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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BBC Labs, New Era Farm Principals Headline
Fourth Annual Integrated Pest Management Conference in December

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Cal Poly's Sustainable Agriculture Resource Consortium and the California Certified Organic Farmers are hosting a two-day conference and workshop in December on sustainable pest control in agriculture.

Designed for agricultural consultants and growers, the fourth annual Sustainable Agriculture Pest Control Advisor Conference will be held at the San Luis Obispo Veterans' Hall on Friday, Dec. 2. On Saturday, Dec. 3, the agencies will hold a hands-on workshop at Tolosa Winery in San Luis Obispo.

The Dec. 2 session will focus on incorporating sustainable agricultural practices into a comprehensive Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategy.

The Dec. 3 workshop is titled "Managing Soil Microbiology for Improved Pest Management and Soil Fertility." Presenters are well-known microbiologist Vicki Bess of BBC Labs and agronomist Ralph Jurgens of New Era Farm Service at Tolosa Winery (www.tolosawinery.com).

The conference will feature tools for biologically integrated pest control, information on enhancing microbial ecologies in soils, designing landscapes to improve habitat for beneficial insects, new research on plant immune systems, updates on important regulatory issues, and expected changes in USDA certified organic regulations.

The winery workshop will focus on the importance of maintaining healthy soil microbiology to help plants resist pests. Winery workshop topics include: managing soil microbiology for plant disease suppression, pathogen inhibition assays, and an overview of compost, compost tea and effective biological agricultural products.

The conference fee is $150 for the Dec. 2 session, and $65 for the Dec. 3 workshop before Nov. 18. Registration after is $175 and $75 respectively. Students with valid identification can register for $35 for the Dec. 2 session and $20 for Dec. 3. Conference registration includes parking, breakfast, lunch and refreshments.

Up to 14 Continuing Education Units will be available for participants attending both days, including three Laws and Regulations Units. For more information call CCOF at (831) 423-2263 ext. 22, or e-mail: ccof@ccof.org, or visit: www.ccof.org/pcaconference.php.

About the Workshop Leaders:

Vicki Bess
is the founder of BBC Laboratories, an independent environmental microbiology laboratory in Tempe, Arizona. BBC labs (www.bbclabs.com) works with agriculture, horticulture and turf industries to improve the soil microbiology for increased crop quality and yield. Bess holds an M.S. in microbiology and has spent many years working with growers, consultants, and compost professionals to evaluate soil and compost quality. She has helped develop economically feasible methods for analyzing microbiological profiles of soil and compost, as well as detection systems for the analysis of plant pathogen inhibitors.

Ralph Jurgens
is an agronomist, nutritional consultant and co-owner of New Era Farm Service Inc. New Era Farm is an agronomic...
service organization specializing in biologically influenced fertility systems designed to enhance microbial soil life. New Era Farms) is currently working with over 900 growers throughout the West, representing over 1 million acres.

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