

Henry W. Miller, Sr.



Henry W. Miller, Jr., a nationally and internationally known for his innovative practices in growing, packing, and shipping fruit, was active in the management and direction of the Consolidated Orchard Company at Paw Paw, in Morgan County, for 52 years.

Mr. Miller's innovations in the production of marketing of tree fruits began with his entrance into the management of enterprise and continued until the end of his career. He was one of the first growers to recognize that marketing is at least as important as production. Continued sales at premium prices were seen by Mr. Miller to depend upon a quality product which was produced by proper cultural and handling methods. He emphasized detailed pruning, vigorous pest control, and protection for the fruit during harvesting, handling, and storage.

Because of his innovative ways, he constantly searched for new materials and methods and cooperated with both public and private research workers, sometimes at considerable expense to his company. He stressed quality and constantly worked to improve the quality of his product. He also realized that a relatively stable labor force was essential and adopted a profit sharing plan for his employees. Mr. Miller's eagerness to display his operations and to discuss his production and marketing procedures made Consolidated Orchards a model for many orchardists and made him a leader in an industry he enjoyed so much.

His achievements brought him many honors and awards and Mr. Miller was a nationally known speaker and writer. He was a member of the International Apple Association, Inc., for many years and served on its Board of Directors at three different times, served as Chairman of its Board of Directors, was elected Treasurer, and then served as President. He also served on the Board of Directors of the American Farm Bureau Federation and as President of the National Apple Institute.

The West Virginia Farm Bureau presented Mr. Williams its "Distinguished Service Award to West Virginia Agriculture" in 1956 and the West Virginia University Chapter of Gamma Sigma Delta presented him its "Award of Merit" in 1960 for outstanding service to West Virginia agriculture. The Progressive Farmer magazine named him "Man of the Year in West Virginia Agriculture" in 1965. He was the first President of the West Virginia Congress of Agriculture.

Widely known and respected in government circles, Mr. Miller served as an advisor to OPA Director Chester Bowles during World War II and was a consultant to Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson during the Eisenhower administration. He also served as an advisor to Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans during the Nixon administration.

Mr. Miller served his country and community. He served as President of the Morgan County Board of Education; was a trustee, Sunday School Superintendent, and teacher at the Woodrow Church in Paw Paw; was a charter member of the Lions Club of Paw Paw; was a charter member of the Kiwanis Club of Berkley Springs; and served on numerous local and state groups supporting increased resources for the public schools.

A colleague said this about Mr. Miller:

"Henry not only managed his own business with great ability and success, but he worked long and hard for the good on the entire industry and for all of agriculture, many times in thankless positions. His ability has been unusual in our industry and his contribution to West Virginia agriculture merits the thanks of all of those associated with it."