

Harold M. Hyre



Harold M. Hyre, for fifty years an active participant in the agricultural affairs of West Virginia, is a native of Upshur County. He received his B.S. Degree in 1930 in poultry at West Virginia University and an M.S. Degree in poultry at Cornell University in 1931. He joined the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service as Extension Poultryman in 1931 and served in that capacity until 1945 when he was appointed Associate Professor of Poultry Husbandry and Associative Poultry Husbandman at West Virginia University. He taught and conducted poultry research until his retirement in 1970. From 1970 to 1974, Mr. Hyre served as Poultry Specialist for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture. From 1973 to the present (1981), he served as Executive Secretary-Treasurer for the West Virginia Association of Agricultural Industries.

During his 14 years with the Cooperative Extension Service, he promoted a state-wide program which stressed the importance of using well-bred strains of poultry for egg production and improving egg quality. He also stressed good management practices in feeding, housing, and disease control. He was instrumental in getting the West Virginia Poultry Association formed in 1934 and served as secretary until 1945.

Professor Hyre was one of the leaders in writing the West Virginia Egg Law and helping to get it passed by the State Legislature in 1937. He encouraged activities that resulted in West Virginia becoming one of the original states to adopt the National Poultry Improvement Plan. He served as official state representative for the program and was chairman of the West Virginia Administrative Committee for many years. He also served as State Chairman of the Chicken of Tomorrow Program in West Virginia and represented the West Virginia Cooperative Extension Service at the World Poultry Congress in 1939.

Through his teaching of poultry courses, Professor Hyre aroused the interest of many of his students to pursue advanced studies and helped them to get assistantships at many of the leading universities and experiment stations. His major interest in research was in the field of poultry genetics. Some of the research included: "Causes of Keel Deformities in Chickens," "Genetic Influence of Interior Egg Quality and Shell Quality," "Selecting for Viability in Chickens," "The Use of Limestone as a Calcium Supplement for Poultry," and the "Effect of Hatchability, Chick Viability, and Growth Rate Fortifying Chick Embryos."

While serving as Poultry Specialist for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture, Professor Hyre worked with farmers on poultry housing, feeds, and feeding, marketing, and similar activities.

Professor Hyre has been active in many organizations and has received both industry and national honors. He has been an active member of the West Virginia Poultry Association for 46 years, a member of the West Virginia Farm Bureau, Gamma Sigma Delta, Epsilon Sigma Phi, a member of the American Poultry Breeders' Association and the Morgantown Lions Club. He has been elected Fellow of the Poultry Science Association, and has received certificates of appreciation and merit from the West Virginia Poultry Association, from the Northeast Poultry Producers Cooperative, and the West Virginia Department of Agriculture.

He has been active in community affairs, notably the United Way and Meals on Wheels. He has been an active member of the Drummond Chapel Methodist Church for 50 years and has served as Chairman on the Board of Trustees for several years.