

CITIZENS VIEW



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**DIRECTING
SAFE DRUG POLICY**

**OREGON
Hemp Bosses
locked
workers in
building with
rodents**

The building housed roughly 25 hemp workers who lived, ate and worked in a structure that was architecturally unsafe, had padlocked doors that prevented escape and exposed workers to rodents and water. *Hemp.* (TinaKru / Pixabay)

<https://www.wweek.com/news/state/2019/11/05/hemp-bosses-in-southern-oregon-fined-for-locking-workers-in-condemned-building-with-rodents/>

HEMP BOSSES LOCKED WORKERS IN BUILDING WITH RODENTS

Five employers who co-own a hemp facility in Murphy, Ore., an unincorporated area outside of Josephine County, have been fined by the state for allegedly housing workers at a vast hemp trimming and packaging facility where there were egregious safety and health violations.

Each of the five employers are being fined \$165,000 by the Oregon Occupational Safety and Health Administration for allowing roughly 25 workers to sleep, eat and work in a condemned building that exposed employees to rodents, standing water and insects, according to a release by the Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services.

The building was also structurally unsound, and had the potential to collapse on the workers, state officials say. Josephine County building safety officials had announced it was unsafe for any type of occupation, residency or workplace.

The building had several padlocked doors, preventing escape in case of an emergency or fire. Appropriate exit routes in case of emergency were also nonexistent.

The building in question was just over 23,000 square feet, or roughly half an acre.

The release calls the employer conduct "reckless disregard for workplace safety and health requirements" and calls the violations "willful."

The employers are Eighteen New Hope LLC, Jai B Ley and Yoram Levy, Yuval Magid, Safe and Simple LLC, and Jai B Levy and Yoram Levy and Yuval Magid.

The registered agent for Eighteen New Hope LLC that WW reached out to did not offer comment. The other employers could not be located for comment.

"Our rules are clear about providing people with a safe and healthy place to work, including making necessary repairs and following sound safety practices," said Michael Wood, OSHA Administrator. "The same goes for our requirements when employers provide housing to workers. The neglect in this case is staggering and utterly inexcusable."

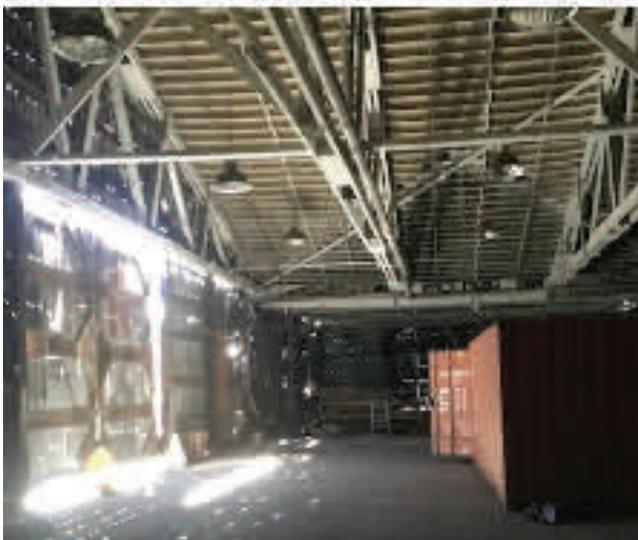
HEMP BOSSES CONT.

With the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill last year, which made hemp legal federally, hemp growing in Southern Oregon has experienced a boom parallel to the cannabis boom that occurred after state legalization of weed in 2015.

It's estimated that there are close to 50,000 acres of hemp currently being grown in Oregon—a number that will rise as more growers hop on the bandwagon of hemp cultivation, the majority of which is currently being used for cannabinoid oil products, or CBD

Hemp Bosses in Southern Oregon Fined for Locking Workers in Condemned Building With Rodents

The building housed roughly 25 hemp workers who lived, ate and worked in a structure that was architecturally unsafe, had padlocked doors that prevented escape and exposed workers to rodents and water.



OR Hemp Company Kept Workers In A Condemned Building Exposing Them To, "rodents, standing water and insects"



KCSO SEIZED 10 MILLION MARIJUANA PLANTS IN 11 HEMP FIELDS WORTH \$1 BILLION

ARVIN, Calif. — The Kern County Sheriff's Office said that a joint investigation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Federal Bureau of Investigation determined that 11 hemp fields operating in Arvin were actually cannabis.

According to officials, they were tipped off about several hemp cultivation sites that were actively cultivating cannabis before they served a search warrant on October 25. The eleven different fields amounted to over 459 acres of land, KCSO said.

Officials said they seized around 10 million marijuana plants with an estimated value of over \$1 billion on the black market.

"These illicit marijuana gardens were grown under the guise of legitimate hemp production," KCSO said in a news release. "The Food and Agricultural Code and Health and Safety Code define industrial hemp has containing less than 0.3% THC content. The research exemption allows for cultivators to grow and possess hemp/cannabis that is over 0.3% THC content, 'if that cultivation or possession contributes to the development of types of industrial hemp that will comply with the three-tenths of 1 percent THC limit estab-

lished in this division."

