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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 16, 2016

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ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS WORK TO ADDRESS NUTRIENT EFFICIENCY IN THE STATE

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. – With a focus on providing farm producers and the fertilizer industry with sound, science-based nutrient efficiency solutions that lead to improved crop yields while protecting our natural resources, the Illinois Nutrient Research & Education Council (NREC) recently awarded 26 grants for research projects to be conducted in the 2016 crop year.

“NREC presents a unique opportunity for stakeholders in Illinois ag and stakeholders within environmental groups to work together to address nutrient issues in our state,” said Dale Hadden, Chairman of Illinois NREC and a farmer from Jacksonville. “We have the same goal, keep the nutrients where they are available to our crops and out of our water systems. This partnership is a win-win for everyone.”

In 2016, NREC will fund 26 projects – 19 projects continued from previous years and 7 new projects. The \$2.8 Million available for funding these projects comes from an assessment of 75 cents per ton of fertilizer sold in Illinois. Additional funds have been earmarked for communications and

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outreach projects to ensure that farmers and fertilizer industry professionals are receiving timely updates from the research projects. Council-funded projects fall into three main categories with emphasis on the 4R's – applying the right source of fertilizer, at the right rate, right time, and right place, looking at ways to capture nutrients within the field using cover crops, and finally exploring methods of capturing nutrients before they are lost in a way that could potentially impact the environment. The last category focuses on methods such as buffer strips, bio-reactors, and wetlands.

As work continues across the state to address the needs outlined in the Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy, research funded through NREC helps to provide science-based solutions to many of the issues defined in the strategy.

For more information about NREC funded projects, including a synopsis of the 2016 projects, the Council Members and Council activities, please visit www.illinoisnrec.org.

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The Illinois Nutrient Research & Education Council (NREC) was created by state statute in 2012. Funded by a 75-cent per ton assessment on bulk fertilizer sold in Illinois, NREC provides financial support for nutrient research and education programs to ensure the discovery and adoption of practices that address environmental concerns, optimize nutrient use efficiency, and ensure soil fertility.

A 13-member NREC Council annually solicits, reviews and funds projects that fulfill the organization's mission. More information can be found at www.illinoisnrec.org.