News
University News & Information

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

SHARE

May 10, 2011
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Hunter Francis
Center for Sustainability
Cal Poly College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences
805-756-5086; *cfs@calpoly.edu*

Cal Poly to Host USDA's 'Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food' College Tour

SAN LUIS OBISPO – Cal Poly will host a presentation by U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan as part of her national college tour promoting the USDA's "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food (KYF2)" initiative. The presentation will be held in Cal Poly's Chumash Auditorium on Thursday, May 19, from 11 a.m. to noon. The lecture is open to the public.

The "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative aims to strengthen local and regional food systems by creating opportunities for local farmers, provide incentives for sustainable agricultural practices, and expand consumer access to healthy agricultural products. Merrigan will provide an overview of the USDA's programs in these areas and emphasize how important it is for today's students to be involved in these efforts. Merrigan will also talk about career opportunities at the USDA and within the agriculture sector, encourage a running dialogue about the nation's food systems, and address the links between strengthening local food systems and obesity prevention.

Merrigan is a noted authority on organic and sustainable agriculture. She co-authored the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990 which established the preliminary standards for organic food certification and labeling through the National Organic Program. She was also the first woman to chair the Ministerial Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, and was named one of *Time Magazine's* 100 Most Influential People for 2010.

Cal Poly is the 12th and final stop in the "KYF2" college tour for spring 2011. The tour will resume in the fall. Merrigan has chronicled her experience during the tour in a blog: blogs.usda.gov/2011/02/14/deputy-secretary-kathleen-merrigan-kicks-off-her-2011-college-tour/.

The lecture is sponsored by the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences' Center for Sustainability as part of its quarterly Sustainable Ag Lecture Series.

For more information on the "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" initiative visit *www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer*.

###

Public Affairs Office
California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

polynews [at] calpoly.edu