



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

INDUSTRIAL HEMP RESEARCH PILOT

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IHRP webpage update and some FAQs

Greetings –

As coordinator of the Industrial Hemp Research Pilot (IHRP), I am regularly asked questions regarding this developing program. In this update, I want to address three of the most frequent questions we receive here at WSDA. I will post a much lengthier FAQ to our agency's website. You can expect another update soon with the link to the additional FAQs and a new IHRP webpage!

The new webpage will contain more than 25 of the most commonly asked questions. It will also have links to industrial hemp legislation, IH news, and other important resources. Updating our website with a webpage focused exclusively on the Industrial Hemp Research Pilot is an exciting step in the creation of this new program.

Thank you – Emily Febles, IHRP Coordinator

Three Most Commonly Asked Questions:

1. **Where can I get an application or permit to grow industrial hemp?**

Applications for permits to grow industrial hemp are not currently available. The program is so new that the application and licensing structure is not yet in place. We hope to make applications for permits to grow industrial hemp available in late 2016 for planting in spring 2017.

2. **How will I get industrial hemp seeds to plant?**

The process of how future industrial hemp growers will obtain seeds is still being worked out. Industrial hemp belongs to the plant genus Cannabis, which is still federally illegal, so no part of the plant, including seeds, can cross state borders. Once seeds cross state lines, they fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government. So, getting seeds from Oregon or Colorado would be illegal, for example. Also, by state law, no one can obtain seeds privately through their own means.

Even though the federal government carved out a small, legal niche to start legal pilot hemp programs, no language was included to allow for movement of seeds. Currently, the only way to get seeds legally is for a state department of agriculture, like WSDA, or a university with an approved pilot program, to get a permit from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to import seeds from abroad and, in turn, provide those seeds for use in research. Most states get imported IH seeds from Canada and Europe. We are

currently working with the DEA to complete our permit and import seeds legally.

3. What is the difference between industrial hemp and marijuana?

Industrial hemp and marijuana are varieties of cannabis that developed due to selective breeding. Hemp was bred for its fiber and seed oil. Marijuana was bred for its narcotic components. By both federal and state law, industrial hemp must contain less than 0.3 percent THC on a dry weight basis. *Cannabaceae*, the plant family that both industrial hemp and marijuana belongs to, also includes hops and sugarberry trees.

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