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Cal Poly Students Take Top Title in Scotland Dairy Judging Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Three Cal Poly students earned the top two team and individual awards in an international dairy cattle judging competition in Scotland.

Cal Poly student Sam Cheda (far left), fellow FFA member Rocco Cunningham, and Cal Poly students Mandy Brazil and Kelli Carstensen in Scotland. Photo courtesy Nancy Grossi

Cal Poly Dairy Judging Team members Mandy Brazil, Kelli Carstensen and Sam Cheda traveled to the Royal Highlands Show in Scotland to participate in the invitational competition, held in late June.

The three Cal Poly students, along with recent high school graduate Rocco Cunningham, competed under the banner of the Petaluma Future Farmers of America. All four grew up in Petaluma and are longtime members of the Petaluma FFA group.

In Scotland, the four were divided into two teams and competed against other top FFA, 4-H and community college teams from the United States. Teams evaluate dairy cattle for their ability to produce the best milk and then present their reasons behind their rankings. In team standings, Brazil and Carstensen placed first and Cunningham and Cheda finished second. In the individual competition, Brazil placed second, Carstensen third, and Cheda 10th.

The Cal Poly students qualified for the Royal Highland Show by finishing second in dairy-cattle evaluation teams in the FFA national competition in Indianapolis, Ind., in October 2009.

“The four of us have been competing as an FFA dairy judging team since our sophomore year in high school,” said Brazil, an Agriculture Communications student at Cal Poly. Brazil, Carstensen (a Dairy Science student) and Cheda (an Agriculture Business student) will be returning members of the Cal Poly Dairy Judging Team in 2010.

About Cal Poly's Dairy Judging Team and Dairy Science Program

Cal Poly's Dairy Judging Team is an activity of the Dairy Science Program in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences. The department runs its own dairy herd; operates a historic Creamery producing milk, cheese and ice cream; and is home to the Dairy Products Technology Center. For more information visit the Cal Poly Dairy Science Web site at: http://www.dairy.calpoly.edu/

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