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California Polytechnic State University

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Contact: Phil Doub
(805) 756-2279

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Merger of Two Cal Poly Departments Provides Multi-Faceted Opportunities for Students and Faculty

Two departments in Cal Poly's College of Agriculture -- Crop Science and Environmental Horticultural Science -- have joined forces to become Horticulture and Crop Science Department (HCS).

The new department not only combines resources, such as an endowed professorship in biotechnology, but also increases students' opportunities for an in-depth, expanded perspective of the production agriculture industry.

The new HCS Department takes the individual strengths of each discipline, including faculty, production facilities, student internships, plus winning student clubs and teams, and offers four majors: crop science, environmental horticultural science, fruit science and plant protection science. A fifth major, wine and viticulture, is being developed.

Previously, the two departments earned national recognition as being outstanding in their respective fields. As of Jan. 1, the two have combined resources and expanded their ability to explore new avenues for student education -- including new curriculum development, equipment and ideas. The faculty, staff and students believe they can be not only the biggest and best in the West, but the top program in the nation.

HCS Department Chair Phil Doub, who teaches in the Agribusiness Department, sees this merger as a tremendous opportunity for faculty to shape the new department into one that meets the future needs of students and the agricultural industry. Doub, who also served as chair of the Food Science and Nutrition Department, has been instrumental in developing the pending wine and viticulture major.

"By meeting the needs of current and new students with an expanded

curriculum and more opportunities for electives that cross traditional boundaries, our graduates become employable in more facets of agriculture," Doub said. "The new department also provides for increased student enrollment while still maintaining our close faculty-to-student ratio and Cal Poly's traditional 'learn-by-doing' educational philosophy."

Interim Dean for the College of Agriculture David Wehner said, "I believe it is vital for the faculty to continue their teaching excellence by facilitating a close partnership with their students, and continuing the hands-on student enterprise approach, key to Cal Poly's success throughout the years."

For more information, please contact the Horticulture and Crop Science Department at (805) 756-2279, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407.

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California Polytechnic State University
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407
805.756.7266
polynews@calpoly.edu