



Hemp FAQs

What is hemp and is it legal?

Hemp is essentially every variety within the cannabis family that contain negligible amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC)—the chemical in marijuana that is psychoactive and gets you “high.”

The Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) [authorized](#) the production of hemp and removed hemp and hemp seeds from the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) schedule of Controlled Substances. It also directed the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to issue regulations and guidance to implement a program to create a consistent regulatory framework around production of hemp throughout the United States. The establishment of hemp as a regulated commodity also paves the way for U.S. hemp farmers to participate in other USDA farm programs.

The 2018 Farm Bill officially [defines](#) hemp as “the plant *Cannabis sativa* L. and any part of that plant, including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol *concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.*” (Emphasis added).

Is hemp the same as marijuana?

No! Hemp and marijuana both come from the same species of plant, but from different varieties or cultivars. Hemp is part of the cannabis family that includes all varieties that contain negligible amounts of tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), the chemical in marijuana which is psychoactive and gets you “high.”

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Just as there are numerous breeds of dogs in the “canine” family, so too does the cannabis family contain numerous varieties. Yet, the cannabis family is most famously known for psychoactive cannabis (*i.e.*, marijuana or “weed”). This is the main reason why people confuse the term hemp with marijuana. Hemp actually refers to the industrial variant which is cultivated for its fiber, hurd (the coarse parts of flax or hemp that adhere to the fiber after it is separated), and seeds.



What can hemp be used for?

Hemp truly is a wonder crop and in 1938 *Popular Mechanics* [published](#) an article calling hemp the next “billion dollar crop” and estimating there to be more than 25,000 known uses for hemp. Whether the claim of 25,000 uses is an exact estimate or not, the point still remains: the entirety of the hemp plant can be used to make just about every consumer product you can think of, including food and beverages, clothing and accessories, automotive, building materials (including hemp concrete or “hempcrete”), paper, bioplastics, and much much more.

The hemp plant can essentially be broken down into 4 parts—the flower, seed (or grain), fiber (bast), and hurd—each of which has its own uses.

1. Hemp Fiber (Bast)

When you slice a hemp stalk in half, you will notice a long, string-like band running the length inside. This is hemp’s famous bast fiber, which is nature’s strongest occurring fiber and, when harvested correctly, is actually stronger than steel. The stalk and its fiber can be used to make:

- Clothing
- Construction materials
- Insulation
- Carpeting
- Paneling
- Flooring (stronger than oak!)
- Fiberglass substitute
- Bioplastics
- Batteries
- Bagging, and much more.

2. Hemp Hurd

Hemp hurd is the soft inner core of the hemp plant stem that resembles a woody core. Hemp hurd can be used in essentially two forms: as untreated and unrefined chunks for a wide array of industrial and everyday products like cement, insulation, and fiber board, as well as in pulp form, which can be used to make biodegradable plastics that are more easily broken down and recycled. Hemp hurd is highly absorbent, rich in cellulose, and has great thermal and acoustic properties. Due to these properties, hemp hurd is ideal for use as a naturally occurring and environmentally friendly substitute for:

- Building materials like [hempcrete](#),
- Insulation
- Bioplastics
- Paper absorbent animal bedding
- Biodegradable garden mulch



- Fiber Board
- Compost
- Mortar
- Printing Newsprint
- Cardboard

3. Hemp Seed (Grain)

Hemp seeds are probably the most popular consumer application of hemp because it's so nutritious, with *Medical News Today* [referring](#) to hemp seeds as a superfood. Hemp seeds are regularly compared to other superfoods like flax and chia seeds because they are one of the most nutritious foods available in nature, easily digestible by the body, can independently sustain human's dietary needs, and contain essential fatty acids (Omega-3 and Omega-6) which help maintain our immune system and cholesterol levels. Hemp seeds are typically hulled and can be eaten raw, ground into a meal, made into milk, and are even used to make protein powder.

The seed is mainly used in dietary products but can also be pressed and made into an oil that can be used in a wide array of consumer goods, including:

- Animal feed
- Salad dressing
- Oil Paint
- Varnishes
- Printing ink
- Fuel
- Coatings
- Solvents
- Soaps
- Shampoos
- Lotions
- Balms
- Cosmetics

Is hemp environmentally friendly?

Yes! Industrial hemp has been scientifically proven to absorb more carbon dioxide (CO₂) per hectare than any forest or commercial crop, making it the ideal carbon sink. Further, the CO₂ that is absorbed by the plant is permanently bonded within the fiber that is used for anything from textiles to paper to construction materials. It is currently being used by some of the leading global automakers to replace plastics in car construction and paper manufacturers as an alternative to paper sourced from cutting down forests. Thus, in addition to hemp's incredible CO₂ sequestration properties, it is also an environmentally friendly input product to what would otherwise be sourced from oil or made from clear cutting forests that take decades to regrow. Unlike forests, hemp



can also be constantly replanted and as such meets permanence criteria as defined by the Kyoto Protocol.

Is hemp safe for human consumption?

Yes. In December 2018, the FDA [found](#) that hemp seed-derived ingredients for use in human food—including hemp seed oil, hemp hearts, and hemp protein powder—were considered “Generally Recognized as Safe” (GRAS) for human consumption after careful evaluation. In fact, not only did the FDA approve these products as safe for human consumption, but hemp seeds are considered a superfood[GO1] with immense nutritional value.

Is hemp legal in all 50 states?

Yes and no. While the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) [authorized](#) the production of hemp and removed hemp and hemp seeds from the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) schedule of Controlled Substances, it did not, by itself, change state hemp or hemp-derived cannabidiol (CBD) legality. Although the Senate version would have legalized hemp nationwide, the final 2018 Farm Bill leaves the responsibility to legalize hemp to the states. Thus, although most states have legalized hemp and hemp-derived cannabidiol, each state’s specific rules vary.

Can hemp be legally transported across state lines?

Yes. When the 2018 Farm Bill was signed into law, one of the biggest perceived wins was a provision prohibiting states from interfering with interstate transport or shipment of hemp. Specifically, the 2018 Farm Bill expressly barred any state or tribe from prohibiting “the transportation or shipment of hemp or hemp products produced in accordance with subtitle G of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 (as added by section 10113) through the State or the territory of the Indian Tribe.”

Is hemp used as an animal feed?

Yes and no. While the same nutritional value attributed to hemp for human consumption applies to its use for animal consumption, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not yet fully approved hemp to be sold commercially for use as animal feed federally. Some states like Montana, however, have [taken](#) the step on their own to allow hemp to be used in commercial animal feed, which will open up a new market to hemp growers and processors and help alleviate the [ongoing](#) global animal feed shortage. Delta Ag is actively leading the way with other industry leaders to educate lawmakers at the federal and state levels on hemp’s value for use as animal feed.

Does industrial hemp feed include cannabinoid hemp products?



No. Industrial hemp feed is derived from hemp grain and hemp fiber—the same hemp parts that the FDA deemed safe for human consumption. The hemp by-products recommended for legislative action are intended for use as a nutritional supplement with high-quality components of protein, fat, fiber, vitamins and minerals. These products contain only small amounts of naturally occurring cannabinoids and not additional cannabinoids from extraction or synthesis.

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