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Agribusiness Students Win National Case Study Competition

SAN LUIS OBISPO - For the fourth year in a row, a team of Cal Poly Agribusiness students took first place in the national Student Case Study Competition, which asks students to develop market strategies for real-life agribusiness products.

The competition, sponsored by the Food Distribution Research Society, was held recently at the society's annual national conference hosted this year by Cal Poly's Agribusiness Department at the Inn at Morro Bay. Universities from across the United States and Canada were represented in the competition, with the University of Florida placing second and the University of Alberta taking third.

The case study, published by the Stanford Graduate School of Business, dealt with Cocoa Pete's Chocolate Adventures, an entrepreneurial venture that markets gourmet chocolate products. Cocoa Pete's is the second startup by Pete Slosberg, who previously developed Pete's Wicked Ale.

The students analyzed the business case, developed strategic alternatives, and recommended a course of action in a presentation to a panel of judges with members from industry and academia. Each team's 15-minute presentation was followed by a 10-minute question and answer session.

Two Cal Poly team members, Kallie Donnelly and Sarah Kramer, are agribusiness undergraduates. The third member, Roland Fumasi, is in the department's agribusiness master's program. Agribusiness professor David Schaffner coached the team.

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Editors please note: a photo of Cal Poly's winning FDRS Case Study Team members (Coach David Schaffner, Sarah Kramer, Roland Fumasi, and Kallie Donnelly) is available. For a jpg copy, please e-mail Teresa Hendrix at thendrix@calpoly.edu.