



Breaking Ground

June 5-11, 2017

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Hemp Farming Advocates Push for Introduction of Industrial Hemp Farming Act in Congress

Grassroots Momentum Builds Following Successful Hemp History Week Campaign

WASHINGTON, DC – From June 5 – 11, 2017, Hemp History Week, the nationwide education and advocacy campaign to restore industrial hemp cultivation to American farmlands, achieved great success with nearly 400 grassroots events across the country. Hemp plantings, film screenings, conferences, workshops and a variety of other volunteer-coordinated events were held to unite communities in the effort to legalize industrial hemp farming at the State and Federal levels, and raise awareness about the environmental, sustainability and nutritional benefits of this historic crop.

“The monumental success of this year’s Hemp History Week was achieved by thousands of dedicated, creative and tenacious hemp farming advocates. Hemp product awareness is key to the conversation about domestic hemp farming. Hemp farming remains illegal or in legal limbo in parts of the country and typically heavily regulated in states where it is legal in accordance with Section 7606 of the Farm Bill. Together, the hemp industries are building a nationwide coalition to restore hemp to American farmlands, and begin domestic manufacturing of this crop for the myriad sustainable product applications, for which Americans are the largest market consumers globally,” said Colleen Keahey, Executive Director of the Hemp Industries Association. “Hemp History Week continues to be an important education campaign. Unfortunately, American businesses, farmers, and entrepreneurs continue to face challenges, and we need continued awareness of the opportunity hemp affords, for the growth and expansion of our economy and sustainable agriculture systems.”

Congress Recognizes Hemp History Week

During Hemp History Week, on June 7, 2017, a bi-partisan coalition of Senators including Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR), Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) introduced the Hemp History Week resolution, which unanimously passed June 8, 2017. These same senators introduced the Industrial Hemp Farming Act in 2015, however this act that would lift federal prohibition on hemp farming has, to date, not been introduced in the 115th Congress. In the House, Representative James Comer (R-KY) announced Hemp History Week during a floor speech on June 8, 2017, and asserted his strong support for the legalization of industrial hemp farming in the U.S.

“We are honored to have members of Congress officially recognize Hemp History Week and highlight the economic benefits of commercial hemp farming,” said President of Vote Hemp, Eric Steenstra. “The passage of a Senate Hemp History Week resolution, and the floor speeches made by Senator Wyden and Representative Comer, underscore the strong bipartisan support in Congress for the full federal legalization of hemp farming. We will continue to take action to bring back commercial hemp farming, until we finally achieve the passage of the Industrial Hemp Farming Act,” he continued.

Hemp Day on the Farm with Rodale Institute

To celebrate the launch of *Hemp History Week*, organizers partnered with organic farming pioneer the Rodale Institute, to present the press event **Hemp Day on the Farm: Press Conference, Hemp Farm Tour & Hemp Luncheon**. The Rodale Institute is one of 16 organizations in Pennsylvania

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that have been granted permits to conduct research with hemp pilot programs, in this inaugural year of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program, which allows for farming of industrial hemp in accordance with the Farm Bill Sec. 7606. Rodale Institute's hemp farming research project will focus on soil health, hemp as a weed-suppressing cover crop, and best agronomy practices for cultivating hemp via a regenerative agriculture model.

Expanding Hemp Advocacy

Though significant progress toward lifting the federal prohibition on hemp farming in the U.S. was made with the passage of the Congressional Agriculture Act of 2014 (Farm Bill), current federal regulations allow only for "States" to enact hemp farming programs. Sovereign tribal lands across America have been precluded from the economic and research opportunity of hemp cultivation. *Hemp History Week* advocates for comprehensive, free market legalization of industrial hemp cultivation, and the removal of industrial hemp from the Controlled Substances Act, so that *all* may benefit from the commercial benefits of this versatile, high-demand crop.

Filmed on the Pine Ridge Reservation, the 8th annual *Hemp History Week* campaign video *Breaking Ground* tells the story of Alex White Plume, Oglala Lakota hemp farmer and activist, whose hemp crop was unlawfully raided and destroyed by the DEA in 2000. An interview with White Plume underscores why the crop should be grown to support sustainable solutions for the next generation; and subsequent scenes elaborate on how *Hemp History Week* supports this message by generating momentum for hemp advocacy around the country. To view the new video for the 8th annual campaign, visit:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-TqInCnvEU&feature=youtu.be>.

Hemp for Our Earth

Hemp is an environmentally sustainable, versatile crop that offers regenerative agriculture solutions for healthy soil, efficient land and water use, and innovative product applications. Hemp is a renewable resource that can help reduce market dependency on wood, petroleum, and other non-sustainable industrial agriculture and energy practices, thereby contributing to environmentally responsible food and fiber production, forest conservation, reduction in agriculture pesticide use, and soil remediation. Hemp sequesters carbon from the atmosphere, mitigating the rising rate of CO₂ levels responsible for climate change; and furthermore, pollinators thrive on the prolific pollen created by hemp flowers. Hemp bast fiber has shown promising potential to replace graphene in supercapacitor batteries, which could then be used to power electric cars and handheld electric devices and tools. Hemp fiber can be used to create environmentally friendly packaging materials, and hard bio-plastics for use in everything from airplanes to car parts. Hemp houses are also on the rise, as hempcrete has many advantages to synthetic building materials, lumber and concrete.

Hemp for Our Health

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 seed, milk, ice cream, oil, cereals and snacks, as well as hemp protein powder, dietary supplements and body care are increasingly popular and available at natural and conventional grocers everywhere. Consumers are increasingly turning on to the nourishing health benefits of hemp foods and body products.

United in the Effort to Legalize Hemp Farming

Now in its eighth 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, Farmer Direct Co-op, Living Harvest TEMPT, Manitoba Harvest, Nature's Path Organic, Nutiva, Pacific Foods, and Plus+CBD Oil.



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Legislative Challenges and Opportunities in 2017

The hemp industry faces a number of challenges and barriers to full scale farming of industrial hemp, including: inability of hemp farmers to obtain crop insurance and financing, difficulties involved with sourcing certified hemp seed, lack of adequate processing infrastructure in the U.S. for raw hemp materials, barriers to interstate commerce for hemp products, and the potential mis-regulation of CBD products exclusively as pharmaceuticals and excluding their use as nutritional supplements.

The 33 states that have legalized industrial hemp farming, per provision Sec. 7606 of the Farm Bill, include: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming.

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Hemp History Week, June 5-11, 2017, 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.