**Alumni Spotlight**

**Christopher Carey**

MAB Class of 2007  
Plant Manager  
OkTex Baking

by Mary Bowen

**Playing it Safe**

Chris Carey, Plant Manager of OkTex Baking in Marietta, Okla., has built a career on playing it safe. When most people think of careers in agriculture, they picture things like farming, ranching, and food production lines. While all of these are a big part of the food and agriculture industry, there is one piece that is the backbone of every agricultural career — safety. Carey never thought he’d make a career out of explaining and enforcing safety procedures, but that is exactly what he’s done.

Growing up, Carey’s father worked in livestock transportation and while he enjoyed being around the agriculture industry, he was not sure what he wanted to do. After some consideration, he went to work for Cargill Meat Solutions as a Purchasing Manager and then moved on to Cargill Animal Nutrition as a Plant Manager Associate. While there he discovered a greater purpose in the area of industrial safety.

“Every year, workers are killed on-the-job due to safety hazards or not following policy. At Cargill, safety was the most important part of your job. I earned the title ‘Safety Champion’ and it became my responsibility to make sure everyone knew and followed safe practices. My career has grown from there,” Carey said.

With an undergraduate degree in Animal Science, he felt he knew the science side of the industry and the importance of safe practices, but needed to gain more knowledge of the business side of agriculture in order to advance. He turned to the Master of Agribusiness (MAB) distance degree from Kansas State University. With the increased knowledge of agribusiness, better public speaking and decision-making skills, stronger leadership abilities and more confidence being just a few of the benefits Carey says he gained by completing his Master of Agribusiness degree.

“What safety procedures does Chris have to remind employees of regularly?  
- Lifting properly
- Not lifting too much weight
- Strains are the most common injury