

In the 1840s, Evva Hanes' great-grandfather purchased the land that would be home to his family for over 100 years. The land continued to be passed down through the years, becoming the property of Evva and her siblings in the 1950s. In an attempt to keep the family land together, Evva bought each of her siblings' shares, reuniting the family farm.

The family originally had about 60 acres of farmland in the Clemmons area. Since then, the family has purchased adjacent land, bringing the acreage up to about 100 acres.

Initially, the family operated a small dairy farm on the land. Evva and her husband, Travis, along with her father, later purchased beef cattle. Today, however, the family land is home to a pine tree farm, plus a sweet surprise inspired by Evva's mother.

Evva's mother made cookies to supplement the family's farm income when Evva was a child. Today, Evva and her family continue to share her mother's cookies with customers around the world.

"Mother was making cookies when I was born in 1932, but I took it over in the early 1960s. At that time the cookies were being made in our home, which was legal back then. In 1970, we built a place separate from the house, and since then it's been added on to about 4 or 5 times."

Mrs. Hanes' Hand-Made Moravian Cookies are rolled and cut by hand, the same way they were made by Evva's mother so long ago. The business currently has about 35 employees, but that number increases during the Christmas season, their busiest time of the year. Throughout the year, the team prepares for the Christmas rush, preparing large amounts of ginger cookies in advance.

"The ginger cookies have a long shelf-life. They have no eggs or milk in them, so they get better with age. We bake those the first part of the year, then we start baking the other flavors after that."

The ginger cookie is the most popular of Mrs. Hanes' cookies, followed by sugar, lemon, black walnut, chocolate, and butterscotch. Evva's favorite, however, is the sugar cookie.

"Mother called them 'tea cakes', and that's what she made mostly. Nobody else in Winston-Salem had a sugar cookie like she had, and they still don't. That was what I baked at first."

The group offers tours of the cookie facility, welcoming about 4,000-5,000 school children each year. Each stop on the tour offers an inside look at the cookie making process, from mixing to packaging. The tour also features a stop at "Grandmother's Kitchen", which is modeled after the kitchen Evva's mother made cookies during the early 1900s.

Evva is now retired from the cookie business, typically helping only when needed during the Christmas season. She enjoys spending her time gardening and cooking for her family.

"My favorite part of my retirement is cooking for my family and gardening. Those two go together; I pick stuff out of the garden and have it for dinner for them. We have dinner once a week, the whole family."

Family is important to Evva. She hopes that in the future her children and grandchildren will continue to operate the family farm and business in the same fashion that she and her husband have, while also taking care of the family's homeplace.

“We have a good family that gets together and loves each other, helps each other. We have our ins and outs too sometimes, but we all want the same thing for the family.”