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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District  
Announces its  
2011 “Cover It Green” Cost-Share Program**

**SOUTH BEND, Indiana:** The St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has again been approved for a grant awarded by the Indiana State Department of Agriculture, Division of Soil Conservation under the Clean Water Indiana Fund.

The Clean Water Indiana Grant will provide partial funding the St. Joseph County SWCD to provide cost-share dollars to eligible St. Joseph County landowners to establish winter cover crops in 2011. The SWCD’s “Cover It Green” cost-share program promotes the use of cover crops since this is a practice that the SWCD feel is very important to improving soil and water quality in the St. Joseph County, Indiana area.

Cover crops are an effective tool to reduce soil erosion and increase nutrient recycling on farmlands, which in turn reduces the sediment nutrient loads entering lakes and waterways. Cover crops also have a multitude of other benefits including pest management, weed suppression, increased water infiltration, improved soil quality and wildlife habitat. As the research on cover crops continues to grow, so does the adoption of the cover cropping practice by Indiana farmers.

The St. Joseph County SWCD will award a one-time payment of a maximum of \$575.00 for winter cover crops (excluding wheat and soybeans) per Board-approved contract.

Beginning January 3, 2011, applications for cost-share may be picked up at the St. Joseph County USDA Service Center office located in Suite 4 of the Farm Bureau Insurance Building, 5605 US 31 South in South Bend, IN (Phone No: 574-291-7444, ext 3).

The deadline to apply for the SWCD's 2011 "Cover It Green" Cost-Share Program is July 1, 2011.