

# Oscar Clemen Stine



Oscar C. Stine was a renowned economist who pioneered price analysis for agricultural commodities and foreign trade analysis, and who founded the commodity situation and outlook reporting for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

A native of Jackson County, Dr. Stine went to work in 1916 in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture. He remained in that bureau through his USDA career. During those years, his work concerns included agricultural prices and income, statistical analysis, agricultural marketing and agricultural history.

His unique contributions to agriculture included:

- (1) He began the price analyses work for agricultural commodities and the situation and outlook reporting which was based on the systematic and continuing study of demand, supply, price and consumption interrelationships.
- (2) He was a pioneer in foreign trade analyses, and early on recognized the importance of monitoring foreign economic conditions as they affect foreign demand for U.S. farm products. He traveled extensively in Europe and the USSR prior to World War II and dispatched some of the first agricultural attaches to foreign countries.
- (3) He played an important role in developing research in economics and marketing under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946.
- (4) He was one of a group of economists who were widely consulted by the Secretary of Agriculture and Congress and who gave the USDA economic services a reputation for competence, objectivity and excellence.
- (5) Probably his greatest professional achievement was the development of a capable analytic staff through emphasis on adequate economic and statistical training, a scientific and historical perspective.

In 1928, Dr. Stine purchased a crop farm in Jefferson County and turned it into an outstanding dairy farm. His basic herd of Ayrshires was developed from the WVU Reymann Memorial Ayrshire herd. His activities were important in the development of the Washington-Baltimore milk shed. He joined the Jefferson County Farm Bureau when it was first established and pressed for the first county extension agent in that county.

Following his retirement from the USDA in 1951, Dr. Stine engaged in numerous post-retirement employment opportunities including a stint at West Virginia University in the early 1960's as economic analyst to a panel of six high-level experts to recommend a rural development program for six central West Virginia counties. At various times he was a lecturer, teacher and researcher at the University of California, Hampton-Sidney College, Southern Illinois University, University of Florida and Shepherd College.

Dr. Stine has been characterized by associates as unflinchingly courageous and consistently objective. He was always ahead of current thinking and prodded his associates to think ahead and see themselves in leadership roles. He was never satisfied with the status quo.