

News & Events University News & Information

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

Oct. 20, 2009

Contact: Stacia Momburg

805-756-6260

Cal Poly Postpones Reduction of Dairy Herd Thanks to Alumni and Supporters

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly announced today (Oct. 20) that it is putting on hold its plan to reduce the size of its dairy herd. In announcing the decision, Dave Wehner, dean of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, said alumni and dairy industry supporters have come forward with offers to help the university find a solution to the problem of maintaining the herd in an economically sustainable way.

"We're very grateful that some of the nation's most savvy dairy producers have offered to work with Cal Poly to help us devise a good business strategy," Wehner said. "There's no question that everyone in the dairy industry is struggling through a tough economy. Dairy prices have plummeted, and our friends in the industry understand the challenge we face at Cal Poly to maintain a herd size that is financially rational."



Several industry professionals sent letters volunteering to help Cal Poly develop a business strategy that would help keep as many of the university's 400 agriculture animals as possible while the university navigates the tough economy. Current market conditions for milk have resulted in milk prices that are substantially lower than the cost of actually producing it – a phenomenon that all the nation's dairies are experiencing.

"We're so fortunate to be able rely on the talent and experience of our alumni and friends," said Bruce Golden, head of the Dairy Science Department. "Their tireless dedication is greatly appreciated."

Cal Poly's herd consists of 150 milking cows, plus dry cows and young stock. As much as 15 percent of the milk is used by the Cal Poly Creamery to produce ice cream, cheese at the historic Cal Poly Creamery and is also used for research projects.

CAFES' plan to reduce the dairy herd included reducing the number of young (non milk producing) stock over time and reducing the milking herd slowly until the herd is financially more viable.

According to Golden, the problem lies in limiting the losses to a level that allows for minimum damage to the overall dairy science program.

1 of 2 10/30/09 3:12 PM

The university's Dairy Science program is the largest in California. Cal Poly's production center works closely with the dairy industry which offers guidance and support. The Cal Poly dairy is funded through milk sales and annual losses are covered by Cal Poly endowment funds and creamery sales. No state dollars are used to fund the dairy.

To learn more about Cal Poly's Dairy Science program, visit http://www.dairy.calpoly.edu/about/index.asp



###

CP Home • CP Find It • Get Adobe Reader • Help Accessing Public Affairs Web Content Cal Poly News Web • Cal Poly Magazine • Cal Poly Update E-newsletter

Giving to Cal Poly

Public Affairs Office California Polytechnic State University San Luis Obispo, CA 93407 805.756.1511 E-mail Public Affairs

2 of 2