



Grow Our Future

JUNE 6-12, 2016

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CONTACT: Lauren Stansbury 402.540.1208
lauren@votehemp.com
Tom Moylan 202.870.3184
tom@wearemovementmedia.com

Organizers Debut Promotional Video and Announce Dates for *Hemp History Week: June 6-12, 2016*

7th Annual Campaign to Focus on Innovation and Opportunity, Sustainable Agriculture, and Healthy Lifestyles Under the Theme 'Grow Our Future'

WASHINGTON, DC – The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp have announced the dates for the 7th annual *Hemp History Week*, to be held **June 6-12, 2016**. During 2015, a record volume of hemp was planted and harvested in the U.S. since the passage of the 2014 Farm Bill, with successful crops in Colorado, Hawaii, Kentucky, Indiana, North Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee, Vermont. Over half of all U.S. states have lifted the ban on industrial hemp farming at the state level, however federal law still prohibits commercial industrial hemp cultivation due to outdated and inaccurate drug policy. With momentum building across the country, and increasing consumer awareness about the health benefits, economic opportunities, technological innovation and sustainability advantages of industrial hemp—advocates and organizers are eager to see 2016 be the year industrial hemp farming expands across the American agriculture landscape once again. To view the new video for the 7th annual campaign, visit: <http://bit.ly/1NAXtZY>.

“To focus on the myriad ways industrial hemp farming and hemp products can lead us to healthier lifestyles, regenerative agriculture systems, and advancements in green technology, the theme for this year’s *Hemp History Week* is **Grow Our Future**,” says Eric Steenstra, Executive Director of the Hemp Industries Association.

Filmed at the Spindletop Research Farm at University of Kentucky during the prior 6th annual *Hemp History Week*, the video showcases work being done by agronomists and agriculture students to research hemp as a viable alternative to tobacco farming. An interview with Leah Black—the country’s first ever graduate student in hemp research—highlights how young people are leading the future of hemp production; and scenes with the campaign’s lead coordinator, grassroots events organizer, and Hemp Industries Association executive director Eric Steenstra elaborate on how *Hemp History Week* is generating momentum and progress in hemp advocacy around the country.

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 seed, hemp milk, hemp ice cream, hemp oil, cereals and snacks, protein powder, and dietary supplements are increasingly popular and available at natural grocers everywhere, as consumers become turned on to the nourishing health benefits of hemp foods.

Innovative Hemp Technology

Advancements in hemp research and manufacturing demonstrate the remarkable versatility and product-potential for hemp. 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 also 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 lumber and concrete. Hempcrete is energy-efficient, non-toxic, resistant to mold, insects and fire, and is much more sustainable and renewable than wood and synthetic building materials.



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Hemp for Sustainable Agriculture

Hemp is a renewable resource that can help reduce market dependency on lumber, cotton, animal products, and other non-sustainable industrial agriculture 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 plants.

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, Jason Mraz, Dar Williams, Michael Franti, John Salley, Doug Fine, Kevin Danaher, John Trudell, and Grammy award-winning band Ozomatli.

Grassroots Engagement

Over 300 grassroots events will take place nationwide, including 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 Farming

Now in its seventh 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, Living Harvest, Manitoba Harvest, Nature's Path Foods and Nutiva.

Legislative Challenges and Opportunities in 2016

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.

Over half of all states have now removed barriers to hemp cultivation and production. With strong support from farmers, businesses, manufacturers and consumers, advocates for industrial hemp farming see 2016 as a pivotal political opportunity in which grassroots momentum and bi-partisan support in Congress may finally culminate to declassify industrial hemp as a Schedule 1 Controlled Substance and once again allow states to regulate hemp farming.

The 27 states that have legalized industrial hemp farming, per provision Sec. 7606 of the farm bill, include: California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Washington, West Virginia and Virginia.

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Hemp History Week, June 6–12, 2016, 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.