

As Industrial Hemp growers since 2016 ‘Margaret River Hemp Company’ and its sister companies ‘Hemp Homes Australia’ and ‘Margaret River Hemp Processing’ have been pioneering the Western Australian Hemp Industry since 1995. As you will probably know the Industry has been very slow moving for many years now, but since 2017 when Hemp Foods finally became legal for human consumption here in Australia(Aus & NZ last 2 developed countries to do this) we finally took one large step forward but at the same time took 10 back.

Whole Industrial hemp plant utilisation, i.e. leaf and flower, was regulated under TGA.

Setting high standards for CBD

In Australia, it became legal to purchase products containing low-dose (less than 150 milligrams a day) CBD over the counter after the TGA down-scheduled the substance from a Schedule 4 (prescription medicine) to a Schedule 3 (pharmacist-only medicine).

But so far, no product containing CBD has been approved by the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG), which is a requirement of pharmacist sale. ARTG approval means regulatory quality data on its safety, contaminants, microbial content, shelf-life and efficacy meet the TGA standards and is known and tested in regulatory grade laboratories. The time and financial costs for drug development to meet the ARTG standards can be significant.

At this time the largest Australian Companies moved to the US, to sell and expand their CBD range.

Hemp Foods Australia - Elixinol

Ecofibre - Ananda Hemp

This was a huge loss to Australia’s economy.

Unlike, in the United Kingdom, low-dose CBD oil can be sold as a dietary supplement, but not a medicine.

Hemp Leaf

It's important that we look at the whole plant not just the cannabinoids(CBD, CBG etc) There are terpenes, the flavonoids and the sterols: all these other things that the plant produces are quite useful.

An application to legalise hemp leaf, seed sprout and root as a legitimate food and food ingredient with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand in late 18 August 2020. And last month, the application itself was approved. Permit sale of low THC hemp.

So, no matter how much hemp you ingest, you just can't get high.

And as the current application to FSANZ points out, the industry is already producing hemp leaf, sprouts and roots, which are going to waste despite their nutritional value. And with just a little bit of tweaking, the Australian Food Code could permit these products to make it onto people's plates.

We saw what was going on overseas with hemp leaf. And a few things have held back the Australian hemp industry.

The first was we had no laws. Then after the laws were approved in 2017, we had no large scale processing for hemp foods here in WA

You can grow the hemp plant and you don't have to wait for it to be fully matured for hemp leaf. You don't have to harvest with big machinery like you do the seed. And you don't need to grow big fields of it, like you do for textiles.

This is a small-scale business that people can do to make teas, beverages and other food products.

Hemp leaf products are available all over the world, just like hemp seed food is.

The sprouts can be added to other sprouts. There are beer options, where you use hemp as an adjunct to hops. And we'll start utilising the terpenes.

So, what we will do now is begin an export market. WA producers will be able to produce these hemp leaf and sprout products for export overseas before we'll be able to sell them over here.

Industrial Hemp Act 2004

With hemp leaf, seed sprouts and roots already with an approved application with FSANZ it is important that the WA Industrial Hemp Act is amended. Terms in the Act are very grey

Example -

Terms used in the Act - ‘*plant* includes seed and any other part of a plant’

There is no mention that Industrial Hemp Growers in WA cannot use the leaf and flower of the hemp plant.

This is similar in NSW Hemp Act, where Industrial Hemp Growers are extracting leaf and flower, because their Act too does not show that you can’t. There are companies already on a commercial scale that are selling Industrial hemp as an extract.

Statistics from Europe - CBD

The cannabis-derived compound CBD is not a narcotic drug because “it does not appear to have any psychotropic effect or any harmful effect on human health”, the EU’s highest court has ruled.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/marijabutkovic/2020/08/17/european-cbd-market-is-booming-and-investors-finally-recognize-it/?sh=5513c33e1204>

<https://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/how-much-the-cbd-market-is-growing-in-the-eu/>

Statistics from the US - CBD

The U.S. CBD market grew over 700% in 2019 and is on track to grow to \$23.7 billion through 2023. “The bulk of this growth is coming from large retailers.

When it comes to where CBD users get their products, a 2019 Consumer Reports study says:

40% purchase CBD from a dispensary

34% purchase CBD from a retail store

27% purchase CBD from an online retailer

12% purchase CBD from another source

<https://www.cannainsider.com/reviews/cbd-industry-stats/>

CBD - recognised around the World

A World Health Organisation perspective on Cannabidiol(CBD)

<https://www.openaccessgovernment.org/who-perspective-on-cannabidiol/80838/>

UN Votes to recognise the potential medical value of cannabis - 02/12/21

<https://prohibitionpartners.com/2020/12/02/the-un-votes-to-recognise-the-potential-medical-value-of-cannabis/>

CBD is not a narcotic drug - EU Court

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/nov/19/cbd-is-not-a-narcotic-says-eu-court-french-ban>

Conclusion

Licensed Industrial Hemp growers with the legal limit of 1% THC, should be able to use the whole plant that they are legally allowed to grow. In turn hemp products(leaf and flower) from Industrial hemp as a food, nutraceutical and or topical, should be produced in a food grade or GMP(Good Manufacturing Practice Facility)

This can be done either, cultivate, harvest and process themselves for leaf and flower or sell to a licenced medicinal company, here in Australia or export overseas.

This in turn will create more jobs, especially for regional areas and significant investment into the Industrial Hemp Industries here in WA.

Our company alone has already set up international connections overseas, and has spent a large investment in genetics and PBR(plant breeders rights) on hemp.

Hemp seed is already a good export market, our green credentials will be able to shine, and we'll be able to export these value-added products over to the US, the EU and even into Asia.

Western Australia can lead the way, for whole plant utilisation, but we must do it sooner rather than later.