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News Release

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REDKEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS RECEIVE USDA SUPPORT

Redkey (#03-30; 7-25-2003): USDA Rural Development announced today that the community of Redkey has been awarded a \$50,000 Rural Business Enterprise Grant. The USDA grant is designed to promote economic development in the area.

Jay County faces difficult economic challenges with an unemployment rate nearly double the state average underscoring the need for continuing economic development efforts. The USDA grant will be used by Redkey to establish a revolving loan fund to assist existing businesses who need capital and attract new businesses to the vacant industrial park. The town will add an additional \$5,000 from their Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT) to create a \$55,000 revolving loan fund.

Robert White, USDA Rural Development State Director, presented a check today for the grant to Violet Erlenbush, Town Board President, at a gathering of local, state and federal officials in Redkey. White said, "Economic development efforts such as those being made by this community are important to helping rural Indiana survive and prosper. We are pleased to be your partner in this worthwhile effort to spur economic development."

Erlenbush added, "This USDA grant will provide the town with a much needed tool to stimulate small business development. The Revolving Loan Fund program to be funded by the grant will have a direct positive impact on our local economy by helping us to create and sustain jobs. It may also help us attract a prospect for our 52 acre Industrial Park

which has set empty for more than 11 years. Erlenbush also pointed out that a loan review committee has already been appointed and includes a representative of the local MainSource Bank, the Redkey EDIT Committee, the Chamber of Commerce and the Town Board.

USDA's Rural Business Enterprise Grants assist public bodies and nonprofit organizations finance and facilitate development of small and emerging private businesses located in rural areas. Last year USDA awarded 9 Rural Business Enterprise Grants for nearly \$800,000 to nonprofit organizations around Indiana. The grant to Redkey is the most recent example of how USDA Rural Development is investing its resources in Jay County. Since 1994, USDA Rural Development has invested nearly \$7.6 million in the county to support home buying, infrastructure and economic development.

Single family home loans, rural rental housing, water and waste water disposal system funding, business and industry loans, and community facility loans and grants are financial resources available from USDA Rural Development. Questions concerning USDA Rural Development services in this area can be directed to USDA Rural Development, 210 E. Monroe, Decatur, IN; phone 260-724-4124, extension 4.