

Audrey H. Vanlandingham



Audrey H. VanLandingham, a native of Georgia, was involved for 37 years with agricultural research and research leadership at the West Virginia University Agricultural Experiment Station. He holds M.S. and Ph.D. degrees from West Virginia University.

Beginning in 1934, Dr. VanLandingham worked as an agricultural chemist in the Agricultural Experiment Station and rose to the rank of Professor and Biochemist in 1948. In 1950, he became Assistant Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics and Assistant Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station. In 1959, he named Associate Dean of the College and Director of the Experiment Station. He retired as Professor Emeritus in 1971.

After he assumed administrative responsibilities for the agricultural research program, he worked to coordinate research in areas of major importance to the economy and general welfare of West Virginia and its people. Soon after becoming Assistant Director of the Experiment Station, he was instrumental in bringing the Soil Conservation Districts into the Surface Mining Reclamation Program. Under his leadership, the Soil Conservation Service developed the first technical guide for strip mine reclamation. Many of the agricultural research accomplishments during the period 1950-70 were made as a result of his leadership and encouragement. His influence in the development of the three-stage broiler house is an outstanding example. He was also instrumental in the initiation of research on small watersheds and securing a weather station at the Kearneysville Experiment Station.

On three occasions, Dr. VanLandingham was appointed Acting Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. It was during the second period as Acting Dean (July 1957-June 1958) that much of the planning was done for the construction and furnishing of the Agricultural Sciences and Agricultural Engineering buildings.

As a scholar and research scientists, Dr. VanLandingham was a member of several societies and organizations. He was a member of the American Chemical Society, the American Institute of Chemists, the West Virginia Academy of Science, Phi Lambda Upsilon, Sigma Xi, Gamma Sigma Delta, the West Virginia Horticultural Society, the West Virginia Poultry Association, the West Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Committee, and the West Virginia Geological and Economic Survey Commission.

Dr. VanLandingham received numerous awards. He was awarded an Honorary State Farmer Degree by the Future Farmers of America and received the Senior Faculty Award from Gamma Sigma Delta, the honorary society of agriculture. He was made an honorary citizen of Tennessee in 1965 and was selected as West Virginia's Man of the Year in Agriculture by the PROGRESSIVE FARMER magazine in 1962.

As one colleague noted:

“Honestly, frankness, and friendliness are valuable personal traits which one notes when first meeting Dr. VanLandingham. These traits, as well as his concern for people, become increasingly evident as one becomes better acquainted with him. His accomplishments at West Virginia University and the high regard in which he is held by agricultural leaders in the Northeast are additional evidence of his leadership ability.”