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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cal Poly Agriculture Appoints New Leader for Horticulture and Crop Science Department

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly soil science alumna Jennifer Ryder Fox has been appointed to head the university's Horticulture and Crop Science Department.

Fox comes to Cal Poly after serving as vice president of regulatory affairs and technical development at AgraQuest Inc. in Davis. The firm is a biopesticide company that discovers and develops crop protection products from microbial fermentation processes for use on many high-value fruit and vegetable crops grown in California and across the nation.

"Jennifer's acceptance of our offer is a major step forward for Cal Poly," said Cal Poly College of Agriculture Dean David Wehner. "She has a proven record of excellence in California's agriculture industry and an entrepreneurial reputation for looking 'outside the box.'"

Fox's appointment began Sept. 10.

The new Horticulture and Crop Science Department leader earned a master's degree in 1980 at New Mexico State University, where she also completed her doctorate in 1989. She earned a B.S. degree in soil science from Cal Poly in 1978 and has worked for FMC Corp. and the Western Crop Protection Association.

"I'm honored to be at Cal Poly," said Fox. "I'll strive to foster collaboration, program growth and close industry partnerships, and most importantly, excellently prepared graduates."

Fox has already won praise from both industry and academic leaders.

New Mexico State University professor James T. Fisher, Fox's doctoral advisor and the current head of that university's Department of

Agronomy and Horticulture, said Fox's ability to communicate "was always stellar and made some of our most accomplished professors envious, including myself. I've not been surprised at her success."

Earl Williams, president and CEO of the California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association, said he believes Fox will bring fresh ideas and new approaches needed to continue to expand the department's quality. "This is the right time for Jennifer and for Cal Poly. Her background and vast experience in the corporate world are absolutely necessary for the challenges that lie ahead."

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