

Remembering Farm Broadcasting Pioneer Orion Samuelson

Career spanned the administrations of nine U.S. presidents

and was heard on 260 radio stations with his "National Farm Report" and on 110 stations with his "Samuelson Sez."

He co-hosted the Saturday Morning Show and later hosted "This Week in Agribusiness" on RFD-TV. Samuelson's career as a farm broadcaster spanned the administrations of 9 U.S. presidents, including John F. Kennedy.

He also made history by being the first agribusiness broadcaster to be inducted into the National Radio Broadcasters Hall of Fame. In 2010, the City of Chicago named the corner of Illinois Street and City Front Plaza Drive "Orion Samuelson Way."

His other accolades include the Lincoln Medal, an honorary doctorate from the

University of Illinois, induction into the National Radio Hall of Fame, and recognition in the inaugural class of the WGN Radio Walk of Fame. In 1997, Illinois Governor Jim Edgar renamed the Junior Livestock Building at the Illinois State Fair in his honor.

For more than 60 years, Orion Samuelson's friendly voice resonated across the airwaves as familiar to most as that of the late Paul Harvey.

His farm reports on WGN-AM radio became a daily staple for farmers nationwide, who relied on his wise advice on all matters related to agriculture.

Samuelson was raised on a dairy farm near Ontario, Wisconsin. He enrolled in college at the University of Wisconsin but reportedly dropped out after just three months because the school wasn't teaching him to be a radio announcer, a passion he wanted to pursue. He later enrolled in a broadcasting school in Minnesota.

Samuelson returned to his home state and first hit the airwaves in the summer of 1952 in Sparta, Wisconsin, where he was the disc jockey for the station's polka music.

Samuelson bounced around between radio stations for several years before his big break in 1960, when he landed a job at the famed Chicago radio station WGN as the station's head ag broadcaster.

Samuelson delivered 16 ag reports daily

A long, storied career

Samuelson partnered with fellow farm broadcaster Max Armstrong to co-host the U.S. Farm Report, a television program that was syndicated to over 150 markets nationwide.

Together, they became synonymous with providing the latest news and information to America's farmers and agricultural businesses for an impressive 42 years.

Samuelson officially retired in January 2021.

Samuelson was an advocate for many organizations that were close to his heart, including 4-H and FFA.

He was inducted into the Wisconsin 4-H Hall of Fame in 2017.

He spent his retirement years at home in Huntley, Illinois, with his wife, Gloria. Samuelson lived to be 91 years old.

He was a champion for the American farmer and will be missed and remembered as an agricultural giant.

Samuelson is the only broadcaster to receive two Oscars in Agriculture from the National Association of Farm Broadcasting.



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