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California Polytechnic State University

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Plant Genetics Expert Appointed to J.G. Boswell Professorship at Cal Poly

Cal Poly's College of Agriculture has appointed Jeffrey C. Wong of the Department of Crop Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to its new J.G. Boswell Professorship.

Sara Hake, director of the USDA Plant Gene Expression Center in Albany, N.Y., calls Wong one of this nation's most outstanding young scientists. "I am sure California agriculture as well as the students at Cal Poly will benefit from his hands-on approach to discovery and learning," she said upon learning of Wong's appointment.

"Jeffrey's acceptance of our offer is a major step forward for Cal Poly," said David Wehner, interim dean of the College of Agriculture. "He was the unanimous choice of the search committee and is a perfect blend of teacher, researcher and mentor."

Wong's appointment is effective immediately. "I'm honored to be joining Cal Poly," Wong said. "I feel that my research, teaching, outreach and collaborative experiences will make me a highly effective teacher, both in and out of the classroom."

Wong has collaborated with researchers at many institutions, including UC Berkeley and the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory in New York. He said he looks forward to teaching an introductory class and laboratory in genetics at Cal Poly. "The techniques and experimental approach I use can be applied to many plant species - for example, cotton. Crop and vegetable species grown on the Central Coast could be used to provide the link between the basic science concepts and the field application," Wong explained.

Wong also wants to design and teach a laboratory techniques class at Cal Poly which would cover the basic tools required to analyze molecular marker data and how that data might be used in a

marker-assisted breeding program.

Wong is currently completing his doctoral dissertation at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He received his bachelor's degree in biology from Saint Mary's College in California and his master's from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.

The new faculty position was made possible by the James G. Boswell Foundation of Pasadena, which provided a \$1.2 million endowment for the College of Agriculture. The foundation is the charitable arm of the Corcoran-based J.G. Boswell Co., California's largest and most diverse farming operation.

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