

Charles Hunter



Charles "Chuck" Hunter was born April 25, 1930 in Gans, Pa. He graduated University High School in Morgantown in 1948 and earned a two-year degree in Dairy Husbandry from WVU. He is a lifelong dairy farmer and the sixth generation to operate the family farm just outside of Morgantown. It is the only privately owned dairy farm remaining in Monongalia County.

Although the herd is not as large as it once was, Hunter has continually kept up to date on the latest products and methods to optimize production. He is an avid reader, and routinely has attended Extension short courses and evening meetings. In the last five years, he has improved his hay production with a new baler and wrapper. He has upgraded all his farm structures with new roofs and added concrete improvements to the milking parlor.

Besides being a lifelong learner, Hunter has provided educational opportunities to numerous students through partnerships with WVU and the Extension Service. The dairy farm has been used for applied research projects, advancing the science and knowledge for all small farm dairies.

The WVU Animal Nutritional Sciences Division uses his farm as a teaching lab. Other classes have visited his farm for real-world experience regarding dairy farming and farm planning. His farm is always open for 4-H and FFA visits. Hunter has also worked with occupational health students from the WVU School of Medicine to improve their understanding of the physical demands and challenges farmers face.

During 2012-13, at a time that cattle losses were being attributed to bad baleage, Hunter contacted the Extension Service about proper baleage methods. That conversation prompted a statewide applied research study that resulted in formal recommendations on how to properly harvest, wrap and store baleage to reduce potential problems.

Hunter applies modern conservation principles on his farm as well. He uses no-till planting, soil testing, hay testing, crop rotation, rotational grazing, contour planting and other conservation practices to maintain the fertility of his farm. The farm is a cooperator with all the USDA agencies in managing land and livestock.

He has been a member of the Monongalia County Farm Bureau since 1956 and is a member of the Monongalia County Livestock Improvement Association. He served as a Monongahela Conservation District Supervisor in the 1970s

and is a member of the Dairy Farmers of America. He belonged to FFA and 4-H in his youth. On snowy mornings, he can often be found clearing neighbors' roads and driveways, and he frequently shares corn and other produce. He won the West Virginia Farm Bureau (WVFB) Distinguished Service Award in 2007 and the WVFB Heritage Farm Award in 2014. He was named a State Star Farmer and awarded the American Farmer Degree from FFA in 1950.

He has served as Sunday School Secretary and teacher at the Forks of Cheat Baptist Church.