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CONTACT: Adam Eiding 202-744-2671, adam@votehemp.com
Ryan Fletcher 202-641-0277, ryan@mintwood.com

Vote Hemp and Hemp Industries Association Announce Week Long Education Campaign to Bring Back Hemp Farming

'Hemp History Week' Events Planned in 50 States

NATIONWIDE, USA - The Hemp Industries Association (HIA) and Vote Hemp are excited to announce the **1st Annual Hemp History Week to be held May 17-23, 2010.** /As a national grassroots education campaign designed to renew strong support for hemp farming in the U.S., **Hemp History Week** will feature a letter writing campaign and events in cities and towns all over the country.

Organizers expect the campaign to collect at least 50,000 hand-signed postcards addressed to President Barack Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder asking them to end the ban on hemp farming and let farmers grow the versatile and profitable crop.

"Hemp was an important crop for George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and thousands of American farmers until it was outlawed completely in 1970 by the Controlled Substances Act. I know many farmers in my district could benefit greatly from the renewed freedom to rotate industrial hemp into their growing seasons. **Hemp History Week** will help other elected officials learn about America's rich hemp heritage along with the tremendous benefits of growing hemp in America once again" explains Rep. Ron Paul, R-Texas.

Hemp History Week volunteers are being asked to visit libraries and historical societies to find old newspaper articles and other documents about local hemp farming and manufacturing before the crop was banned. The newly discovered research will be presented at scheduled public events in May. Details about planned events will be announced in early April.

In addition to volunteer-run events nationwide, natural product retail outlets are participating in **Hemp History Week** by sampling best-selling hemp products in their stores including: Nature's Path's **Hemp Plus™** Granola Cereal, Sunny Hemp™ Granola Bars and Hemp Plus™ Waffles; Living Harvest Foods **Tempt™** hemp milk and frozen desserts; Nutiva's organic shelled hemp seed and Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps.

"Lost opportunities for farmers and businesses have real consequences," says David Bronner, President of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps which uses hemp oil in almost all of their products. "With over \$360 million in estimated U.S. retail sales, American companies making hemp products have no choice but to import their raw materials because our farmers continue to fear they will be prosecuted for growing hemp, due to an out of date federal policy which confuses non-drug industrial hemp with drug varieties of *Cannabis*," adds Bronner.

Sustainable hemp seed, fiber and oil are already used in nutritious food, textiles, body care and even auto-parts. Companies like Ford Motors, Patagonia, and The Body Shop, in addition to Hemp Industries Association members are using imported hemp in their products today.

"Supporting the hemp industry is something that is very close to our hearts at Nature's Path," said Arjan Stephens, Vice President of Marketing and Product Innovation for Nature's Path Organic Foods. My father and founder of



Nature's Path, Arran Stephens, successfully fought in the three-year battle with the United States DEA to overturn its ban on the sale of healthy hemp foods and I'm proud to follow in his footsteps by supporting **Hemp History Week.**"

For the last four growing seasons, farmers in North Dakota have received licenses from the North Dakota Department of Agriculture to grow industrial hemp. Despite the state's authorization to grow hemp, these farmers risk raids by federal agents if they try to grow the crop due to the failure of the Drug Enforcement Administration to distinguish non-drug industrial hemp from drug types of *Cannabis*.

"Despite the ban, consumers still want nutritious hemp foods—and we do not want to deny the goodness of hemp to anyone", explains Hans Fastre, CEO of Living Harvest Foods, the global leader in hemp food products, including Tempt™ hemp milk, frozen dessert and protein powder. "By allowing U.S. farmers to sell hemp seed, we'll be better able to manage costs, including the cost of product at retail. Moreover, we'll be able to better promote sustainable agriculture in the U.S., support local farming and fuel the economy."

Due to its many benefits – a reusable resource in every aspect and offering a long list of health and nutritional benefits, hemp is one of the fastest growing industries in natural foods. Hemp is a rich source of Omega-3 & 6 essential fatty acids with Super Omega Stearidonic Acid (SDA) and Gamma Linolenic Acid (GLA), digestible protein, naturally occurring vitamins and minerals such as vitamin E and iron, while being a good source of dietary fiber. It is second only to soybeans in complete protein containing all 10 essential amino acids, with no enzyme inhibitors, making it more digestible by humans. Hemp seeds are also gluten-free.

"Compare hemp seed to soy or flax seed - and it wins hands down in both taste and nutrition" says John W. Roulac, founder and CEO of Nutiva. "With the First Lady's recent campaign to improve the typical American diet, hemp foods are well positioned to be embraced by Americans seeking both a healthier diet and a more sustainable world."

Hemp History Week – May 17-23, 2010 is an unprecedented industry-wide project initiated by The Hemp Industries Association and Vote Hemp, involving hundreds of hemp manufacturers and retailers. The **Hemp Industries Association (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. While 16 states have passed pro-hemp farming legislation to date, Hemp History Week organizers want to influence significant policy changes on the federal level as well.

Further information, along with a full list of sponsors can be found at <http://www.votehemp.com/hemphistoryweek>
For more information on the Hemp Industries Association, go to <http://www.thehia.org>
For more information on Vote Hemp, go to <http://www.votehemp.com>

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