



Media Release

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Cal Poly Agriculture Business / Comm. Sr. Wins Collegiate Discussion Meet

For the second year in a row a Cal Poly Agriculture student has taken first place at the California Farm Bureau Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest. The contest was held this past weekend at the California Farm Bureau Annual Meeting in Anaheim, California.

Brandon Souza, a senior at Cal Poly, will graduate in June with a degree in agricultural business with a minor in agriculture communications. He grew up on his parents' walnut and corn farm in Hanford, California and spent a summer working as an intern for the communications news department of the California Farm Bureau Federation in Sacramento.

Souza was one of eight from the Cal Poly / San Luis Obispo County Young Farmer & Ranchers team. He competed with 30 other college students from across California, discussing topics that included finding new uses for agricultural products, agriculture politics, animal ID and the troubles associated with rising agricultural land prices.

Souza earned a \$500 cash award and a bid for the National YF&R Discussion Meet Competition in Jacksonville, Florida in February. Jackie Mundt of California State University, Fresno, was first runner-up in the collegiate competition; Tom Bottoms of Cal Poly was second runner-up and Joel Saldana Jr. of Fresno State was third runner-up. A team from Fresno State won the collegiate team competition.

Beth Sequeira, Cal Poly alumni, won the California Collegiate Discussion Meet Contest in 2005 and went on to win the National Discussion Meet two months later. She was the second California student to win in three years.

Discussion Meet activities encourage young farmers and ranchers, and college undergraduates studying agriculture, to analyze agricultural issues and arrive at solutions. More information about the Discussion Meet may be found on the California Farm Bureau Web site at www.cfbf.com/programs/yfr/

The California Farm Bureau Federation, the state's largest farm organization, works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of more than 92,000 members.

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Mission Statement:

"To lead San Luis Obispo County in the protection, promotion and advocacy for the benefit of our members and community"