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## Farmers, Hemp Advocates and Industry Leaders Organize 6<sup>th</sup> Annual *Hemp History Week* June 1-7<sup>th</sup> 2015

*Spring Plantings, Hemp Building Courses and Grassroots Education Events Sow the Seed for Growing the Hemp Industry in the U.S.*

**WASHINGTON, DC** – The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp have announced that the *sixth* annual [Hemp History Week](http://www.HempHistoryWeek.com) will be held **June 1-7, 2015**. Surging with momentum following a monumental year in 2014, wherein hemp was both legally cultivated and harvested in Kentucky, Colorado and Vermont, this year's campaign will focus on the increased acreage of hemp on U.S. farms with the theme *Sow the Seed*. Throughout all 50 states, over 1,100 grassroots events will bring documentary film screenings, cooking demonstrations, retail promotions, educational outreach, spring plantings and hemp home building courses to the public, catalyzing movement on the issue of hemp legalization nationwide.

To learn more about *Hemp History Week*, visit: [www.HempHistoryWeek.com](http://www.HempHistoryWeek.com).

### Spring Hemp Plantings

HIA and Vote Hemp will work with farmers in states that have legalized the cultivation of hemp, to coordinate events this spring to celebrate the planting of hemp crops. The events will be open to both community and media attendance. An environmentally sustainable crop, hemp helps restore nutrients to soil via phytoremediation, and does not require chemical inputs of pesticides and herbicides to flourish. As farmers open their hemp fields to the public, grassroots activists will offer educational events about industrial hemp—its history, agronomy, health and ecological benefits—as we join together to *sow the seed*.

### The Health Benefits of Hemp

Among the fastest-growing categories in the natural foods industry, hemp seed is a rich source of Omega-3 and Omega-6 essential fatty acids (EFAs), providing both SDA and GLA, highly-digestible protein, and naturally-occurring vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin E and iron. An excellent source of dietary fiber, hemp seed is also a complete protein—meaning it contains all ten essential amino acids, with no enzyme inhibitors, making it more digestible by the human body.

### Hemp Building Courses

HIA will organize a series of hemp home building courses, in which members of the public will be invited to participate. Hemp structures are built with hempcrete— a natural material that is energy-efficient, non-toxic and resistant to mold, insects and fire, and which is more quickly renewable and sustainable than lumber. A multi-day course, these programs will cover contemporary construction methods and hands-on practical applications of working with hempcrete, including forming or shuttering, mixing and casting the hempcrete within a framed structure, as well as finishing with plasters and coloring. Students who complete the course will have the knowledge and skillset to pursue a hemp-building project of their own.



# Sow the Seed

[www.HempHistoryWeek.com](http://www.HempHistoryWeek.com)

## Screenings of Hemp Documentary Film “Bringing it Home”

Community organizers will host screenings of the documentary “Bringing it Home” at educational and public institutions, retail locations, independent theatres and community spaces around the country in the weeks proceeding and during *Hemp History Week*. “Bringing it Home” documents the history of hemp in the United States, shares exciting new technology and advances being made with hemp, interviews leaders in the hemp movement, and tells the story of environmentally conscious home designer Anthony Brenner, and his quest to find the healthiest and most sustainable home building material on the planet.

## Celebrity Endorsements

*Hemp History Week* is endorsed by celebrities and high-profile wellness experts, including Dr. Andrew Weil, Alicia Silverstone, Phil Lempert, Ashley Koff R.D., Brendan Brazier, Elizabeth Kucinich, Ziggy Marley, Alexandra Jamieson, Dar Williams, Michael Franti, John Salley, Kevin Danaher, John Trudell, and Grammy award-winning band Ozomatli. For the 2015 campaign, environment advocate and actress Daryl Hannah, and professional skater and artist Pat Ngoho have signed on as endorsers of *Hemp History Week*.

## Grassroots Engagement

Over 300 grassroots events will take place nationwide, including an educational tour of college campuses, a restaurant program, film screenings, community outreach at farmers’ markets, state lobbying days, a letter writing campaign, spring plantings and other exciting engagement opportunities. Specific details for these *Hemp History Week* events will be listed on the web site beginning in early April.

## United in the Effort to Legalize Hemp

An incredibly versatile crop, hemp fiber, oil and seed are used for a myriad of products—including health foods, cosmetics and body care products, building materials, automobile parts, bio-composites, batteries, bio-fuel, textiles, paper and other products. Now in its sixth year, *Hemp History Week* is an industry-wide effort made possible by the support of the leading natural product brands known for manufacturing the highest quality hemp products. These HIA members and sponsor brands include Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, Living Harvest, Manitoba Harvest, Nature’s Path Foods and Nutiva.

