

## Stakeholder Report from Industrial Hemp Farmers Talks

by: Industrial Hemp in Colorado, LLC

Industrial Hemp in Colorado, LLC organized "Farmers talks" regarding industrial hemp in various towns in rural eastern Colorado. James McVaney created this company after splitting from Hemp Cleans, LLC in January 2013. Before this, McVaney was involved in campaigning for industrial hemp via Amendment 64 by running and financing the pro Amendment 64 registered issue committee "Vote Hemp Yes on 64". McVaney started work on this project back in November of 2011, shortly after Amendment 64's ballot language, which included industrial hemp, was finalized. Vote Hemp Yes on 64 targeted rural Coloradans through distribution of get-out-the-vote literature throughout the mountain regions of Colorado, and through a Facebook campaign which target all rural Coloradans and sought to engage them via online discussions.

The successful industrial hemp farmers talks, those not postponed due to the many and much needed spring snow storms which went through Colorado in March and April, were almost exclusively attended by actual eastern Colorado Plains farmers.

The first event was held in Limon, Colorado on Friday March 22nd at the Limon Community Center. The main concerns from the farmers who attended were:

1. Crop insurance. They wondered who would provide it. They do not want any risk with this issue.
2. What about growing hemp on leased land? Would there be anything in the bill that will address this issue?
3. Where/what is the market for industrial hemp. They need to see people make money before fully committing to planting this crop
4. How drought resistant is hemp? How does hemp handle hail? Is it a viable cover crop?

Another round of farmer's talk was held on April 13th. These were held in La Junta, and Lamar Colorado at the local College and library respectively.

From these meetings, which focused on giving a brief history of industrial hemp, I gathered the following from the farmers in attendance.

1. A lot of farm programs are contingent on no drugs being allowed. Until this is cleared up they are not interested

2. They are very interested in hems usefulness as a rotational crop, specifically hems ability to boost the yields of corn crops when planted the season before the corn by bring nutrients higher up in the soil from its deeper than average root system.

3. From their conversations with other local farmers, they felt there was tremendous interest in the local farmers for planting hemp, but that there is not enough information out there right now to guide them. And they feel the industrial hemp industry could run into "worse case" scenarios without knowledge readily available to farmers.

4. Financing and bank issues need to be address so the current banking situation in the medical marijuana industry in not repeated in the industrial hemp industry.

5. Feel the industrial hemp issue needs to be addressed at Federal level in order to solve the issue of the Federal government taking away access to farming programs if the farmer is found to have any business with Federal banned substances.

Industrial Hemp in Colorado, LLC does have more "farmer talks" planned in other places in Eastern Colorado, such as Sterling and Yuma, however these events are scheduled after the current legislative session.

Please feel free to contact us if you need any clarifications or further information.

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