

Irvin Dulaney White

Home:

1713 Proffit Rd  
Charlottesville, VA 22911

Business:

Bracketts Farm Rd.  
Louisa, VA 23093

Irvin White is a farmer and a businessman who combines his interest in managing the land in an environmentally sound way with profitability and sound production. He takes great pleasure from designing and installing rotational grazing systems that increase efficiency and productivity while protecting natural resources. His true love is managing cattle, building his herd to maximize upon the genetics of those cattle which thrive on the local forage, reducing the need of supplemental feed, with each generation showing better adaptation to the local environment. Irvin's long term goal for the cattle operation is to maximize local marketing and consumption of the farm-raised, grass-finished beef.

Irvin did not come from a farming background. A Virginia native, Irvin graduated from the University of Virginia in 1995 with a degree in Environmental Science. He developed his love of farming while working on a farm outside of Charlottesville during college. After a short career as a feed and seed salesman which kept him travelling, in 1998 Irvin started his own one-man fencing business. He has grown the business, now with five employees, installing fencing, working pens, alternative watering systems, and stream crossings for farmers throughout Central Virginia.

White Fencing is a thriving business that makes a profit promoting and installing conservation. The business has installed hundreds of miles of stream fencing and water line throughout Culpeper, Madison, Orange, Greene, Albemarle, Fluvanna, Nelson, Louisa, and Spottsylvania Counties, working with the Culpeper, Thomas Jefferson, and Tri-County City SWCD as well as with the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Irvin has conducted farm management consultation as far from home as Bath County. Five of the farms where Irvin designed and installed the fencing and the water system have won Grand Basin awards for their conservation practices.

As a fencer and farm consultant, Irvin actively guides farmers, new and old, through the process of working with both District and NRCS staff to protect natural resources. Irvin will stay with a farmer throughout the process from planning to installation, acting as an advocate for the farmer. Irvin helps find the best conservation program to suit a farmer's needs and goals. This process may take many small projects over many years, and it may grow to span many properties. Irvin's greatest skill is his ability to incorporate conservation into production agriculture.

In addition to farm planning and conservation practice implementation, Irvin is also an active farmer who has also benefitted from both state and federal conservation programs. The Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program as well as a suite of NRCS programs such as CREP, CSP, and EQIP have helped Irvin best manage his farms and cattle production. After buying his first herd of cattle in 1998 with a Farm Credit loan, Irvin now rents over 2,000 acres three counties where he raises about 250 cow/calf pairs on 8 different properties. Irvin also manages an additional 50 cow/calf pairs for landowner partners. Irvin is able to balance a for-profit cattle operation while keeping many diverse landowners happy with his management.

Irvin is active member of his community. He served on the following organizational boards for a range of 2-10 years: Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District (Associate Director), Central Virginia Cattleman's Association, Virginia Grassland and Forage Council, Albemarle County Farm Bureau (one term as president). Other notable community activities with which Irvin assisted are the organization and oversight of the Farm Bureau Main Street Agriculture Event which brought livestock and farm equipment to downtown Charlottesville and the hosting of a Conservation Farm Tour for UVA's Department of Urban Planning (5 years).

After 20 years of working only on rented land, Irvin's dream of owning his own family farm is close to becoming a reality. Working with the Farm Service Agency and Farm Credit, Irvin has a contract to (hopefully) purchase 200 acres of pasture to call his own. This land base will add stability and security to the cattle operation. Irvin is excited to have a farm to call home, to share his love of the land and farming with his wife and three children. Irvin takes great pride in all he does, and owning a family farm will be the culmination of a lifetime of hard work.