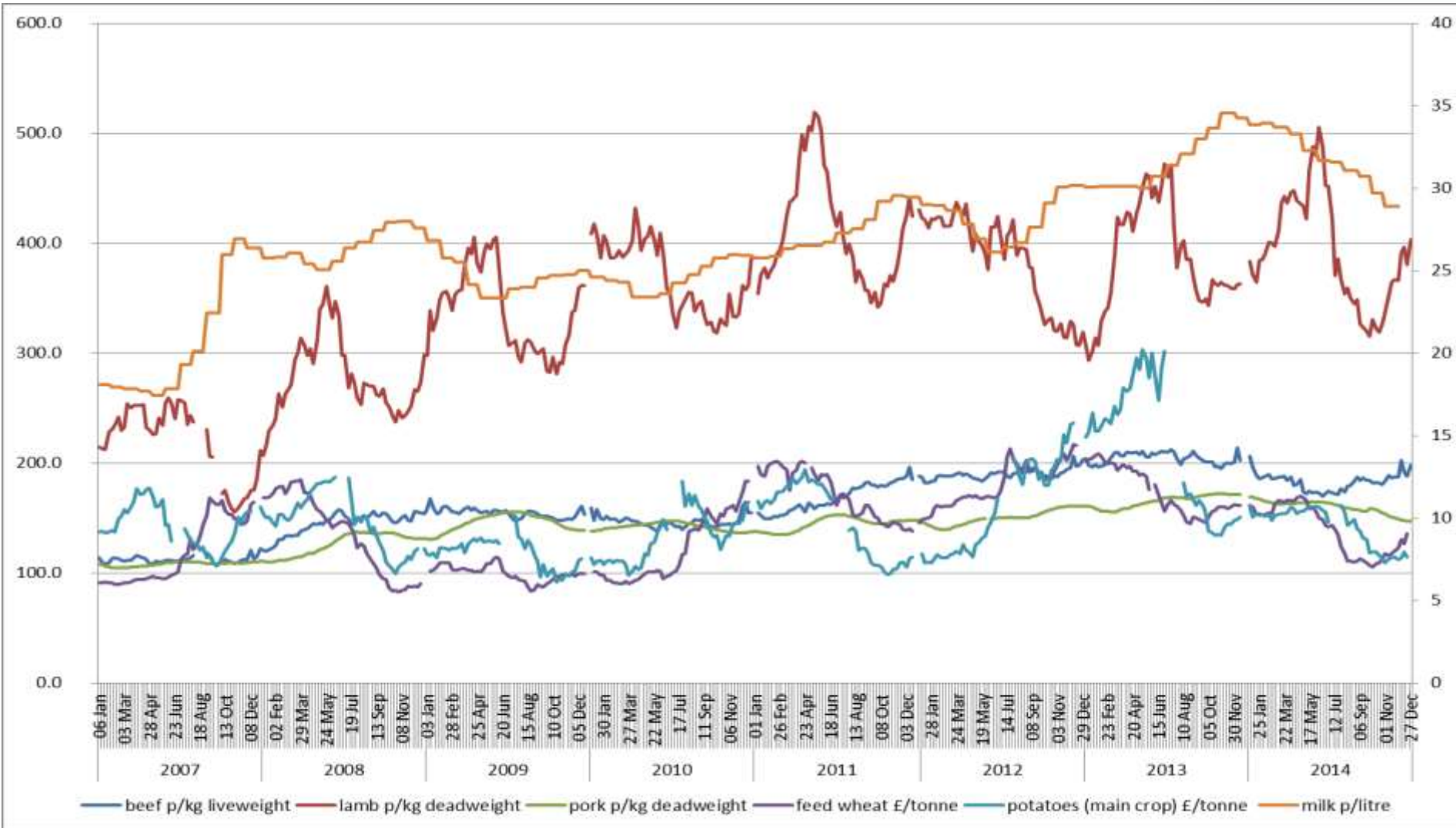


*He's a record breaker — but for all the wrong reasons. Guy Smith's Essex farm is officially the driest in Britain, prompting key management changes. Where crop growth varies according to soil type precision farming could help (left).*





