

[Skip to Content](#)

[Cal Poly](#)

[News](#)

Search Cal Poly News

Go

California Polytechnic State University

April 19, 2002

Contact: Teresa Hendrix

(805) 756-7266

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Cal Poly Names New Dean for Its College of Agriculture**

Cal Poly Professor David Wehner has been named dean of the university's College of Agriculture, the fourth-largest undergraduate agricultural college in the nation, and the oldest and second-largest of Cal Poly's six colleges with some 3,675 students enrolled this year.

Wehner, 52, has a background in agronomy and horticulture and has served as interim dean of the College of Agriculture since July 2001. He succeeds Joe Jen, who accepted an appointment in July 2001 as U.S. undersecretary of agriculture for research, education and economics in Washington, D.C. The university conducted a national search for Jen's replacement before appointing Wehner on April 15.

"We are extremely fortunate to have had many strong candidates for the deanship," said Cal Poly's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Paul Zingg. "The process confirmed much of what we already knew: that we are fortunate to have Dave with us already. He has earned the respect of his colleagues in the college and throughout the university during his year as interim dean. We are confident that his strengths, background and experience, along with his commitment to undergraduate education, are a perfect match for Cal Poly and the College of Agriculture. With Dave at the helm, the college and agriculture interests and communities throughout the state can expect strong, focused and responsive leadership."

Wehner joined the faculty at Cal Poly in 1994 as the head of what was then called the Environmental Horticultural Science Department. In addition to serving as department head, he taught courses in introductory and advanced turf-grass management. In 1996 he became interim assistant dean in the College of Agriculture, continuing his previous duties but also coordinating the college's graduate program and assisting faculty members with research and public service programs.

In 1997 Wehner was named associate dean of the College of Agriculture, becoming primarily responsible for the undergraduate program and directing the college's Multicultural Agriculture Program Center. Since Jen's departure last year, Wehner has overseen the merger of the Environmental Horticultural Science and Crop Science departments into the unified Horticulture and Crop Science Department, the formalization of a graduate education partnership with UC Davis and ongoing planning for a new wine and viticulture major tentatively set to launch within the next three years.

Wehner said he is deeply honored by the appointment, and chief among his goals is to continue the long-standing tradition of excellence already established by the college.

"The College of Agriculture is already a strong entity," Wehner said. "I want to make sure that we maintain our strength and continue to be a strong entity in the future, and that we continue to serve our clients: the agriculture industry in California and students who are interested in careers in agriculture."

The new dean said he is strongly committed to Cal Poly's "learn by doing" philosophy and tradition of hands-on education. "We have a unique approach to education here, not just in the College of Agriculture, but in the entire university," Wehner said. "A lot of it has to do with the relationships that develop between our faculty and students. I truly believe those lasting relationships develop here in a special way that's not found at any other university in the nation."

Wehner earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry in 1972 from the University of Notre Dame, a master's degree in agronomy in 1975 from Pennsylvania State University. He earned his doctorate in agronomy from Penn State in 1979. Before coming to Cal Poly, he taught in the Agronomy Department at the University of Maryland and then in the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Department of Horticulture.

He is a member of the National Academic Advising Association, the Crop Science Society of America, the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and the American Society of Agronomy. He also serves as a lector at Nativity of Our Lady parish in San Luis Obispo.

Wehner lives in San Luis Obispo with his wife, Diana, son Jeff, 21, and daughter Nicole, 13.

-30-

Note to Editors: A print-quality .jpg file photo of Dean Wehner is available on the Cal Poly News Web site. To download the photo, click on its image in the Cal Poly News Photo Gallery at:

<http://www.calpolynews.calpoly.edu/gallery/photogallery.html>.

[CP Home](#) • [CP Find It](#) [Get Adobe Reader](#) • [Microsoft Viewers](#)

[Events](#) • [Recent Releases](#) • [Cal Poly Magazine](#) •

[Cal Poly Update E-newsletter](#) • [Contact Public Affairs](#) • [Alumni](#) • [Giving](#) • [Athletics](#)

**Cal Poly Public Affairs**

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

805.756.7266

[polynews@calpoly.edu](mailto:polynews@calpoly.edu)