

## NRCS Announces Sign-Up Dates

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) State Conservationist Eric B. Banks announced continuation of the National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) in Kansas for 2013. NRCS will manage the initiative and make financial and technical assistance available to farmers and forest landowners in order to improve water quality in priority watersheds. NRCS offered the NWQI in three impaired Kansas watersheds in 2012, and will continue to accept additional applications for the same three watersheds in 2013. While NRCS accepts applications for financial assistance on a continuous basis, NRCS will use two application cutoff dates: **April 19 and May 17, 2013**. Through this effort, producers in the headwaters of Grasshopper Creek in the Delaware River Watershed in southcentral Brown County (one of the three approved Kansas priority watersheds) may apply. Covering more than 22,000 acres, this selected watershed was identified with help from Kansas state agencies, partners, and the NRCS Kansas Technical Committee. Using funds from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), NRCS will provide financial and technical assistance to producers interested in addressing resource concerns using conservation practices such as field borders, cover crops, waste storage facilities, heavy use area protection, and nutrient management. In Kansas, socially disadvantaged, limited resource, and beginning farmers and ranchers will receive a higher payment rate for eligible conservation practices applied. For additional information specific to the National Water Quality Initiative, or to sign an application, stop by your local U.S. Department of Agriculture Service Center and visit with the NRCS staff. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.