# Price volatility





**NFUnited**  
There's strength in members.



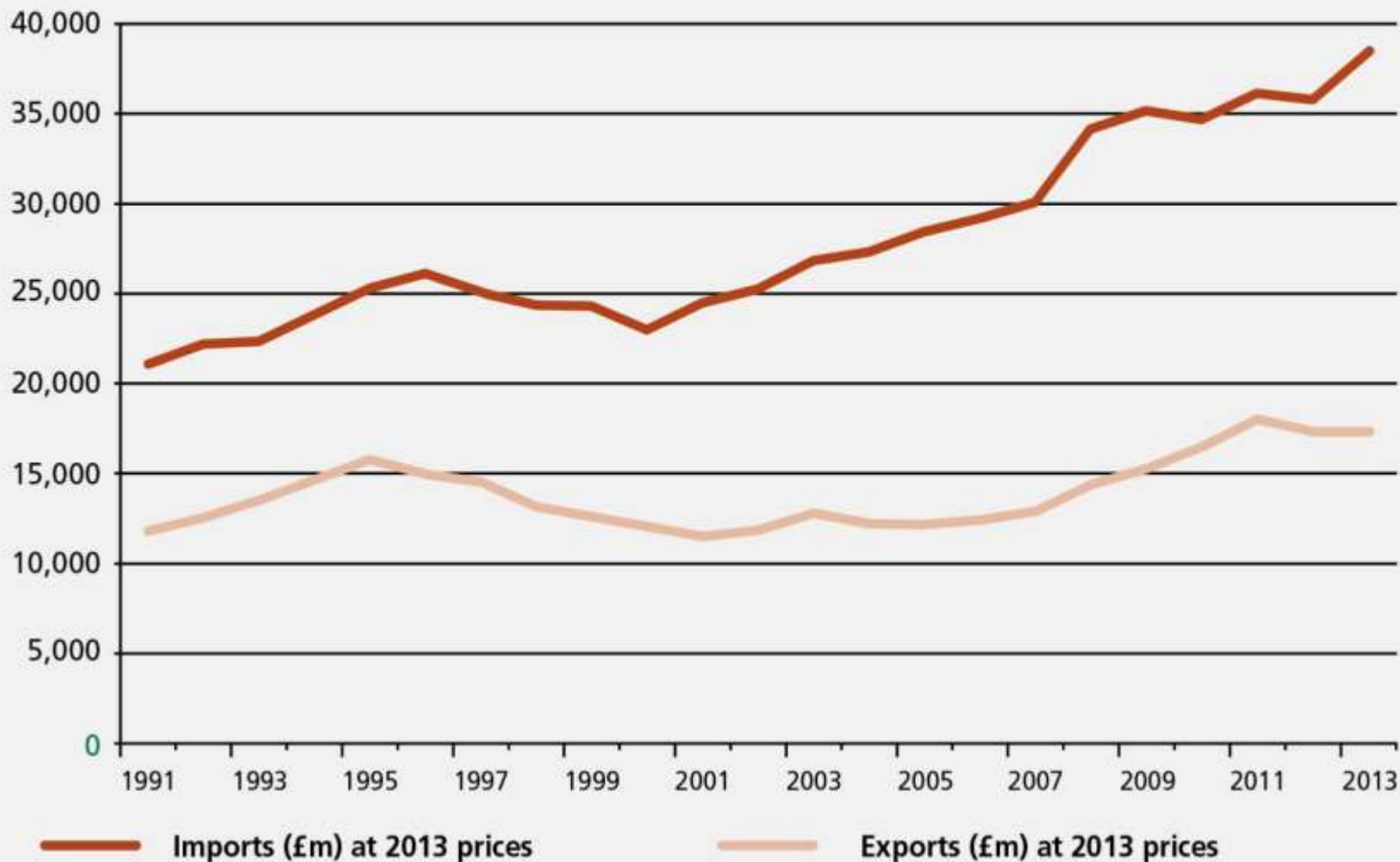


**NFUnited**  
There's strength in members.





# UK TRADE IN FOOD AND DRINK – 2013 PRICES



# Farmers Guardian

WWW.FARMERSGUARDIAN.COM



**SIMA 2015**  
Efficiency at heart of  
new kit launches p20-22

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 27 2015 £2.95

AGRICULTURE'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

**DAIRY SPECIAL** INCLUDING UK DAIRY EXPO PREVIEW p29-49



At the NFU conference, chief executive of the Rural Payments Agency Mark Grimshaw (centre) acknowledged the IT challenge which lay ahead for online CAP applications.

