



HEMP FOODS...BEYOND THE SOYBEAN

WHAT IS HEMP?

Hemp is Cannabis Sativa, but a different strain than Marijuana. Hemp has been cultivated for thousands of years in temperate climates, Marijuana in tropical climates. Although once thought to be different plants, they are now considered different strains of the same plant. Hemp produces very little T.H.C. (the drug that produces the "high"), Marijuana produces much more.

Hemp fiber has been used for 9,000 years, first in China. Its fiber is used for rope, canvas, clothing, and paper. It is considered the best raw material for these basic commodities, easy to work with and strong. (In fact, the word "canvas" is derived from "cannabis".)

When America's founding fathers planned liberation from England they knew that an independent supply of fiber for paper, ropes, ship sails, and clothing was critical. Therefore they grew Hemp with great enthusiasm. Even the Declaration of Independence was written on Hemp paper, and the first U.S. flags were made of Hemp. Yes, Hemp is as American as Apple Pie, Betsy Ross, and the American Flag!

Hemp can also be used to make paint, lumber, charcoal, lubricants, batting, plastics, fuel, and cooking oil. In fact, Henry Ford once made a car that used Hemp to make body panels and upholstery. Hemp was a significant part of the U.S. and world agriculture and industry, until being caught in the rising tide of manufactured sentiment against its cousin, Marijuana, in 1937.

Hemp can be grown all over North America, and grows especially well where tobacco is now planted. (In our country's early years Kentucky consistently had the tallest Hemp plants.) Hemp roots help control erosion, it has few pests and is very hardy. Paper from hemp requires no dioxin to bleach it (unlike wood paper). "Hemp for Victory" was a World War II campaign to get U.S. farmers to grow Hemp for use in the war effort. The U.S. Department of Agriculture even made an instructional film for farmers growing Hemp. Today, domestic cultivation of Hemp would improve our economy and environment by reducing our need for petroleum, trees, and imported textiles.

Hemp Seeds are high in the essential fatty acids Omega-3 Linolenic Acid and Omega-6 Linoleic Acid, and Super Omega-6 Linoleic Acid, in "Nature's perfect balance" (according to Dr. Udo Erasmus). They also contain 23% complete protein, and 35% fiber. Hemp Seeds make superior bird seed and have been imported for years by seed companies (of course, the seeds must first be sterilized by exposure to 160° F steam for 5 minutes in order to be legal). The seeds contain no T.H.C.

WHAT ARE HEMP FOODS?

Foods made from Hemp are usually snacks that contain whole Hemp Seeds. However, Sharon's Finest of Santa Rosa California, is using the Hemp Seeds in the same way they have used soybeans for 14 years. The firm produces HempRella™ cheese alternative containing 5% milled Hemp Seeds (similar to

their TofuRella® cheese alternative) and Hempeh™ Burger, which is a soybean-and-rice tempeh burger that contains 10% whole Hemp Seeds. The future of Hemp Foods lies in using Hemp Seeds to make an emulsion (analogous to soymilk from the soybean) which can then be used to make milk, yogurt, ice cream, tofu, cheese, meat alternatives, and the like.

Unfortunately, sterilizing them makes Hemp Seeds much harder to work with and reduces nutritional value somewhat.

IF IT'S SO GOOD THEN WHY IS HEMP ILLEGAL?

In 1937 Congress passed the "Marijuana Tax Act" without so much as a roll call vote. The *Virginia Law Review* called the hearings on the matter a "near comic example of dereliction of legislative responsibility." It noted that "no primary empirical evidence was presented about the drug...[only] hearsay and emotional pleas", and that the law "was tied neither to scientific study nor law enforcement need." The prestigious law journal concluded that Congress was "hoodwinked." But why?

Powerful timber and chemical interests had good reason to curtail Hemp, their most formidable competitor. Working with a California newspaper publisher who had lost 22,000 acres of timber land to Marijuana-smoking Mexican Revolutionaries, the fix was in. Fabricated and exaggerated stories were published about the "killer" weed Marijuana, and public sentiment turned. It was then easy to get Congress to ban Cannabis, including both Marijuana, and its innocent cousin Hemp, with nary a whimper from the public (bird seed and paint makers were exempted from the law). Aiding from within the federal bureaucracy was the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, in imminent danger of having its budget slashed. Its director was able to seize the threat of this new drug menace to expand its budget and importance. The dirty deed was done, and not coincidentally soon thereafter Du Pont Chemical Co. introduced new chemicals to replace Hemp in industry, including Nylon. In 1970 Marijuana was made a Schedule I Controlled Substance with "no medical use" whatsoever, unavailable even for legitimate medical use.

In June 1994 President Clinton signed an Executive Order promoting "strategic commodities," including Hemp. This Order makes official the federal government's interest in making viable domestic production of certain commodities that are imported, so that in the event of war or shipping interruptions we won't be caught short of products made from those commodities. The inclusion of Hemp in the Order proves the potential Hemp has for industry.

Today, there is proof Marijuana is very useful in treating a variety of medical conditions, and Hemp fiber and seeds can be used widely and profitably as well. So why are very ill, terminal patients arrested for using medically-indicated Marijuana? And why is it still illegal to use Hemp Seeds if they aren't sterilized, even though viable seeds have no danger of abuse?

MORE INFORMATION

Hemp--Lifeline to the Future by Chris Conrad

Hemp Today by Ed Rosenthal

The Emperor Wears no Clothes by Jack Herer

The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws

