

Welcome Alberto!

Dana Zook: [00:00:00] Welcome back to the Extension Experience podcast.

I'm Dana Zook.

Josh Bushong: And Josh Bushong

Dana Zook: We are here today with the entire Northwest Area Specialist team. So you may know as a listener that we've been short in Ag Economist for several years. It's been a long time.

Josh Bushong: It's been a minute.

Dana Zook: Josh is back with us today, but we are excited to announce that we have a new member of our team, Alberto Amador.

Welcome, Alberto.

Alberto Amador: Thanks, Dana. Hello, everybody.

Dana Zook: Alberto has stepped into the role as the West Area Ag Economist, and we are very excited to have him. Alberto, I know you've done several presentations introducing yourself. It's got a lot of academics in it, and it's very formal, and that's not what this is gonna be.

So, so we're gonna take a little different spin. Personally, I like to hear about people's backgrounds, and where they're from, and, and what got them here. And so that's what we're gonna do. We're gonna just do a fun list of 20 questions, as they say. So, why don't you start out, Alberto, and tell us a little bit about your agriculture [00:01:00] roots, and where your from.

Alberto Amador: Sure, I'm from Mexico.

I am agronomist and I am the third generation on my farm. My farm is in Puebla, Mexico, . And originally my grandpa produced pulque, that is a pre Hispanic beverage. And We produce garlic, corn, and cattle but throughout the time, we adapt to the market conditions and we breed in a feeding lamb and produce grains, basically corn and oats.

Dana Zook: Okay. So what, tell us that beverage again. Tell me what that is.

Alberto Amador: Okay. The name is pulque it come from the agave.

Dana Zook: Oh, the agave plant? Yeah.

Alberto Amador: Agave plant. But it's not the same that the tequila.

Dana Zook: Oh, . There is

Alberto Amador: another, another one, and you collect it like the maple syrup.

But if you ferment it, the name of the liquid inside [00:02:00] is a aguamiel.

Dana Zook: Okay.

Alberto Amador: And if they fermented, you get alcohol that the name is pulque. Okay. And the Aztecs and Mayans drank it.

Dana Zook: Okay. Is it popular?

Alberto Amador: It was really popular, but because it's a fermented beverage

It's difficult to. Conserve it, and it sometimes smell it doesn't smell good.

Dana Zook: Oh, okay. After, after a time. After a period of time. So it has a limited shelf life.

Alberto Amador: Yes.

Dana Zook: Okay.

Alberto Amador: Exactly. And also it's hard to compete with beer.

Dana Zook: What is it like in the area in Puebla, where you're from? Tell us about it.

Cause the listeners probably don't know.

Alberto Amador: Well, it's in the center of Mexico, and the temperature is between 40s and 70s. And in my hometown, the agriculture [00:03:00] production is a lot of apple trees, corn, like in whole Mexico, basically. Berries, especially blueberry, coffee, and many sheep, a lot of sheep.

Josh Bushong: Oklahoma used to have a lot of sheep back in the day until transition to cattle, but I know talking with you before, you also have pretty good history with rodeo horses.

Alberto Amador: Well, I practice like the Mexican rodeo, the name is Charrería, and it is like nine performances. And I used to practice three of them that my favorite is to be in a normal horse jump to a wild horse.

Dana Zook: Really?

Alberto Amador: And you have like two chances to do it.

Dana Zook: How often were you successful?

Alberto Amador: Like 50 50 I think. Okay. I was good in that.

Dana Zook: That sounds crazy. Okay, I didn't know [00:04:00] that. Josh, you, you figured that out.

So you said 40 to 70, is that degrees Celsius or is that Fahrenheit

Alberto Amador: No, Fahrenheit, Fahrenheit.

Alberto Amador: But yeah. On my farm could be like in the thirties too, because it's really high.

Dana Zook: Okay. So mountainous.

Alberto Amador: Yeah. I mean, Zacatlán is surrounded of hills.

Dana Zook: Okay, cool. So so you have an experience in the government in Mexico. So tell us a little bit about that.

Alberto Amador: Yeah, I have worked in the three different levels.

Government in my hometown as in the extension department consulting the agronomy field and the financial to the producers. Then I work in the federal government as budget analyst in the Congress and in the state of Tlaxcala. I work in the Secretary of Agriculture, too.

Dana Zook: You also owned a [00:05:00] restaurant that was supplied by your farming operation.

Alberto Amador: Yes, I tried to complete the cycle and add value

to

my lamb. So I open a restaurant of barbacoa that is a traditional Mexican dish based on lamb. And with the, with the restaurant I start to see real profits adding the value to the, to the lamb.

Dana Zook: So it's kind of like here people retaining ownership of cattle through the feed yard and then selling direct to the packer.

So that's kind of a similar thing. You were. Routining ownership all the way through until the restaurant, so. And barbacoa, we talked about this the other day, that is your favorite.

