

Low THC Hemp as Food

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Low THC Hemp as Food (*Cannabis Sativa*)

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

This submission reflects a personal interest in industrial hemp as a crop that has the potential to be of significant economic value to Australia, and in particular Tasmania where conditions are ideal for its growth, and where the potential for its use as an alternative to plantation forests for pulp and paper making offers considerable economic benefits and employment opportunities for the state.

This submission is based on the content of a number of recent articles relating to hemp reported in the Tasmanian media, information available on the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers' Association (TFGA), and publicly available information on the internet about hemp's uses.

Hemp growing has been trialled in Tasmania since 1991/92¹ but State Government regulatory issues have thus far prevented its commercial production, either for food or any other potential products hemp can be used for. Its many and varied uses include clothing, ropes, food and cosmetics, and an alternative to wood pulp for paper making.

Benefits of hemp seeds

Hemp seed products come from the hemp plant *Cannabis Sativa* and contain all of the essential fatty acids to maintain human life². ***'The plant is a low THC variety and the seed contains no THC itself. Hulled Hemp seed is one of the world's most nutritional foods and it is also very easy to digest.'***

Hemp seeds are high in essential fatty acid Omega 6, and contain more Omega 3 acids than seafood. They also contain other trace elements vital for good health including: calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, vitamins B1, B2, B6, B9, B12, and vitamins C, D, and E.

Hemp seeds could therefore potentially supply Australians with essential fatty acid Omega 3 and reduce the pressure on our increasingly over-fished oceans.

Because they are so rich in so many of these necessary elements hemp seeds have been used to treat:

***Children with ADHD
Cancer***

Rheumatoid arthritis
Bipolar disorder

Hemp fibre

Hemp plants produce a strong durable textile fabric that offers a natural fibre alternative to cotton in making clothing. It doesn't require vast quantities of water as cotton does, and neither does it require chemicals, pesticides or herbicides – making it an environmentally healthy crop for Australian farmers to consider in terms of their own health and that of the land.

Hemp can be grown in rotation with other crops, eg vegetables, and it produces four times as much fibre per hectare as pine trees. Paper made from hemp can be recycled up to seven times.³

Conclusion

Industrial hemp offers an important diversification for farmers given a global demand for the product in all its wide variety of uses.

Hemp is used in other countries, including Canada, the US and several European countries, in a range of foods.

Allowing industrial hemp to be grown in Australia – especially in Tasmania's ideal conditions – would provide a significant contribution to the state's economy through jobs growth in agriculture and manufacturing industries. Hemp cultivation also fits with the clean, green image promoted in Tasmania, and would enable the state to overcome its current over-reliance on environmentally destructive resource extraction industries such as forestry and mining.

As I understand FSANZ has not identified any public health and safety concerns associated with the consumption of hemp foods, I urge the agency to amend its position and allow low THC hemp to be grown as food.

Yours sincerely,

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References:

¹ <http://www.tfqa.com.au/policies/submissions>

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http://www.hempseedsaustralia.com.au/index.php?main_page=page&id=1&zenid=005c6bd84fea9c79311019d4b7ecc600

³ *Tasmanian Country*, Friday 13 January 2012, p.6