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## National Water Quality Initiative Focuses on Grasshopper Creek – Special Producer Meeting Scheduled for May 30

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently announced the launch of a new conservation program for the Grasshopper Creek Watershed in northeast Kansas. The program, call the “National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI)”, is a nation-wide initiative designed to assist landowners with implementation of conservation measures in water quality impaired watersheds in rural America. Grasshopper Creek is one of only three watersheds in the state of Kansas to be selected for this program.

A special informational meeting about the program is scheduled for May 30 at 8:00 am at the Fisher Center in Hiawatha. All landowners and agricultural operators in the Grasshopper Creek Watershed are encouraged to attend. Coffee and breakfast rolls will be served during the meeting.

The Grasshopper Creek Watershed is located west/northwest of the city of Horton, or east/southeast of the city of Powhattan and lies primarily in Brown County with small portions also located Jackson and Atchison Counties. The primary land use in the watershed is cropland agriculture.

Through the NWQI program, NRCS provides financial and technical assistance for implementation of conservation practices such as cover crops, nutrient management, filter strips, sediment basins and terraces. Funding is provided through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Since nearly \$300,000 **annually** is dedicated for use in the Grasshopper Creek watershed for the next two years, producers in Grasshopper Creek who apply for funding will not have to compete with applications from outside the area. However, in order to be considered for this fiscal year’s funding opportunity, applications must be turned in to the NRCS field office by June 15, 2012.

For more information about the NWQI program or the May 30 meeting, call the Brown Co. NRCS office at 785-742-2012 or Delaware River WRAPS at 785-284-3422.