

Hemp Facts from Drug War Facts

What is Hemp? “Industrial hemp is classified under the genus *Cannabis*.³⁷ Marijuana and industrial hemp derive from different portions of the plant popularly known as the hemp plant.³⁸ The plant is designated as *Cannabis sativa* in the Linnaean system of botanical classification (*Cannabis sativa* L.)³⁹ Generally, the flower or leaves of the hemp plant are the portions of the plant that produce the drug marijuana, whereas the stalk produces the industrial products.⁴⁰” *North Dakota Law Review*, 2009.

What is the history of Hemp? “Industrial hemp was a critical agricultural product in America for over four centuries. So important was hemp¹ to the earliest settlers that in 1619, the Jamestown colony passed a law making it illegal not to grow the crop.² Colonies in Massachusetts and Connecticut passed similar laws in 1631 and 1632.³ The first drafts of the United States Constitution and the Declaration of Independence were both penned on hemp paper,⁴ and hemp cultivation continued well into the twentieth century as patriotic farmers responded to the government’s call by drastically increasing production during World War I and World War II.⁵ But, over the past seventy years, interpretations of narcotics laws by federal agencies,⁶ and the policies enacted in response to those interpretations, have completely obstructed industrial hemp cultivation such that crops have not been grown domestically since 1958.” *UCLA Law Review*, 2009. <http://uclalawreview.org/pdf/57-1-5.pdf>

Where is Hemp produced? “Today, China, Canada and Europe are the main Hemp cultivation areas in the world. In 2008 the total cultivation area in the European Union was around 15,000 ha [hectares] – in 2009 we expect this to have increased to 18,000 ha. ... The main [European] countries for Hemp production are France, UK, Germany, The Netherlands and Poland.” *European Industrial Hemp Association*, 2010. http://www.nova-institut.de/pdf/bwr_april_2010.pdf

What is Hemp’s legal status in the United States? “Strictly speaking, the CSA [Controlled Substances Act] does not make *Cannabis* illegal; rather, it places the strictest controls on its production, making it illegal to grow the crop without a DEA [Drug Enforcement Administration] permit.” *Congressional Research Service*, 2005. <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/RL32725.pdf>

“The United States is the only industrialized nation that does not permit the production of industrial hemp.” *North Dakota Law Review*, 2009. http://web.law.und.edu/LawReview/issues/web_assets/pdf/85-2/85NDLR403.pdf

What is U.S. the market value for Hemp? “There is no official estimate of the value of U.S. sales of hemp-based products. Industry representatives claim that U.S. retail sales exceed \$350 million annually.²⁵ This reported retail value is a rough estimate and is difficult to verify. Included in the industry estimate of total U.S. retail sales are estimates of the size of the U.S. market for hemp clothing and textiles, which is approximated at about \$100 million annually.²⁶ The estimate of total sales also includes between \$60 million and \$100 million annually for hemp-based foods, nutritional supplements, and body care products.²⁷ Underlying data for this estimate are from SPINS survey data;²⁸ however, because the data reportedly do not track retail sales for The Body Shop and Whole Foods Market—two major markets for hemp-based products—as well as for restaurants, hemp industry analysts have adjusted these upward to account for this gap in the reported survey data.²⁹” *Congressional Research Service*, 2010. <http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/RL32725.pdf>

What can Hemp be used for?

“The hemp plant has three primary components: bast fibre, hurd, and seed / oil.”

“**Hemp bast fibres** are among the strongest and most durable of natural fibres, with high tensile strength, wet strength, and other characteristics favourable for various industrial products. [They are] used in the production of a wide range of products where its strength and durability are advantageous, including cordage (rope, twine, etc.), specialty papers, fabrics for clothing and other applications, and industrial textiles such as geotextiles and carpeting. The strength of hemp fibre also makes it ideal for use in a range of composites for applications such as moulded car parts and fibreboard for construction.”

“**Hemp hurd** is composed of cellulose-rich, short fibres, and make up approximately 75% of the hemp stalk. They are spongy and absorbent, ideal characteristics in applications such as animal bedding and industrial absorbents. They may also be used to produce low-quality paper. More recently, hemp hurd has been used to produce a concrete-like substance for use in building applications, as well as for insulation and to produce fibreboard.”

“The **whole hemp stalk** can also be used to produce various biofuels such as bio-oil (or pyrolytic liquid), cellulosic ethanol, syngas (synthetic gas) and methane. Alternatively, the bast fibre can first be removed for use in high-value fibre applications, and the remaining hurd can then be processed into biofuel. The processes by which hemp is converted to biofuels may also produce valuable chemicals and other materials as bi-products.”

“**Hemp oil** is extremely nutritious, and is used in foods and nutraceutical products for humans and animals, as well as in personal care products. Hemp oil is also suitable for use in industrial products such as paints, varnishes, inks and industrial lubricants, and can be used to produce biodiesel. The crushed seed meal left over from oil production is frequently used for animal feed.”

Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiative Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 2008.

http://www.votehemp.com/PDF/National_Industrial_Hemp_Strategy_Final_Complete2.pdf