



Grow Our Future

JUNE 6-12, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 17, 2016

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Advocates, Consumers, and Businesses Build Momentum for *Hemp History Week: June 6-12, 2016*

Leading Hemp Brands Unite to Support Grassroots Education Campaign

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**. 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hemp farming at the state level, however federal law still prohibits commercial industrial hemp cultivation due to outdated and inaccurate drug policy.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>.

“Hemp is widely recognized as a nutritious superfood, yet leading brands in the natural products industry must import their hemp to meet the growing demands of the US market,” says Eric Steenstra, Executive Director of the Hemp Industries Association. “*Hemp History Week* educates consumers nationwide about the benefits of hemp products, and the campaign has grown tremendously in the last seven years, but our ultimate goal is to legalize hemp farming at the federal level, so hemp can be grown by farmers here in the U.S. We’re building a movement—one that’s good for farmers, businesses and consumers.”

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The theme for the 2016 campaign focuses on the ability of hemp farming, raw materials, finished products, and innovative technologies to create a sustainable future in which every-day products are renewable and grown using regenerative agriculture. Hemp is a renewable resource that can help reduce market dependency on synthetics, lumber, cotton, and other non-sustainable industrial materials. It contributes to environmentally responsible food and fiber production, forest conservation, reduction in agricultural pesticide use, and soil remediation. Hemp sequesters carbon from the atmosphere thus mitigating the rise of CO₂ levels responsible for climate change. Furthermore, pollinators thrive on the prolific pollen created by hemp plants. Hemp seed products are among the fastest-growing categories in the natural foods industry and are rich in healthy Omega-3 essential fatty acids (EFAs), highly-digestible protein, and naturally-occurring vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin E and iron. From hemp batteries to efficient hemp homes, industrial hemp is a crop that can *Grow Our Future*.

Retail Promotions

Promotions and in-store events will highlight the benefits of hemp in hundreds of natural product retail outlets across the country. Hemp product promotions will happen in more than 1,300 participating retailers including natural foods and specialty stores and most Whole Foods Market location in the U.S.

Grassroots Engagement

Over 300 grassroots events will take place nationwide, including a restaurant program, film screenings, fashion shows, 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.

Hemp for Our Health

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),



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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 gluten-free and has no known allergens.

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, Nutiva, Pacific Foods and Himalania.

"The ban on hemp farming is yet another economically debilitating and nonsensical effect of prohibition," said David Bronner, CEO of Dr. Bronner's. "We want to invest in our environment and farmers, and source the 20 tons of hemp oil we use annually for soap production from U.S. farms. Being part of Hemp History Week is one way we demonstrate our support for this issue, and in a wider sense, our commitment to sustainability and regenerative agriculture."

"Industrial hemp is an exciting crop being re-introduced slowly into the U.S. after a tumultuous domestic history. Tempt is poised to be a national industrial pioneer and proud to be supporting this growing agricultural evolution," said Donna Ratner, COO Tempt Hemp. "It's amazing to think about the abundance of nutrition that comes from this tiny hemp seed which includes 18 amino acids and is rich in Omega 3s; not to mention the potential viability of using hemp instead of destroying forests, its potential in supplementing petroleum use and employing hemp to fulfill our global hunger for plastics. I believe that hemp's industrial opportunities are numerous and hope to see the U.S. government realize a firm position and strategy on re-implementing hemp as a national, federally regulated commodity."

"We're proud to be a long-time supporter of *Hemp History Week* and the movement to legalize Industrial Hemp in the U.S.," explains Mike Fata, CEO & Co-Founder Manitoba Harvest Hemp Foods. "Growing hemp in both Canada and the U.S. will advance our dream of making it easier than ever for people to enjoy hemp foods at every eating occasion."

Arran Stephens, co-CEO and founder of Nature's Path Foods, North America's largest organic breakfast and snack-food company, says, "We include organic hemp seed in a growing number of our cereals, bars, oatmeals, and waffles to deliver delicious plant-based protein. Nature's Path has proudly been an integral actor in the growth of the edible hemp industry since its beginning. This June, we look forward to celebrating America'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. Let us remember that the American constitution was written on hemp paper, and it was considered patriotic to grow hemp for its many beneficial industrial uses."

"Hemp was a major crop for American farmers 150 years ago," said John Roulac, Founder and CEO of Nutiva. "Hemp improves the tilth and carbon contents of soils. Let's plant the seed!"

"High in Omegas and essential amino acids, nutrient-dense hemp seeds are the basis of one our most popular lines of non-dairy beverages," said Jon Gehrs, President of Pacific Foods. "There are often untrue assumptions made about this versatile, sustainable crop, and we're looking forward to being a part of educating consumers about its robust nutritional benefits, particularly for those following specialty-diets."

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, Joel Salatin, and Grammy award-winning band Ozomatli.

Legislative Challenges and Opportunities in 2016

When the 2014 Farm Bill was signed into law in February of 2014, the hemp amendment to the 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



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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_farm_0127.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.