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**Subject:** Hempseed  
  
**Categories:** Blue Category

## FSANZ Application A1039

### Hemp Foods for Australia

#### Discussion points

1. Are you aware of any evidence that consumers believe that low THC hemp foods have psychoactive effects?

Absolutely none as is shown by overseas countries selling it for years.

2. Are you aware of any evidence that representations on low THC food (including labelling and advertising) mislead consumers by leading them to believe that low THC hemp foods have psychoactive effects when consumed?

NO. People clearly know the difference between high thc and low. And no one tries to get high off seeds!

3. Can you provide any evidence in addition to that presented in this consultation paper whether or not the consumption of low THC foods can return a positive test for a THC drug test?

Again we have plenty of overseas experience to go on

4. Can you provide information on THC testing in Australia and NZ, particularly with regard to regulatory limits of THC that may be set?

No. 5. Can you provide information to indicate whether there will be an impact on the cost of testing for THC in humans that could arise from an approval of hemp foods?

Athletes are turning to hemp foods to assist maintaining optimal nutrition. They are a closely monitored group, but no instances of false positive testing has yet been reported.

6. Do you agree that there are adequate controls currently in place, or that would be achieved by imposing maximum limits for THC, to mitigate any risk of high THC Cannabis varieties entering the food supply?

There is NO risk of high THC cannabis entering the food supply. Hemp food is exclusively derived from hemp seed which are produced from industrial hemp plantations, which are subject to regulatory testing to ensure low levels of THC.

7. Do you consider that trade practices legislation in Australia and New Zealand is sufficient to mitigate the potential risk that representations (including labelling and advertising) of hemp foods could suggest psychoactive properties relating to consumption of those foods? If not, what labelling and representations of hemp foods should be considered?

Those interested in marketing hemp seed products intend to use the ample nutritional benefits as the selling point, not some juvenile reference to “getting high”.

8. What is the potential opportunity costs for current producers of hemp crops if hemp foods continue to be prohibited?

Hemp crops may be grown for the production of long and short fibre, for seed production or co-cultured to yield both seed and fibre.

9. What are the potential benefits to food manufacturers if hemp foods were approved for use?

Amending the current inappropriate restrictions on the food uses of hemp seed in Australia would expand the range of products able to be manufactured. When added to existing foods such as soy milk in place of canola oil, hemp seed would add considerably to the nutritional benefit of the product. An amendment to hemp food legislation would also open the way for production of a range of new foods, such as hemp milk and ice cream. For those suffering allergies to soy or dairy products this would provide a valuable alternative source of these types of foods. Manufacturers could use the hemp seed to produce concentrated health bars which would find a ready use in a range of markets from school lunches, hiking and camping food through to emergency food provisions as part of a natural disaster relief effort. Using Australia's environmental credentials and the excellent environmental credentials of hemp would open a potentially very large export market.

10. Are there likely to be any additional costs for food manufacturers wishing to supply hemp foods?

Hemp seed can be produced economically, especially when economies of scale and dual fibre/seed plantations are operating. The seed requires only minimal processing before being used in most food preparation. It is stable and can be kept for months without special storage needs. Over many years of food use overseas no significant problem with allergies have arisen, so existing food processing machinery can be used with no expensive decontamination procedures. Therefore, no additional costs would be anticipated.

11. Would the approval of low THC hemp foods increase the cost of food enforcement beyond what would be expected of the approval of any other substance added to food, or other food regulatory change?

No additional costs could be reasonably anticipated. Hemp seed, especially hulled hemp seed contains negligible quantities of THC. Therefore, any food manufactured from these will also be virtually free of THC, making product testing unnecessary. If testing is considered necessary it would only be necessary to batch test at the first stage of production i.e. the seed producer, with all downstream producers covered by the certainty that their products would be compliant.

12. What other legislation would affect or be affected by approval of hemp foods?

There need be minimal changes to existing legislation. Australia is currently the only country on Earth to restrict the food uses of hemp and no legislative or enforcement issues, to my knowledge, have arisen in other countries. Although locally produced hemp foods are preferred minor modifications to the Customs regulations would need to be made to facilitate any import of food grade hemp seeds. The changes would be of a similar nature to the industrial hemp laws, where exemptions to existing restrictions were introduced without difficulty or problems.

13. Would the approval of hemp food have an impact on hemp regulations in Australia and New Zealand? Would industrial hemp destined for use in food require additional controls to those already specified in industrial hemp regulations?

Hemp seed is currently a legal item of commerce in Australia, currently being used in the manufacture of cosmetics and other topical products, as well as a pet food supplement. No additional controls could conceivably be required, especially when dealing with processed items incapable of germination, such as hulled seeds.

14. Would food manufacturers be required to be licensed under existing hemp regulations?

As stated above the current situation in Australia is that any person can receive and process seed and fibre without restriction, providing it has been produced by a licensed grower. This has been confirmed in NSW by the Department of Primary Industry. There is no conceivable need to add additional regulation to a system that is currently working adequately.

15. Would additional costs be incurred by government agencies responsible for granting licenses for the cultivation of hemp as a result of approval of hemp foods?

With the expansion of the current hemp industry by the addition of food production there would be an increase in the number of farmers receiving licenses. However, no additional costs would be incurred because the system as it is currently operates is based on cost recovery, by fees paid.

16. Can you identify risk management options that have not been considered in the impact analysis?

There is no actual risk associated with changing the regulation so no risk management options need be considered. Joining the world community and legalising hemp foods for consumption in Australia and New Zealand poses no risk, but a win-win scenario for farmers, producers and consumers.

17. Can you identify any other costs and benefits for any of the risk management options considered in this paper?

Any costs associated with adding hemp food to the approved schedule would be nil or minimal. Risks are non-existent whilst the benefits to farmers, processors and consumers would be great.

18. Do you have a view about the appropriate preferred regulatory options regarding the approval of hemp foods, based on benefits and costs?

My preferred regulatory option is that of minimal intervention, leading to a rapid normalisation of the hemp food industry. The stated aim of the food regulations is to protect the health and well-being of the Australian population. This is best done by expediting the introduction of hemp foods, whose ample nutritional profile will greatly benefit the population. The imposition of unnecessary, vexatious or expensive conditions are to be avoided. Most progressive social legislation faced the barriers of ignorant criticism and fear-mongering when they were first proposed. Consider the resistance placed in the way of what we now consider self-evident truths, such as female suffrage and equal rights for all racial groups, when they were first introduced. What we are seeking is not radical or ground breaking change, but simply to join the world community in adopting a safe and beneficial food.

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