Cal Poly Organic Farm Reaches Out to Local Growers Through the Community Supported Agriculture Program

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- The Cal Poly Organic Farm is beginning its sixth annual Community Supported Agriculture Program – good news for gourmet cooks and other local food lovers looking for fresh home-delivered organic produce. County residents can now sign up for weekly harvest box of fresh, seasonal organic vegetables, fruit, herbs and cut flowers from the university's organic farm. The program has seen such high demand over the past five years that this year, Cal Poly is adding fresh produce from other Central Coast organic farms in each week's harvest share, said program coordinator Sandra Sarrouf.

“Including Central Coast organic growers in our CSA program is good for both the consumer and the farmers. Farmers have another market and consumers enjoy local fruits and vegetables from all over the county. Subscribers to this program can know they are directly supporting organic and sustainable farming in our county.” Participating farms includes Four Elements Farm, Le Fort's Organics and Growing Grounds Farm. Other organic farms are welcome to participate and can contact the the Cal Poly Organic Farm for details.

The delivery season is 26 weeks: April 18 through Oct. 14. Each week members receive a newsletter with recipes and farm-related information as well as an events calendar of farm activities and workshops. This year the Cal Poly Organic Farm CSA program is adding drop-off sites in north and south county as well as in Morro Bay/Los Osos area. CSA subscribers can also pick up their weekly veggies at the farm on campus.

“Community supported agriculture is really a worldwide movement linking community members to their local farms,” Sarrouf stressed. “At Cal Poly, we're working to link San Luis Obispo County residents to their local farms, so they see where their veggies are grown, how they are grown and are welcome to participate in farm activities.”

The organic farm is jointly managed by the Horticulture and Crop Science Department, the university's Sustainable Agricultural Resource Consortium, students and farm staff.

The Cal Poly CSA program offers two sizes of weekly harvest deliveries: a full share and a half share. The full share is $572 per season and the half share is $416. Payment plans are available as are work-trade opportunities, Sarrouf said. The program also offers quarter-long weekly programs to students at a reduced rate.

For more details or to sign up, contact Sandra Sarrouf at the Cal Poly Organic Farm at
756-6139, ssarrouf@calpoly.edu, or visit the farm Web site at
www.calpoly.edu/~sarc/csa.htm.

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