

INDUSTRIAL HEMP

Industrial Hemp

Although hemp is a variety of the genus Cannabis, the same plant species as marijuana, hemp is genetically different and distinguished by its use and chemical makeup. Hemp has long been cultivated for non-drug use in the production of industrial and personal care products. Some estimate that the global market for hemp consists of more than 25,000 products, including fabrics and textiles, yarns and raw or processed spun fibers, paper, carpeting, home furnishings, construction and insulation materials, auto parts, and composites. One of the more interesting uses is in phytoremediation, to cleanse contaminated and radiated soil, air and water. It is being used to clear contaminants at the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site.

http://www.mhhe.com/biosci/pae/botany/botany_map/articles/article_10.html Hemp is effective as weed control to avoid use of herbicides. <http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/crops/hemp/bko05s05.html> As a food product, it contains numerous essential fatty acids. <http://www.finola.com/Hempseed%20Nutrition.pdf>

The inclusion of hemp with marijuana under the definition of Cannabis is based upon reliance on outdated norms, without any reasonable distinction between the THC levels in the different species of Cannabis plants and without distinction between the psychoactive and medicinal uses of marijuana and the agricultural and industrial applications of hemp.

On August 29, 2013, the United States Department of Justice updated its federal marijuana enforcement policy in response to recent state laws that have legalized the possession, production, processing, and sale of marijuana under strict state regulatory systems. In light of such updated federal policy, and upon Florida's imposition of strict regulatory requirements for hemp cultivation, it is reasonable to expect a similar non-interference policy with regard to the cultivation, processing, and sale of hemp in Florida.

The requisite regulatory guidelines are available for our legislature's use, as Bill Wohlsifer, voluntarily and without pay, drafted such regulatory guidelines in 2013 for use by any Florida legislator that will take it up. In all, Bill drafted two proposed industrial hemp bills <http://wohlsifer4ag.com/2013/12/31/industrial-hemp-reclassification/> and <http://wohlsifer4ag.com/2013/12/31/hemp-agricultural-crop/> and one proposed industrial hemp resolution <http://wohlsifer4ag.com/2013/12/31/recognition-of-industrial-hemp/> for use in the 2014 legislative session.¹ At present, no Florida legislator is moving on this great opportunity. Please contact your representatives and introduce this initiative to them.

Industrial hemp is legally produced by at least 30 countries in the world, including China, Russia, Korea,

¹ The Legislative Review Committee of the Libertarian Party of Florida is currently seeking representative sponsors to file the proposed legislation.

and our neighbors, Canada and Mexico. It defies logic to allow the import of hemp and hemp byproducts from Canada and Mexico to be used in the production and sale of goods in the U.S., while not allowing hemp to be grown domestically. Normalizing industrial hemp cultivation would generate tax revenue, revitalize vacant farmlands, add to the sale of farming machinery and agribusiness supplies, and create jobs in Florida.