KCSO added that preliminary testing determined that the levels of THC in these fields were "well over the legal limit .



Kern County Sheriff's Office
on Thursday

Hemp fields in Arvin determined to be cannabis

The Kern County Sheriff's Office received information about several hemp cultivation sites that were actively cultivating cannabis. The Kern County Sheriff's Office, with the assistance of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), initiated a joint investigation.

On October 25, 2019, a search warrant was executed at eleven different fields in the Arvin area, amounting to over 459 acres of land. Investigators with the Kern County Sheriff's Office Narcotics units seized and eradicated approximately 10 million marijuana plants. These plants have an estimated value of over \$1 billion on the black market.

These illicit marijuana gardens were grown under the guise of legitimate hemp production. The Food and Agricultural Code and Health and Safety Code define industrial hemp has containing less than 0.3% THC content. The research exemption allows for cultivators to grow and possess hemp/cannabis that is over 0.3% THC content, "if that cultivation or possession contributes to the development of types of industrial hemp that will comply with the three-tenths of 1 percent THC limit established in this division." This provision does not allow the commercial sale of hemp or cannabis that is over this threshold.

Preliminary testing showed the levels of THC in these fields were well over the legal limit for industrial hemp production and were in fact cannabis. The investigation is ongoing.

https://m.benzinga.com/article/14712927?utm_referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.smartnews.com%2F&utm_source=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.smartnews.com%2F



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Consultant, Trainer, Speaker

Building partnerships between citizens and government officials to help develop safe drug policies.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTLLU KsbyaY&feature=youtu.be>

CONNECTIONS

- **Monthly Connections**
- **Quarterly Citizen View Newsletter**
- **Quarterly Community Educational Forums –Focus Marijuana**
- **Annual Nat'l Safe Drug Policy Summit-Focus Marijuana**
- **Web Trainings**
- **Small groups meetings**



We believe we are socially responsible for preserving public safety, quality of life, and protection of property values on behalf of our communities and for the legacy of our children.



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New Report **Hemp** Shows the Crop's Vast Potential, but Also Severe Supply-Chain Issues

Economist Beau Whitney, who led the report, says the supply chain issues are "indicative of how immature the overall industry is."

A new report published by the Oregon-based firm Whitney Economics says commercial hemp cultivation has the potential to become the nation's third most lucrative crop in coming years.

But it also warns that 65 percent of the American hemp growers surveyed didn't have a buyer for their crop.

This raises the possibility of a glut, similar to the oversupply of cannabis that has driven down Oregon's prices ("Too Much Weed," WW, April 18, 2019). But it also might just be a "hiccup," says Beau Whitney, who owns the economics firm and oversaw the report.

"It's indicative of how immature the overall industry is," says Whitney.

The report shows 62,000 acres of hemp are currently being grown in Oregon by roughly 1,700 licensed growers. That's within shouting distance of Oregon's flagship crop: hazelnuts, or filberts, which cover 70,000 acres. (But it's nowhere near the largest crop, wheat, and its nearly 800,000 acres.)

Whitney says that though hemp acres may not compare to acres of wheat, the value of hemp "dwarfs wheat."

The report notes that 20,000 hemp-growing licenses have been doled out in 34 states since the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, which legalized hemp cultivation and transportation of hemp across state lines.

Already, hemp has emerged as Oregon's newest cash crop. And in the state's southern counties, which have a perfectly situated climate for growing cannabis plants, hemp grows have sprouted at an eye-brow-raising rate.

The lack of certain buyers, says Whitney, shows that "there has been little focus and little data on the supply side."

That, the report says, is a symptom of broker middlemen who aren't doing responsible business, and may be taking advantage of growers who don't have the business savvy to know any better.

"Currently there are a lot of brokers in the middle between buyer and sellers, in many instances, brokers do not have the supply available to sell (even though they say they do) or do not have a buyer in place that they claim to have," the report reads. "This is creating a lot of wasted efforts and failed deals."

Because of the lack of buyers for hemp right now, the report notes that growers must find ways to "utilize tools to dry and store the crop while they figure out how to bring their product to market" so it doesn't perish.

But the amount of **processors** in the market are vastly outnumbered by the number of growers, creating a bloated supply of biomass with nowhere to go. The report shows that for every four growers, there is one processor available.

One of the ways to prevent perished plant is to extract the plant into a product like cannabidiol (or CBD), which has a longer shelf life.

Another issue, the report says, is the inconsistent status of hemp regulations and rules across states. Individual states can still prohibit the cultivation of hemp, making transportation across states where it's illegal a risky endeavor.

"Issues of crop insurance, banking, FDA regulation of CBD, interstate transportation, and confusion by law enforcement have surfaced in recent months," the report reads.

But despite the setbacks, Whitney says hemp is a "transformative product" and says it's "just the beginning right now" of a potentially huge revenue-garnering crop in the U.