Alberto Amador: Yes, my favorite kind of tacos.

Dana Zook: I'll have to try that. Though we don't have many lamb options at the, at the taco trucks around here, but that looked really good.

So, Alberto, what brought you to Oklahoma?

Alberto Amador: I had [00:06:00] the opportunity to start a master in Mexico because I got a scholarship and my university in Mexico is UPAEP and UPAEP has an agreement with OSU. So my director offered me to do the dual degree at OSU in the MBA. So I accept and I, I'm really happy to take that decision.

Dana Zook: So you finished your MBA last summer.

Alberto Amador: Yeah, in August.

Dana Zook: Okay, you finished your MBA and then you worked on the agronomy farm for several months as you were applying for and looking for a job.

Alberto Amador: Yes, I started working on the farm like in June, I think.

Dana Zook: Okay, all right. Very cool. So what do you feel like? I mean, I can't imagine getting an MBA. I can't even, I have a hard time with just basic budgets. But what do you feel like the MBA brings to your job now as an area [00:07:00] economist

Alberto Amador: MBA is a complete program and you see like a holistic topics.

For example, accounting, finance, income, and Multiple ways or strategies to approach to the, to the stakeholders or your coworkers. And I learned how to manage different situations, especially like human situations. Additionally, almost in all the classes, we analyze cases. And For me, it's like a training to advise and consult people and business.

Dana Zook: . Definitely quite, quite an accomplishment to have done that. And so you stayed. You decided to stay. In Oklahoma. Tell us a little bit about that decision.

Alberto Amador: Well, since I arrived [00:08:00] to Oklahoma, OSU community made me feel at home.

And, I don't know, I want to give back a little bit that OSU has given me. And, I don't know, I think that extension is a good way to help people. And I want to build a career here now.

Dana Zook: That's very cool. We're, we're glad to have you. So what are you wanting to bring to your job and address as the area economist?

I know you're very new to the job, kind of new to the area. What are some things that you really like to do or looking forward to working on?

Alberto Amador: Well. For now, I, I want to, of course help the, the farmers, the producers, and find an area to research, and that research triggered, like, an economic development [00:09:00] in, in the region.

In my Mexican thesis that it, that was Applied Economics, I, I made a research about the food production, the correlation of food production and rural multidimensionality poverty. And I had the opportunity to, to collaborate with my director. With this research and now the research is going to be published in a journal and he shows to the government in Puebla.

So I gonna try to do something like that here too.

Josh Bushong: So before coming up to Oklahoma, were you making trips to the U. S. before that commitment to come up here for MBA or was coming up to OSU your first experience in the U. S.?

Alberto Amador: No, when I was kid I, I went to Boston I don't know why, I, I went with my father. He, he had, he had a friend who, who lived in Boston, and my sister went to a [00:10:00] course in the university there, and I have family in Texas, so I have gone to visit them a couple of times.

Dana Zook: Well, I can't say that I know what it's like to, to come to a new place, but I did travel two states away from my home and come, but I know it's such a big, it is quite a big undertaking to come to school in a different place, but also to stay.

And you've already done some. So, a little bit of work in some economic development areas since taking on the job. You've looked at start up daycare costs in some rural communities and, and so the rural development part I think is really going to be valuable because the West District is such a, a rural area of Oklahoma.

Josh Bushong: Yeah, lots of diversity Obviously our staples wheat for many reasons, but we got everything from specialty crops [00:11:00] peppers to peaches to cherries to everything else, but It's gonna be interesting to see what we can So, we'll do together over the next coming years, so.

Dana Zook: Yeah, maybe we'll do some lamb budgets. , the small ruminant thing is really taking off.

Josh Bushong: I still know a few producers that got some. Yeah, I do too. I believe NOC here has a pretty good program. Yeah, I think

Dana Zook: so, yeah.

So there's opportunities there.

Alberto Amador: Also the lamb meat is my favorite, so.

Dana Zook: Yeah. Well maybe we should have like a cooking thing.

Alberto Amador: Where's your best taco you found in Oklahoma?

Dana Zook: Yeah. Where was it?

Alberto Amador: Oh.

Dana Zook: What, what town? Because you traveled a lot with agronomy,

Alberto Amador: yeah. And they love the Mexican food.

Yeah. But I went to a place that name is El Chilango in O. K. C. And the. Tacos al pastor. Okay. Are really good there. So for now, they are my favorite. So far. But you're trying it as we go.

Dana Zook: I didn't take him to a Mexican place the other day in Clinton. But, but [00:12:00] we're gonna, we're gonna, it's gonna be our new thing.

We're gonna try to do that, so.

Alberto Amador: Deal.

Dana Zook: Well Alberto, thanks for letting us introduce you to our audience. So, listeners, you'll hear a lot more from Alberto in the coming episodes. We'll be highlighting some ag economics and agronomy topics in the next couple of months. So stay tuned. Thank you all for joining us and have a wonderful week.