“Hemp is an integral component in our body care products, as the Omega-3 rich hemp oil provides moisturizing nourishment to the skin, and imparts luxurious smoothness to our soaps’ lather,” says David Bronner, President of Dr. Bronner’s Magic Soaps, the top-selling brand of natural soap in the U.S. “Dr. Bronner’s plans to source the twenty tons of hemp oil we use annually from American farmers, rather than import it from Canada, once the crop is legal and the infrastructure for hemp production is in place. Given the momentous progress made this past year, including the first legal hemp crops harvested in Colorado, Kentucky and Vermont since the 1940’s, we are determined to keep up the momentum on the issue in Congress so that 2015 lawmakers allow U.S. farmers to once again cultivate hemp.”

“With the ever growing number of food allergies, hemp seeds are an easily digestible plant protein and an impressive source of all 10 essential amino acids,” says Dan Ratner of Tempt, which makes the #1 selling hempmilk, coconut hempmilk, hemp tofu, and brand new hemp yogurt. “Currently, we must import our hemp seed from Canada and Europe, which translates to higher consumer prices and an increased carbon footprint. We continue to push for better industrial hemp legislation and hope to one day purchase our hemp from U.S. farmers.”

“Here in Canada the legalization process started with research trials, so we are tremendously hopeful the same will be true in the U.S.,” says Mike Fata – CEO & co-founder of Manitoba Harvest Hemp Foods. “As the market for hemp food products grows, we need to source more hemp seed to meet the demand. Manitoba Harvest is eager to partner with U.S. farmers and has profitable production contracts waiting.”



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“Hemp seed is a nutritious superfood that Nature’s Path includes as a plant-based source of protein and fiber in a growing number of our foods – from snack bars to granolas, waffles and oatmeal,” attests Arran Stephens, co-founder and co-CEO of Nature’s Path Foods, North America’s largest organic breakfast and snack food company. “We’ve been cooking with hemp seeds for decades and are delighted to see the industry grow. We look forward to celebrating this important and versatile crop during Hemp History Week – a time to educate people on the benefits of embracing hemp; both in our farmlands and on our kitchen tables.”

“More Americans are choosing organic foods. Nutiva is the leading producer of organic hemp products and we’ve seen our sales grow over 60% annually for the past 10 years. It’s vital we legalize the cultivation of hemp within the U.S. so we can source domestically grown hemp and support our American farmers.”

## Legislative Progress and Challenges in 2015

When the 2013 farm bill was signed into law in February of 2014, the hemp amendment to the farm bill, Sec. 7606 Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research, defined industrial hemp as distinct from the *Cannabis sativa L.* subject to prohibition per the Controlled Substances Act. This was an historic moment in the longstanding effort to legalize hemp as the act asserts that industrial hemp is not psychoactive, having less than 0.3% tetrahydrocannabinol on a dry weight basis and therefore presenting no drug value.

The bill further allows for states that have already legalized the crop to cultivate hemp within the parameters of state agriculture departments and research institutions. Read the full text of the Legitimacy of Industrial Hemp Research amendment on the Vote Hemp website:

[http://www.votehemp.com/PDF/Pages\\_from\\_farm0127.pdf](http://www.votehemp.com/PDF/Pages_from_farm0127.pdf).

In defiance of clear Congressional intent regarding the legitimacy of industrial hemp for agriculture and industrial applications, the Drug Enforcement Administration attempted to halt hemp plantings in Kentucky in the spring of 2014 by seizing a lawfully imported shipment of hemp seeds which had been ordered by the state’s agriculture commission. Following midterm elections in the fall of 2014, hemp advocates will have further work to do, as they petition and lobby their representatives to support hemp legalization at both the state and federal levels.

Despite contradictory actions among federal authorities, the number of states that have pro-hemp legislation continues to increase. During the 2014 legislative year, industrial hemp legalization was introduced or carried over in Puerto Rico and twenty-nine states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

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*Hemp History Week, June 1–7, 2015, is an industry-wide initiative of the Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp. The HIA is a non-profit trade group representing hemp companies, researchers, farmers and supporters. Vote Hemp is a national, single-issue, non-profit advocacy group founded in 2000 by members of the hemp industry to remove barriers to industrial hemp farming in the U.S. through education, legislation and advocacy. For further information, please visit [www.TheHIA.org](http://www.TheHIA.org) and [www.VoteHemp.com](http://www.VoteHemp.com).*