



Hemp for a Healthy Future

www.HempHistoryWeek.com

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Third Annual 'Hemp History Week' Kicks Off to Promote Hemp for a Healthy Future June 4-10

*Public Education Campaign to Bring Back Industrial Hemp Farming will Feature over 800
Grassroots Events and Retail Store Promotions Throughout all 50 States*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Today, June 4 marks the start of the 3rd annual **Hemp History Week, June 4-10, 2012**. The national grassroots education campaign organized by Vote Hemp and The Hemp Industries Association is designed to renew strong support for the return of hemp farming to the U.S. **Hemp History Week 2012** will feature over 800 events in cities and towns throughout all fifty states. The multi-faceted campaign will feature over 100 grassroots volunteer-led events; more than 700 retail promotions; a restaurant program; and a letter writing and email campaign to encourage 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."

LETTER WRITING AND EMAIL 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. This year an online and in person letter writing drive to U.S. Senators will take place through a social media campaign kicking off in June and at events nationwide. Advocates expect that a companion Senate bill will be introduced later this year. Representatives Ron Paul (R-Texas); Collin Peterson (D-Minnesota); Tim Johnson (R-Illinois); Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon); and many other members of Congress support legislation in favor of a federal policy change.

"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 has more than doubled in size and scope compared to last year's event, which mobilized supporters of hemp farming nationwide. With more than 700 participating retail stores and over 100 grassroots volunteer organized events the 2012 campaign will be the biggest yet. A listing of events nationwide is available at <http://www.HempHistoryWeek.com/events.php>.

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 over 700 participating retail stores this year, including most Whole Foods Market locations in the U.S.

NATIONAL RESTAURANT PROGRAM

New to the 2012 campaign, this week over 20 health conscious cafes and restaurants around the country are participating in **Hemp History Week** by featuring hemp-infused dishes on their menus. Some restaurants will also be hosting special events. "Candle 79 is looking forward to participating in the 3rd annual **Hemp History Week**. 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.

Participating restaurants include: Akasha Restaurant in Culver City, CA; Au Lac in Anaheim, CA; Candle 79 and Candle Café in New York City; Café Gratitude in Los Angeles and San Francisco, CA; Café Flora in Seattle WA; Euphoria Loves Rawvolution in Santa Monica, CA and New York City, NY; Gaia's Garden in Santa Rosa, CA; Green Leaf in Ashland OR; Lydia's Lovin' Food in Petaluma, CA; Karyn's on Green in Chicago, IL; VegN Out in San Diego, CA; and Slice of Life in Sebastapol, CA.

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 the 2012 **Hemp History Week** 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 and 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 2010, 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 removed barriers to its production or research. However, despite state authorization to grow hemp, farmers in these states risk raids by federal agents and possible forfeiture of their farms 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 drug 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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