## RPA boss urges patience with online CAP system

96 PAGES OF  
NEWS AND  
CLASSIFIEDS

<b>NEWS</b>	10
Derbyshire pig unit denied	
<b>BUSINESS</b>	15
Management advice top tips	
<b>ARABLE</b>	17
Potential of hybrid OSR	
<b>LIVESTOCK</b>	23
A and B price formula fears	
<b>FARM FEATURE</b>	50-51
Family behind Newark mart	
<b>SALES</b>	56

**NFUnited**  
There's strength in members.

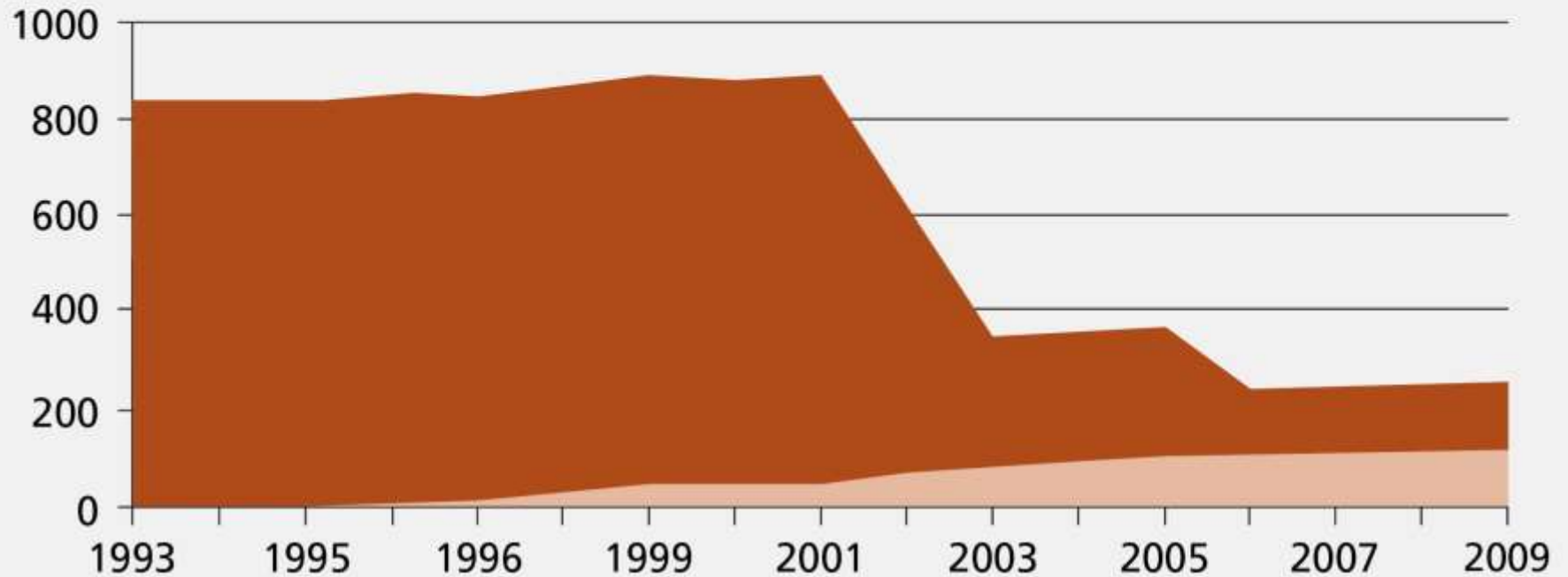


# DEVELOPMENT OF APPROVED ACTIVE SUBSTANCES

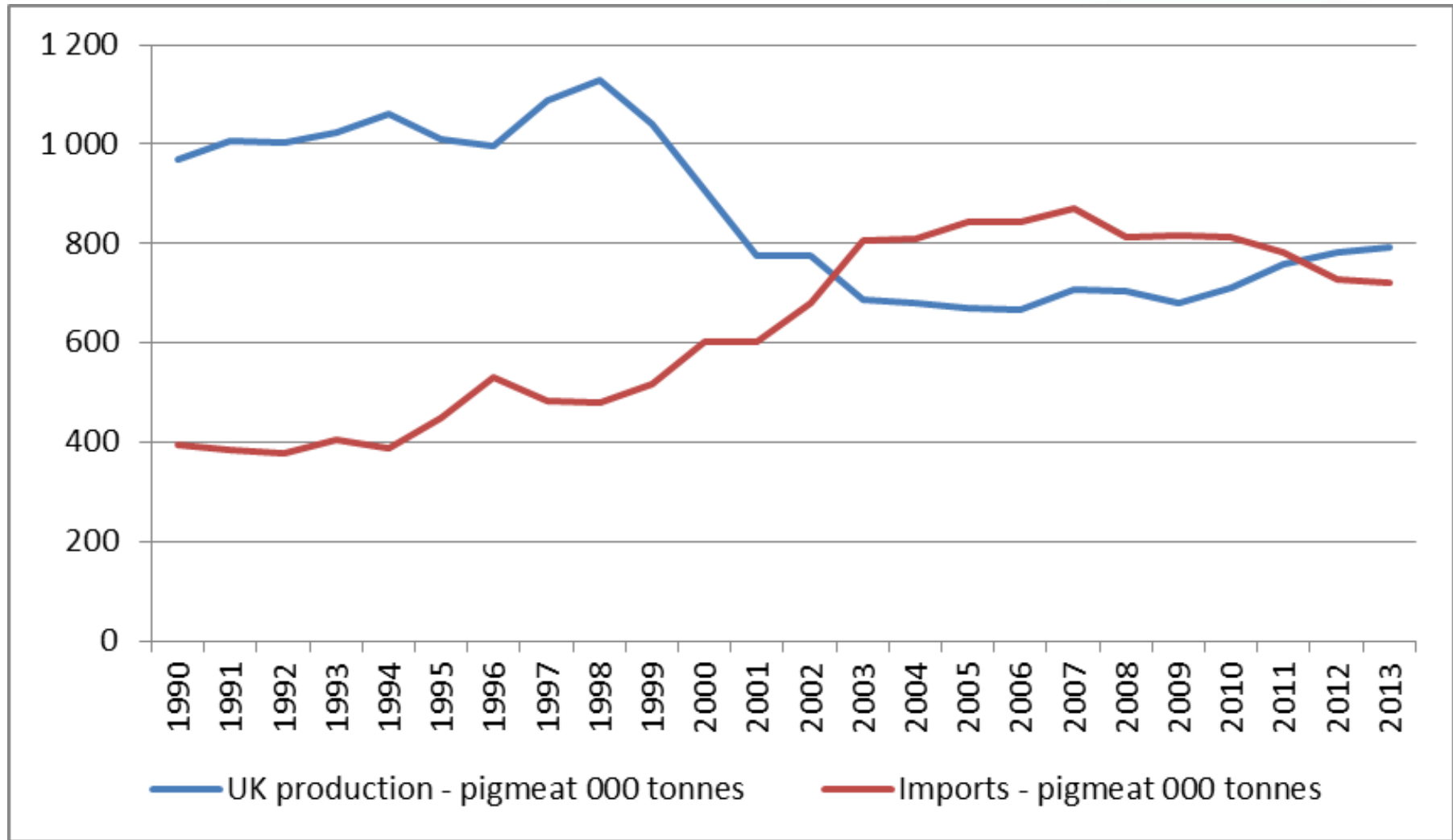
Source: European Commission

■ 'Old' active substances

■ 'New' active substances



# Impact of regulation





EU REFERENDUM

**UK FARMING'S  
RELATIONSHIP  
WITH THE EU**

**NFUnited**  
There's strength in members.

