



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture * Rural Development
5975 Lakeside Boulevard, Indianapolis, Indiana 46278
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Date: August 29, 2011
Release Number: 11-34

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Two Indiana Applicants Selected for “Stronger Economies Together” Program (Provides Technical Assistance for Rural Regional Development)

USDA Rural Development, in conjunction with the Purdue Cooperative Extension, Association of Indiana Counties, Indiana Association of Cities and Towns, Indiana Association of Regional Councils, Indiana Economic Development Association, Indiana Grantmakers Alliance, Indiana Office of Community & Rural Affairs, and Indiana Planning Association has selected two rural multi-county regions in Indiana to be included in a program called “Stronger Economies Together” (SET). The two selected regional teams are Rural Communities of LaPorte, Jasper Starke, and Southern Porter Counties and the Southeastern Indiana Growth Alliance, encompassing the counties of Ripley, Dearborn, Ohio, Franklin, and Switzerland counties including the City Of Batesville. These two teams were selected from applications received by the May 13, 2011, deadline.

SET is a program designed to help regional teams develop new approaches to strengthen and enhance regional economic development activities. The SET program is an opportunity for current or newly formed multi-county teams to receive the latest tools, training, and technical assistance to help their region move forward and take advantage of positive growth and quality of life opportunities.

The selected applicants will receive the following: 1) Valuable intensive strategic planning training for their regional team, including the newly developed “Stronger Economies Together” program, a program designed to help your regional team develop new approaches to strengthen and enhance regional economic development activities; 2) Database tools specifically designed to help the regional teams examine the critical drivers of their region and identify emerging growth sectors and regional competitive advantages; 3) Technical assistance and educational support from the USDA Rural Development staff, and Purdue University Extension staff; and 4) Other educational and information-sharing opportunities with other SET program participants around the country.

USDA Rural Development serves as the lead federal agency for rural development needs by offering financial and technical assistance to individuals, businesses and communities. USDA Rural Development programs include funding for day care centers, fire trucks and other community facility projects; the purchase, construction or repair of homes; loans and guarantees to rural businesses to save or create jobs and renewable energy; and loans and grants for water and sewer utility projects. For more information on programs offered by USDA Rural Development, contact the Indiana State Office at (317) 290-3100 ext. 4 or visit its website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/in.

The Purdue Cooperative Extension is one of the nation's largest providers of scientific research-based information and education. It is a network of colleges, universities, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, serving communities and counties across America. The Purdue University

Cooperative Extension Service program areas are: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Consumer and Family Sciences, Economic and Community Development, and 4-H Youth.

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