

# Ohioans Join Legal Hemp Harvest in Kentucky, Touting Jobs Creation and "Brain Food" Benefits

CLEVELAND, OH, USA, October 27, 2014 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For the first time in two generations, the Industrial Hemp crop has been legally harvested in Kentucky. The [hemp plots](#) were grown in compliance with Kentucky state law and in accordance with Sec. 7606 of the 2014 US Farm Bill (Agricultural Act of 2014) that authorized hemp cultivation for research purposes in states that permit Hemp farming. The agricultural excitement spurred some of Ohio's long-time hemp advocates to travel south to meet the farmers and gain first-hand experience with the plant that Cannabis prohibition has kept out of American fields until very recently.



In votes often favoring Hemp by wide margins, 20 states have legalized the crop, defining it as Cannabis Sativa L., having .03% THC or less (no drug/narcotic value). The reforms are welcome in Kentucky, where tobacco growers are hurting for alternative crops. Even with the non-drug status being declared federally, the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) seized viable hemp seed en route to Kentucky from Italy, as outdated policy under the Controlled Substances Act doesn't recognize the scientifically-demonstrated chemical distinctions between "marihuana," a Schedule 1 narcotic, and hemp, a viable agricultural cash crop commodity. Kentucky sued the DEA to release the seeds, and prevailed in federal court, allowing the research plots to proceed. The Ohio Hemp Chamber of Commerce (OHCC), which planned the Kentucky hemp farm tour for its members, sees the DEA actions as more motivation to clear up the lingering misunderstandings about the ancient crop. For Jeremy Koosed, owner of Plant Kingdom Bakery in Lyndhurst, Ohio, clarifying the non-drug status is an urgent matter. In 2013, he pledged to the Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner that Plant Kingdom would source Kentucky-grown Hempseed for use in their line of protein bars. He also wrote Governor Beshear, urging him to sign the legalization measure. Customers have bemoaned for years, Koosed says, sharing their

frustration that Hemp is not being grown domestically. Plant Kingdom joined the Kentucky Hemp Industries Council and the Ohio Hemp Chamber of Commerce, as these groups are seeking to promote the crop to businesses, policy makers and the general public.

Since Plant Kingdom began producing snacks and vending Canadian-grown Hemp foods in 2009, Koosed claims to have informed hundreds of thousands of Ohioans, by offering samples and having face-to-face interactions. "It's important to put aside the pot jokes so some of the superfood nutrients in Hemp can go to work for public health," he says. "The average person gets it, and does not support continuing prohibition. If people have reservations, we assure them the seeds do not cause failed drug tests, and people are glad to hear about strengthening protein, omega fats and sustainable farming practices."

### Nutritional Intrigue

[Hemp seed oil](#) is lauded by nutritionists for having a balanced ratio of Omega-3, Omega-6, and hard-to-find GLA and SDA forms of Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs). This makes it uniquely aligned with the World Health Organization's recommendations for healthy fat intake. Plant Kingdom has been printing hemp seed recipe fliers for over a year, and promoting digital versions on the web. The recipes focus on basic applications like mixing seed oil in salad dressings or making pesto and hummus. Plant Kingdom recently sponsored a Facebook page, the Omega Fats Action Network, with a mission is to promote hemp, flax and chia seeds for Omega-3s, encourage general understanding of brain-supportive foods and to preserve depleted ocean fish stocks.

Consumption of Omega-6 rich vegetable oils has increased in the American diet relative to Omega-3s since the 1960s, leading to what nutrition expert and hemp-supporter Dr. Andrew Weil calls a "destructive imbalance." Along with the increase in consumption of refined and processed foods during the same time period, Dr. Weil cites these dietary issues as driving the obesity epidemic and inflammatory illnesses. Meanwhile, Omega-3s have anti-inflammatory effects and our brains' cell membranes, as well as the lipid layers of our skin, incorporate the fatty-acid that Koosed refers to as "replenishing and fortifying." Extolling the benefits, Koosed says switching to healthier fat intake helped with his own digestion, metabolism and weight loss back in 2000.

### Organization Takes Root

The Ohio Hemp Chamber of Commerce (OHCC) is an organization of hemp business owners and advocates focused on putting the plant to work for society. For E.R. Beach, owner of Hemptations shop in Cincinnati, witnessing the hemp fields first hand and getting a chance to work with crop was something he's been hoping to do since going into business retailing hemp products over 19 years ago.

"The future of [Hemp in the US](#) is now, and Kentucky is on the forefront," says Beach. The research plots visited by OHCC are tended by generational farmers, college student researchers

and group of veterans called Growing Warriors, a project through the Kentucky Department of Agriculture that already has sustainable outfitter and outdoor gear manufacturer, Patagonia, as an invested financial partner interested in developing products from the crop.

OHCC businesses are strengthened by members experienced in land-use planning and organic farming. According to OHCC cofounder and communications director, Lauren Berlekamp, planting strategically for "bioretention" can filter storm water runoff and retain soil and soil nutrients on farms, while providing a valuable feed stock for supporting existing manufacturing industries as well as public infrastructure in Ohio. Phytoremediation, planting to clean up contaminated soil, is another function that can be deployed for soil and water quality and environmental health. Hemp farming can also help address climate change, according to the HempIndustries Association (HIA) because it's compatible with "regenerative" farming practices that sequesters carbon in the soil.

The group sponsored the Thriving Communities Institute's Ohio Land Bank conference in September where they were well received with an expert panel discussion and presentation regarding these issues. They plan to keep educating about the crop, through awareness events like Hemp History Week, looking to Kentucky as an example. Find out more about the OHCC at [www.ohiohempchamber.org](http://www.ohiohempchamber.org).

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