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Cal Poly Agri-Marketing Team Wins National Competition

A team of students from Cal Poly's College of Agriculture took first place in a nationwide competition sponsored by The National Agri-Marketing Association (NAMA).

Cal Poly's NAMA team competed against teams from the top 35 agribusiness schools in the nation April 17-18 at the association's convention in Nashville, Tenn. Student teams were asked to submit an original marketing plan for the competition. Cal Poly's entry was a foreign marketing plan for an Arroyo Grande tomato grower.

Sun Roma originally came to the Cal Poly team for assistance with a marketing solution for exporting yellow Roma tomatoes to Japan and gaining a premium price for them in Japanese markets.

Using the Sun Roma plan, the students won first place after competition in a final round against the University of Tennessee, the University of Florida, Gainesville, and Ohio State University. This is the eighth time in the past 23 years the Cal Poly NAMA team has won the national competition; in 2001, the team placed second, said Agribusiness Lecturer Tom Frawley, who coaches the team along with Agribusiness Professor Phil Doub.

"The competition was fierce. Each team that Cal Poly faced in the finals had either won or made it to the final round each of the last three years," Frawley said. "The championship was decided by only a few points."

Team members who developed the winning plan are Kimberly Aspiras of Chico, Camille Robertson and Amanda May, both of Santa Maria, Jack Lagier of Ripon, and Kathleen Corcoran of Santa Rosa.

"This Cal Poly NAMA team was exceptional," said Frawley. "This is a big boost for the Agribusiness Department and displays why Cal Poly's
agribusiness department is considered one of the top in the nation.