



Hemp: Our Heritage, Our Future

www.HempHistoryWeek.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 26, 2013

CONTACT: Ryan Fletcher 202-641-0277
ryan@votehemp.com

Lauren Stansbury 202-518-8790
lauren@mintwood.com

Amidst Growing Momentum for Policy Change, Industrial Hemp Advocates Prepare for Fourth Annual “*Hemp History Week*”

Retail Promotions, Grassroots Events, Restaurant Program, College Roadshow and Premiere of New Documentary Film will Anchor Public Education Campaign

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp have announced plans for the fourth annual *Hemp History Week* to be held from June 3–9, 2013. The theme of the 2013 campaign is *Hemp: Our Heritage, Our Future*. A national grassroots education campaign designed to amplify support for hemp farming in the U.S., *Hemp History Week 2013* will feature an estimated 850 events in cities and towns throughout all 50 states. Volunteer-led grassroots events, retail promotions, a documentary film premiere, a restaurant program, a college campus roadshow, a day of action and an online letter-writing drive to encourage the Obama Administration and Congress to change federal law that currently prohibits American farmers from growing industrial hemp are all facets of the campaign to bring this environmentally sustainable and profitable crop back to American soil. More information and a promotional video for the campaign are available at: www.HempHistoryWeek.com.

“Hemp was once a paramount crop in American agriculture, as a hardy and renewable resource for various industrial applications, including cordage, paper and textiles,” says Eric Steenstra, President of Vote Hemp. “Now, hemp is being used in an even greater variety of products, including health foods, organic body care, clothing, construction materials, biofuels, plastic composites and more. Increasingly, we’re moving toward a future that embraces environmentally sustainable agriculture practices, and hemp is at the forefront of that movement, given its incredibly diverse applications and net-positive environmental impact. *Hemp History Week 2013* will focus on how industrial hemp can help build a future in which economic growth and sustainable agricultural and manufacturing practices go hand-in-hand.”

Letter-Writing Campaign

A primary objective of *Hemp History Week* is to advocate for federal policy change, while sending a strong, positive message to President Obama and Congress to end the ban on hemp farming and let U.S. farmers grow the versatile and profitable crop once again. The campaign will conduct outreach to encourage the public to write their representatives and sign an online petition to change current federal law restricting the cultivation of industrial hemp. Legislation has been introduced in both houses of Congress already this session, and many members of Congress currently support the legislation in favor of a federal policy change. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) recently came out in support of hemp farming by co-sponsoring S. 359, the Senate companion bill to the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2013 (H.R. 525), and has expressed support for

Kentucky's recently passed Senate bill (SB 50) which would allow Kentucky farmers to grow industrial hemp once federal restrictions are lifted.

"The utilization of hemp to produce everything from clothing to paper is real," said Sen. McConnell, "and if there is a capacity to center a new domestic industry in Kentucky that will create jobs in these difficult economic times, that sounds like a good thing to me."

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 include over 150 grassroots events nationwide, as well as a new program to bring hemp education programming to over thirty college campuses around the country. Specific details about grassroots events will be announced in early April on the *Hemp History Week* Web site.

Documentary Film Premiere

Bringing It Home, a new hour -long documentary film about industrial hemp, explores the question of why a crop with so many widespread benefits cannot be farmed in the U.S. today. The film explores the history of hemp, its myriad industrial applications and legalization efforts. Through a grassroots audience engagement screening tour, the documentary aims to magnify dialogue about hemp in order to facilitate America's transition to a more informed, sustainable and healthy future. The film will premier in conjunction with *Hemp History Week 2013* with screenings in major cities across the country.

Filmmakers Linda Booker and Blaire Johnson were inspired by environmentally conscious home designer Anthony Brenner's story to find the healthiest building material available to build a safe indoor environment for his young daughter, Bailey, who has a sensitivity to synthetic chemicals. Brenner received national media attention when he and Hemp Technologies completed "America's First Hemp House" for the former mayor of Asheville, North Carolina. Booker and Johnson tell the story of hemp through animation, archival images and footage of hemp business leaders and entrepreneurs like Brenner from England, Spain, Washington, D.C., California and North Carolina. For more information, go to: www.BringingItHomeMovie.com.

Retail Promotions

Promotions and in-store events highlighting the benefits of hemp will occur in hundreds of natural product retail outlets across the county. Hemp product promotions will happen in more than 700 participating retail stores, including most Whole Foods Market locations in the U.S.

National Restaurant Program

Building off the success of the 2012 national restaurant program, *Hemp History Week 2013* will invite health-conscious cafes and restaurants around the county to feature hemp-infused dishes on their menus during the week of the campaign. Some restaurants will also host special events.

"Candle 79 is looking forward to supporting the fourth annual *Hemp History Week*. We already 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 seed, and our customers can't get enough," says Joy Pierson, owner of Candle 79 & Candle Cafe in New York City.

