



Hemp for a Healthy Future

www.HempHistoryWeek.com

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Leading Natural Product Brands, Retailers, Celebrities and Grassroots Activists Team Up to Produce Third Annual 'Hemp History Week'

Public Education Campaign Aims to Allow Industrial Hemp Farming Again in the U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp have announced plans for the **3rd Annual Hemp History Week to be held on June 4-10, 2012**. A national grassroots education campaign designed to renew strong support for hemp farming in the U.S., **Hemp History Week 2012** will feature events in cities and towns throughout all fifty states. The multi-faceted campaign will feature grassroots volunteer-led events, retail promotions, a restaurant program, a day of action and an online petition drive to encourage the Obama Administration and Congress to change federal policy and allow American farmers to once again grow industrial hemp. A new Web site, along with a promotional video for the 2012 campaign, is viewable at www.HempHistoryWeek.com.

The theme of the 2012 campaign is **Hemp for a Healthy Future: Healthy Lifestyles, Healthy Economy, Healthy Planet**. "As more Americans recognize the health and environmental benefits of hemp products, hemp farming promises job creation and economic opportunity for farmers and manufacturers and ensures that nutritious foods and sustainable goods are more accessible and affordable for consumers," says Eric Steenstra, President of Vote Hemp. "In turn, this means healthier lifestyles, a stronger economy and a more sustainable world. Through **Hemp History Week 2012**, we're spreading the message that we need to change federal policy on industrial hemp to reflect today's realities and ensure a better tomorrow for America's families and farmers, the economy and our planet."

PETITION DRIVE

A primary objective of **Hemp History Week** is to advocate for a federal policy change while sending a strong, positive message to President Barack Obama and Congress to end the ban on hemp farming and let farmers grow the versatile and profitable crop. In 2010 and 2011, the campaign generated thousands of postcards and online petition signatures to the President and Congress. Representatives Ron Paul (R-Texas), Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio), Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon) and many other members of Congress support legislation in favor of a federal policy change. A companion Senate bill is expected to be introduced later this year.

"There are several successful businesses in my state who are manufacturing healthy and sustainable products made from hemp," said Senator Ron Wyden (D-Oregon). "Currently these companies are forced to import their raw materials from Canada and other countries. Changing federal policy to allow American farmers the right to grow hemp right here at home will help these companies thrive, while creating new economic opportunities in Oregon and across the country. The **Hemp History Week** campaign is a good opportunity to educate other elected officials and the American public about the benefits that the ability to once again grow hemp in America can bring."

CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENTS

Hemp History Week is endorsed by a long list of 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 and Kevin Danaher.

GRASSROOTS EVENTS

This year's campaign will double in size once again compared to last year's event, which mobilized supporters of hemp farming nationwide, including hundreds of volunteers who organized over 500 events throughout all fifty states, and generated tens of thousands of letters and postcards to the President and Attorney General in support of hemp farming. Volunteers are being called upon once again to organize events in 2012, with specific details about those planned events to be announced in early April on the **Hemp History Week** Web site.

RETAIL PROMOTIONS

Hundreds of natural product retail outlets across the country have signed up to participate in **Hemp History Week** through promotions and in-store events. Hemp product promotions in retail stores will increase from 400 stores in 2011 to as many as 1,000 participating retail stores this year, including most Whole Foods Market locations in the U.S.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT PROGRAM

New to the 2012 campaign, this year's effort will also feature a national restaurant program. Health conscious cafes and restaurants around the country are being invited to participate in **Hemp History Week** by featuring hemp-infused dishes on their menus during the week of the campaign. Some restaurants will also be hosting special events. "Candle 79 is looking forward to participating in the 3rd annual **Hemp History Week** this June. We use hemp in many of our favorite menu offerings, including our hemp seed crusted seitan and our famous hemp seed ice-cream desserts. Our chefs love working with hemp seeds, and our customers can't seem to get enough," says Joy Pierson, owner of Candle 79 & Candle Cafe in New York City."

