



Future Chicken hatches a microdrama-inspired series

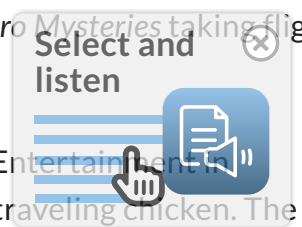
EXCLUSIVE: Wind Sun Sky is giving its ecological toon the vertical treatment—and a new look—in its new set of AI-powered *Micro Mysteries*.

By Sadhana Bharanidharan

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Microdramas aren't just live-action soaps for Gen Z anymore, with *Future Chicken: Micro Mysteries* taking flight on YouTube tomorrow.

The new series is the latest batch of content produced by Vancouver's Wind Sun Sky Entertainment in partnership with ClearWater Futures Foundation for the eco-franchise about a time-traveling chicken. The series is going to look and feel a little different from usual though, taking inspiration from the ongoing market



boom in [microdramas](#).

Starting from April 1, the first season of 12 x two-minute episodes will roll out on a weekly basis on the official [Future Chicken channel](#)—featuring a serialized arc that uses the microdrama technique of cliffhanger endings to keep kids engaged.

The series for the six-plus crowd tags along with Future Chicken as she tries to find a fix for the broken “Bloom Clock” that causes nature’s rhythms to fall totally out of sync. Helping her out on the mission is her team of Planet Protectors including a cautious egghead, a soil scientist worm, a no-nonsense catfish and a mushroom.

While Future Chicken has always focused on a mix of climate literacy and comedy, CEO Catherine Winder says the new series is especially designed to emphasize the suspense and the laughs, with educational themes expertly folded in.

“It’s the broccoli-covered-in-the-cheese-sauce way, where kids are coming for the comedy and the mystery and [underneath] there are a lot of science learnings,” she says. And while the vertical microdramas that have been such a hit with older audiences have emphasized more dramatic, soap opera-style stakes, *Micro Mysteries* is playing up the mystery element with its weekly release schedule, so that kids are “not just watching, they’re trying to solve clues alongside the characters.”

In another big change, Future Chicken is now sporting a new 2D look, which helps emphasize the focus on storytelling. “The CG-animated videos in the past were a little heavier on education and more contained. Now we’re leaning more into the time-travel continuum [and evolving Future Chicken into] more of a comedic character,” she says. The change was made with the help of feedback from focus groups, where audiences loved the more expressive, 2D style.

To produce the new series, Wind Sun Sky has integrated AI into parts of the animation pipeline to help speed up the creative team. “We know these days it’s very important to be able to produce quickly and cost-effectively, especially for YouTube,” she said. “So we’ve actually created a hybrid approach as we figure out how to do this most efficiently.”

With this mixed approach, some scenes are made using AI while others are done with traditional keyframe animation. AI isn’t as advanced with 2D animation as it is with CG and doesn’t work for certain visuals, which still need to be done by hand, Winder explains, citing how AI has trouble rendering the shape of Future Chicken’s beak going upward. “AI constantly makes the beak go down, so those shots don’t work.”

Still, she estimates that the AI-integrated process will eventually help the team save 50% of the production time. As it is, production of the series that debuts tomorrow only began in mid-January.

Winder has high hopes for this new season. An arc is already mapped out for a second, which will continue with the new look and pipeline, and feature another storytelling-forward premise to expand the franchise, she says.

And there will be more ways than one to watch the new series, she adds. *Micro Mysteries* will be available in a horizontal format on the YouTube Kids app, and it can also be combined and shopped as a well-paced, half-hour special.