



## Rural Economy and Land Use Programme

*Harnessing the social and natural sciences for sustainable rural development*

# RELU NEWS

Jan-March 2005

Welcome to the first quarterly Newsletter of the Rural Economy and Land Use Programme.

### RELU hosts major launch conference "The Challenge for Research"

RELU held its major research launch conference 19-21 January 2005 in Birmingham. Lord Whitty, Defra's Minister for Farming, Food and Sustainable Energy opened the conference. A panel discussion, chaired by Sir Howard Newby, involving the Chief Executives of ESRC, BBSRC and NERC on the theme: 'Why Interdisciplinary Research: The Challenges and the Obstacles' concluded the conference.

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/events/Jan05/confjan2005.htm>

Conference press release

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/news/relupress190105.htm>

### RELU currently funding 42 projects and counting ...

A total of 42 interdisciplinary projects have been commissioned and are now underway as part of RELU's first round of research funding. The projects bring together an unprecedented spread of expertise involving over 30 scientific disciplines. Projects are grouped under two main headings

- Food Chains
- People and the Rural Environment

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/>

### RELU Food Chain Forum holds first meeting

The first meeting of RELU's Food Chain Forum took place in February. The stakeholder forum brings together individuals from public, commercial and voluntary organisations to help disseminate and evaluate the implications of RELU research.

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/about/advisory.htm>

### RELU Data Support Services there to help

The RELU Data Support Service (DSS) is now up and running. The DSS will provide support to RELU award holders and applicants, through a telephone and email help desk, a web portal and a series of training events.

<http://www.esds.ac.uk/aandp/create/reludss.asp>

### Project News News News ....

"Beetles back on top of the Crops" Project report in the Times, 6 December 2004

"New Food Comparison Study" Project report in Farmers Weekly, 18-24 March 2005, p14

"A Change for the Better". Britain's uplands are changing fast, but researchers from the Universities of Leeds, Durham and Sheffield, with the Moors for the Future Partnership, have joined forces with local residents in the Peak District National Park to make it a change for the better.

<http://www.relu.ac.uk/research/projectnews/susuplandsNewsletter.pdf>

### Data Integration Workshop, York, 19 May 2005

Hosted by the RELU data resources scoping study based at the Central Science Laboratory and the RELU Data Support Service, the workshop will discuss integration of data from socio-economic and natural science disciplines, the practical issues involved and approaches to resolving common difficulties.

<http://reludata.csl.gov.uk/>

