

James E. McDonald



James E. McDonald, a native of Berkeley County, helped his father to plant his first orchard when he was eight years old. Since that time, he has had a long and distinguished career as a farmer and orchardist and has devoted much time to assisting young people to further their careers in agriculture.

Mr. McDonald has always been of a cooperative spirit. As an orchardist willing to experiment and try new production practices, he has encouraged many young adult people to become a part of the industry, including his five sons, four of whom (plus his only son-in-law) are actively engaged in the family business which was incorporated in 1967 as J.E. McDonald and sons, Inc. He has served as a leader in the orchard industry with his innovated ideas for fifty years.

His interest and belief in the vitality of agriculture in general are reflected in his years of service to many organizations and agencies that provide leadership for the industry. He served as President of the Berkeley County Farm Bureau and for several years was president of the West Virginia Farm Bureau. He served on the Board of Directors of the Southern States and Cooperative (Richmond, Virginia) for ten years and served as President of the West Virginia Horticultural Society for two years. He helped organize the Knouse Food Cooperation in 1959 and has served on its Board of Directors since that time.

Mr. McDonald has also helped organize the first Tri-County Wool Pool and Lamb Marketing Cooperative at Bardane, West Virginia.

His continuing relationship and work within the industry have brought him many awards and recognitions. He was made an Honorary State Farmer by the State Future Farmers of America, is a West Virginia 4-H All Star, and has been honored by Gamma Sigma Delta, the Honor Society of Agriculture. Mr. McDonald was awarded a Certificate of Partnership by the Agricultural Council of America and a Leadership Award by the Southern States Cooperative.

A 1922 graduate of West Virginia University, Mr. McDonald was elected to membership in Alpha Zeta Honorary as an undergraduate. As a young man he was a member of the first Corn Clubs organized in West Virginia, continued as a 4-H Club Leader for many years and yet today helps with certain projects and demonstrations. He has often provided transportation for 4-H and FFA livestock exhibits and projects to regional and state events.

A colleague has made this observation:

“As a dedicated Christian man, James McDonald has always been faithful to his Church, family, and community – and to the farming industry as a whole. He has always been ready to cooperate in any way to improve the overall condition of the industry for the benefit of all persons engaged in agriculture. By example, he continued to inspire and encourage, and continues to serve his church, community, and industry in an outstanding manner.”