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Sept. 22, 2005

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cal Poly, CSU Ag Programs Join to Aid International Development

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly and four other California State Universities have joined forces to aid agriculture in developing nations through the newly formed California State University Consortium for International Development.

The consortium includes Cal Poly and the Chico, Fresno, Humboldt, and Pomona CSU campuses. Cal Poly Food Science and Nutrition Professor Hany Khalil has been named director of the consortium, and Bill Erysian of Fresno State has been named director of resource development, and Fresno State's campus representative.

The CSU consortium seeks to aid agricultural development across the globe. The consortium has already submitted a proposal to the Millennium Challenge Corporation to help the agency with development in Africa, Eurasia and South America.

"We represent a core of expertise that is now available as a resource to high-priority federal and non-governmental international agriculture development initiatives currently underway across the globe," explained Khalil.

In forming the CSU consortium, "We recognized that each of our five core campuses in the consortium already had very active international development programs," Khalil said.

"By combining our resources and experience, we can now offer a centralized wealth of applied research and technical knowledge to the rest of the world. The faculty at our combined campuses have expertise in virtually all areas of agriculture, including water management and irrigation, food and dairy processing, enology and viticulture, forestry, environmental sciences, agribusiness marketing, small and medium enterprise development and much more," Khalil said.

The consortium hopes to:

- Improve the economic efficiency, productivity, profitability and sustainability of international agriculture development initiatives
- Foster consumer-sensitive and environmentally sound food and agriculture systems worldwide
- Improve public safety and health in the developing world
- Produce results and models that are easily transferable
- Foster collaboration between California State Universities, land-grant universities and industry at the international level.

The consortium will provide a variety of agricultural and development expertise, including international research, technical assistance, training, extension and student participation. It also offers links to private industry agribusiness leaders throughout the United States.

The consortium will also encourage and facilitate strong collaborative applied research and extension partnerships with other qualified universities, professional organizations, and government institutions, Khalil said.

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