

HOW DO YOU FEED 13,000 ANIMALS?

WITH CAL POLY'S NEW ANIMAL NUTRITION CENTER

BY TERESA MARIANI HENDRIX

IT'S CHOW TIME. Cal Poly's College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences has opened the doors of its brand new Animal Nutrition Center.

That's good news for Cal Poly's more than 13,000 farm and ranch animals. The Animal Science Department uses the plant to make all of the feed for the 400 beef cattle, 250 dairy cows, 125 horses, 50 sows, 500 piglets, 350 quail, 5,000 egg-laying hens and 7,000 broiler chicks living on campus.

The Animal Nutrition Center is also used to manufacture specialty feed products that are part of ongoing industry-sponsored research on campus, as well as manufacturing custom products for commercial companies. It will also serve as a teaching and animal nutrition research center, said Animal Science Department Head Andrew Thulin.

Students from majors across the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences as well as students from many other majors across campus will take classes and labs in the new facility, focusing on animal food processing and related food safety. The Animal Nutrition Center will also serve as a site for feed industry management training for individuals from across the United States and the world.

The towering 21,000-square-foot center cost \$5.5-million, completely replacing the decades-old feed mill located where the 9,000-bed Poly Canyon Village student housing complex is rising. Filled with state-of-the-art processing equipment, the new plant can produce up to six tons of animal feed per hour for a variety of species.

Production in the new facility began at the end of March, under the direction of plant manager Casey Callaghan. Now,



on any given weekday, the plant is filled with students mixing up batches of corn, oats, barley and other ingredients, depending on the needs of their eventual animal consumers.

Though the quantities are gigantic and the mixing equipment four stories tall, "It is a lot like cooking," Thulin said.

NEXT UP, MEAT:

With the Animal Nutrition Center and the new Beef Facility both completed and opened, the Animal Science Department is still fund-raising for one last key project: The J and G Lau Family Meat Processing Center. The \$5.5 million, 13,500-square-foot Meat Processing Center will include conference rooms, meat harvesting and processing labs, food safety research space and ready-to-eat product and packaging development facilities for Cal Poly and companies in the meat industry.

Cal Poly has so far raised \$4 million in private support of the total \$5.5 million needed to finish the center. For details on the Meat Processing Center, contact Thulin at 805-756-2419 or Assistant Dean for Advancement Tanya Kiani at tkiani@calpoly.edu or 805-756-7507. □