

Hu S. Vandervort



Hu S. Vandervort, whose career spanned six decades of service to agriculture and rural people, was a pioneer and innovator whose achievements involved activities in agricultural education, agri-business, agricultural organizations, and agricultural policy and acting at county, state, and national levels.

He began his public career in 1912, in Wood County, as County Agricultural Agent, just four months after the first County Agricultural Agent began in Kanawha County. He also served as the West Virginia University Agricultural Extension Service as District Agent and as Assistant Director. As a pioneer in Extension, Mr. Vandervort developed ideas and techniques for working with total people that provided valuable guidance for those agents who came later. In 1960, Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture, presented Mr. Vandervort with an award in recognition of his scholarship and service to West Virginia Agriculture. He also served as a member and Chairman of the Advisory Board to the WVU College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

During the trying times of the late 1930's, Mr. Vandervort served as a member and chairman of the State Agricultural Adjustment Administration Committee where his leadership was valuable in the interpretation and operation of the depression-oriented agricultural legislation passed by Congress. His advice was also sought at the national level on agricultural policy.

As owner-operator of the Sanitary Milk and Ice Cream Company in Morgantown, he provided the first milk pasteurizing plant in Monongalia County. The plant provided an outlet for the milk produced by farmers throughout northern West Virginia and the dairy products were sold in many counties.

A lifetime farmer, in addition to his numerous organization and agency agriculturally-related activities, Mr. Vandervort also found time to contribute his talents to community activities. He was a member and president of the Board of Monongalia County Hospital; a Director of the Monongalia County Tuberculosis and Health Association; a member of city council in Morgantown when the new City Building was built; a member of the Morgantown Community Association; a member of the House of Delegates for three terms.

Mr. Vandervort inspired all those with whom he came in contact. One associate has listed these traits which distinguished Mr. Vandervort as outstanding among his fellowmen:

“Profession integrity, fairness to employees, respectful of the rights of other, devotion to family, loyalty to community, an unswerving commitment to fulfill obligations, and a willingness to shoulder more than his share of the public responsibilities in the community and state where he lived.”