

Oklahoma Horizon

Improving rural Oklahoma. That is the focus of the new television show Oklahoma Horizon. From economic development to education, the show highlights the stories of Oklahomans from across the state.

“Agriculture is changing, and so are the communities that support it,” said Rob McClendon, executive producer. “Each week we strive to give our viewers context to the changes in our world. We go behind the headlines and try to offer intimate stories on people and places who illustrate the bigger picture.”

Agriculture is a \$7 billion industry in Oklahoma. Oklahoma Horizon focuses on agriculture because it is so vital to the state’s economy, and many people do not realize it. The innovations and commitment of farmers and ranchers throughout the state are driving Oklahoma’s economy forward.

Oklahoma Horizon is a 30-minute weekly show that is a partnership between the Oklahoma Department of Agriculture, Food and Forestry and the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education. The studio is located at CareerTech’s state department in Stillwater, Oklahoma. The show debuts on RFD-TV Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

McClendon said Oklahoma Horizon tries to give a global perspective on stories with a local focus. “Cattle and wheat are the big two agricultural receipts in Oklahoma, and we realize that growers and ranchers know their own operations well,” McClendon said. “What we want to do is show how their industry can be impacted by global events.”

Oklahoma Horizon has done several international stories. The staff followed Made in Oklahoma companies to Puerto Rico for an international food show and highlighted Oklahoma’s trade with countries such as Cuba and China in

other programs. McClendon will travel this summer to report on the establishment of trade ties with a former enemy – Vietnam. This summer Horizon will feature a series of stories from Israel. “While we are now learning how to protect ourselves against Bio-Terrorism, it’s a threat the country of Israel has had to deal with for decades” McClendon said.

The Horizon video crew saw first hand how Israeli ag producers have had to structure their operations to meet food safety measures to not only protect their food supply, but keep export markets open.

“Our world is changing so fast, and it’s only human nature to be resistant to change,” McClendon said. “But what we do with each of our stories is show how people and even entire towns have embraced everything from new technology to new attitudes to improve their lives.”

McClendon has 15 years of experience reporting on Oklahoma agriculture as the host of the former SunUp program. He has also been a news anchor for CBS and ABC affiliates.

Members of the Oklahoma Horizon production team are employees of the Education Technology Resources and Communications and Marketing divisions of CareerTech. McClendon and the other staff members will cover stories from across Oklahoma, showcasing those people and businesses who contribute to the state’s economic development.

The show is also done in cooperation with Oklahoma Farm Bureau, Oklahoma Farmers’ Union, and several other organizations with a vested interest in rural Oklahoma. But the show does not cater only to rural Oklahomans. Oklahoma Horizon pushes to keep urban Oklahoma involved as well, from stories about the agurbs featured in