

## Barton S. Baker

**D**r. Barton S. Baker, a part-time farmer, dedicated his career to the promotion and enhancement of West Virginia agriculture. His contribution to the industry include being a beef producer, teacher, researcher and service/outreach efforts through the West Virginia University (WVU) Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences and WVU Cooperative Extension Service.

Dr. Baker was born in Paint Bank, Va., and majored in agriculture at Berea College, Berea, Ky., receiving a B.S. in 1964. He then attended WVU, Morgantown, W.Va., where he majored in agronomy, receiving a M.S. in 1966 and Ph.D. in 1969.

He began his career in 1970 at WVU as the agronomist on the W.Va. Allegheny Highlands Project, a service and research demonstration project. He served as director of this project from 1978-1981, while also serving as extension agronomy specialist from 1978-1986. From 1986-1993, he served as acting, and then director of the Division of Plant and Soil Sciences. After serving as WVU Davis College of Agriculture, Forestry and Consumer Sciences interim dean and Agriculture and Forestry Experiment Station interim director from 1993-1994, he returned to serve as director of the Division of Plant and Soil Sciences. During his service with the Plant Sciences Division, Dr. Baker has overseen significant growth of the division, especially in research.

Through Dr. Baker's innovation and leadership the W.Va. Allegheny Highlands Project was one of the first sustained integrated programs in West Virginia to promote the management practices and demonstrate the value of forage production to the State livestock industry. Dr. Barton introduced growing corn to several farmers in the Tygart Valley who had been on a hay and grass only program, developed and promoted new methods for fertilization of hill pastures and played a major role in development of farm plans for the 85 cooperating farmers in that project. The Project produced over 70 publications and a cadre of farmer leaders who continued innovations in livestock agriculture over the next two decades. The contacts made in this project have allowed faculty and graduate students from WVU to continue to do on-farm research in the nine-county project area to this day.

Dr. Baker has been an invaluable educational and service resource to West Virginia producers, commodity groups and youth organizations throughout his tenure at WVU. He has published over 40 manuscripts and has made a significant contribution to West Virginia agriculture through his teaching and research programs in the education and training of undergraduate and graduate students, many of whom continue to serve West Virginia agriculture through extension and other state agencies and industry organizations.

Dr. Baker has a long, well established history of collaboration with the W.Va. Department of Agriculture, W.Va. Legislature, State Fair of W.Va., USDA and Rockefeller Foundation. He was selected for the 1974 study tour of the Rockefeller Foundation Pueblo Project in Mexico and WVU Foundation 1985 study tour of agriculture in Australia and New Zealand. Dr. Baker also received the Gamma Sigma Delta W.Va. Chapter's 1977 Junior Faculty Certificate of Merit Award and 1988 Senior Faculty Award of Merit; Randolph County Mountaineers for Rural Development 1981 Outstanding Service Award; American Forage and Grassland Council 1987 Merit Certificate; W.Va. Department of Agriculture 1988 Award for bringing Honor and Recognition to the State of West Virginia; and WVU College of Agriculture and Forestry Visiting Committee 1995 Outstanding Service Recognition.