College Campus Roadshow

The *Hemp History Week College Campus Roadshow* will travel 9,000 miles through fifteen states, sampling leading hemp products on over thirty campuses in seven major cities across the Midwest, Southwest and West Coast, while engaging students at agricultural colleges with educational programs, petition signings and film screenings on the economic, environmental, agricultural and nutritional benefits of industrial hemp.

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 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, while being a good source of dietary fiber. It is a complete protein, containing all ten essential amino acids, with no enzyme inhibitors, making it more digestible by the human body. Hemp seed is also gluten-free.

Industry-Wide Effort

Now in its fourth 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 applications, including foods, cosmetics, clothing, building materials, auto parts and many others. The sponsors of *Hemp History Week 2013* include Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, Living Harvest Foods, Manitoba Harvest, Nature's Path Foods, Navitas Naturals, Nutiva, prAna and Vega. A maker of high-quality hemp clothing and accessories, prAna is a new sponsor of the campaign this year, demonstrating the rapid expansion of hemp in the fashion industry for green lifestyle products.

"Consumers want the products they buy to reflect their personal commitment to a healthy lifestyles and environmental responsibility," says prAna Director of Sustainability, Nicole Bassett. "Hemp clothing has come a long way; the fabrics now are softer and finer. You still get that durable fabric made from a unique plant that is often grown without added irrigation or fertilizers, so its environmental impact is lower. Hemp clothing makes a statement. We're combining contemporary design and style with sustainable materials, and our new hemp line is a perfect example of how well these values can complement each other when choosing clothes."

"Hemp is an integral component in our body care products, as the super-fatty hemp oil gives our soap its rich, foaming lather and provides moisture and nourishment to the skin," says David Bronner, President of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, the top-selling brand of natural soap in the U.S. "Dr. Bronner's would like to source the twenty tons of hemp oil we use annually from American farmers, rather than import it from Canada, and we financially support efforts to legalize the cultivation of industrial hemp right here in the U.S. We are hopeful that 2013 will be the year in which lawmakers ensure that U.S. farmers are finally allowed to once again plant hemp in American soil.

Dan Ratner, owner of Living Harvest Foods, cites underlying nutritional motivations for their focus on hemp products, saying "Hemp seed is a truly remarkable part of the plant that offers a complete plant protein with all essential amino acid nutrients and an amazing amount of Omega-3 and Omega-6 EFAs that really improves the way Americans eat. Currently, we must import our hemp seed from Canada and Europe, which translates to higher consumer prices and an increased carbon footprint. This has helped Canadian farmers with a cash rotational crop, but there is growing momentum in Congress from several key states to recognize hemp as an industrial crop. We are helping garner support from key Congressional leaders in eastern urban and industrial states to support the western states; we all need to get on board with opening access to foods that are good for people and the planet."

“We are very appreciative of the Canadian government’s support and hope that the U.S. government will soon recognize the economic opportunities hemp presents,” says Mike Fata, co-founder and CEO of Manitoba Harvest. “Manitoba Harvest would love to be able to offer production contracts to U.S. farmers, so they can also benefit from this booming opportunity.”

Arran Stephens, founder and CEO of Nature’s Path Foods, North America’s independent, number-one brand of organic breakfast foods, says “Hemp is a nutritious, gluten-free, non-GMO superfood. Our hemp-based cereals, bars and waffles exemplify how naturally hemp can be incorporated into our diets for a much-needed nutritional boost that is often lacking in these types of foods, given the ubiquity of cheap grains like GMO corn. Nature’s Path has proudly been an integral actor in the growth of the hemp industry since its beginning. This June, we look forward to celebrating our country’s long history of hemp farming and educating the public on the benefits of embracing hemp — both in our farmlands and on our breakfast tables.”

“The hemp foods industry is one of the fastest-growing in the country,” says John Roulac, founder and CEO of Nutiva. “Nutiva’s sales have grown at an average annual rate of 52% since 2002. Our industry is seeking new sources of hemp seed to meet the growing demand for hemp foods. American-grown organic hemp is the key to successful business growth for us.”

Legislative Progress

This month, the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2013 (H.R. 525) was introduced in the House with twenty-eight original co-sponsors, and it was quickly joined by a companion bill in the Senate (S. 359) which was introduced by Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Rand Paul (R-KY), Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), underscoring the bipartisan support around the hemp issue. If passed, the bills would remove federal restrictions on the domestic cultivation of industrial hemp, defined as the non-drug oilseed and fiber varieties of *Cannabis*. The full text of the bills, as well as status and co-sponsors, can be found at: www.VoteHemp.com/legislation.

To date, thirty-one states have introduced pro-hemp legislation and nineteen have passed legislation, while eight states (Colorado, Maine, Montana, North Dakota, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia) have defined industrial hemp as distinct and removed barriers to its production. However, despite state authorization to grow hemp, farmers in those 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 (i.e., marijuana).

So far in the 2013 legislative session, industrial hemp legislation has been introduced in fourteen states (California, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Vermont and Washington). Legislation is expected to be introduced in at least one more state as well (Colorado).

#

Hemp History Week, June 3–9, 2013, 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 and www.VoteHemp.com.