SHOWCASING THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF HEMP

A renewable resource offering a long list of health and nutritional benefits, hemp is one of the fastest-growing categories in the natural foods industry. Hemp is a rich source of omega-3 and omega-6 essential fatty acids (EFAs), providing both super omega-stearidonic acid (SDA) and gamma-linolenic acid (GLA), highly-digestible protein and naturally-occurring vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin E and iron, while being a good source of dietary fiber. It is a complete protein, containing all 10 essential amino acids, with no enzyme inhibitors, making it more digestible by the human body. Hemp seeds are also gluten-free.

UNPRECEDENTED INDUSTRY-WIDE EFFORT

Going into its third year, **Hemp History Week** is an industry-wide effort made possible by the support of leading natural product brands that are known for manufacturing the highest-quality hemp products. Hemp can be used in a wide variety of products, including foods, cosmetics, clothing, building materials, auto parts and many others. The sponsors of **Hemp History Week 2012** are Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, Living Harvest Foods, Food Should Taste Good, Manitoba Harvest, Nature's Path Foods, Nutiva and Vega. Sustainable hemp seed, fiber and oil are also used by major companies such as Ford Motors, Patagonia and The Body Shop.

Arran Stephens, founder/CEO of Nature's Path Foods, North America's independent, #1 brand of organic breakfast foods, says "We believe our hemp-based cereals, bars and waffles exemplify all of the goodness that hemp has to offer as a nutritious, gluten-free, non-GMO superfood. Nature's Path is proud to have been part of the growth of the hemp industry since the beginning. This June, we look forward to celebrating America's rich history with hemp farming, while educating consumers about the benefits of hemp foods. If hemp production was good enough for George Washington and Thomas Jefferson (note that the Declaration of Independence was drafted on hemp paper), then it's good enough for us."

Other U.S. hemp manufacturers have been relentless in their struggle for the right to buy hemp from U.S. farmers. "For nearly ten years, the Bronner family has financially supported efforts to lift the ban on non-drug industrial hemp farming because it is an environmentally-sustainable crop," states David Bronner, President of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, the top-selling brand of natural soap in the U.S. "Despite our efforts, we are forced to continue purchasing the twenty tons of hemp oil that we use annually from Canada. This is a lost opportunity for American farmers and businesses, a situation that is becoming more absurd and outrageous with each growing season that passes."

The HIA estimates that U.S. retail sales of hemp products exceeded \$419 million in 2011, yet American companies making hemp products have no choice but to import their raw materials, due to the federal government's outdated and misguided ban on hemp farming. While demand for hemp products continues to rise, it is becoming a challenge for Canadian growers and processors, currently the primary suppliers of hemp seed and oil to the U.S. market, to keep up and meet that demand.

"Nutiva's sales have grown at an average annual rate of 42% since 2006. In 2009, 2010 and 2011, we were named by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the fastest-growing businesses in America," says John W. Roulac, founder and CEO of Nutiva. "By allowing U.S. farmers to grow and sell hemp seed, it will help the entire industry to meet the growing demand for hemp products."

Living Harvest Foods is a global leader in hemp food products. "Our mission is to pioneer delicious hemp foods that are good for people and planet," says Cathy Hearn, President of Living Harvest Foods. "Hemp is a truly remarkable plant that's packed full of essential nutrients that can improve the way Americans eat. Sourcing hemp from outside the U.S. adds unnecessary costs, which translates into higher retail prices. We want to make this superfood accessible to everyone, and to do that we need Congress to recognize the benefits of a domestic hemp program. There are no valid arguments against it."

To date, thirty-one states have introduced pro-hemp legislation and seventeen have passed legislation, while eight states (Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, Vermont and West Virginia) have already authorized the licensing of farmers to grow the crop. However, despite state authorization to grow hemp, farmers in these states risk raids by federal agents if they plant the crop, due to the failure of federal policy to distinguish oilseed and fiber varieties of *Cannabis* (i.e., industrial hemp) from psychoactive varieties.

"My co-founders of Manitoba Harvest and I are proud to have successfully petitioned our government to legalize hemp in Canada over a decade ago. We are very appreciative of the Canadian government's support and hope that the U.S. government will soon see the opportunities with industrial hemp as well," says Mike Fata, co-founder and CEO of Manitoba Harvest. "With consumer demand for hemp products growing, why shouldn't American farmers also be allowed to benefit from this huge opportunity?"

*For more information on **Hemp History Week 2012**, please see the completely re-designed campaign Web site at: www.HempHistoryWeek.com.*

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