



HEMP FEDERATION IRELAND

PRESS STATEMENT 8 JUNE 2020

### **HFI Statement on Recent Police Raids on the Homes of Irish Consumers of Hemp Products.**

The extraordinary dismantling of Ireland's hemp industry by the Irish government continues at a new level of absurdity as armed Gardai raid the homes of Irish citizens who buy farmed hemp products.

The raids on the homes of Irish consumers are all connected to a single retailer who, on the advice of his solicitor, lodged notice of legal proceedings against Irish Customs and Revenue within the past two weeks. One such raid saw a post graduate business student return home to find his parents being held at their kitchen table by armed Gardai while two more Gardai searched the upstairs bedrooms of their home.

The World Health Organisation has comprehensively advised countries why preparations containing predominantly CBD and not more than 0.2% THC do not fall within the scope of the UN single Convention on Narcotic Drugs. Such products are not drugs, are safe for human consumption, have no abuse and no illegal trade potential, according to the WHO.

On Friday last a delivery by An Post to the home of a single parent who suffers from severe epilepsy was followed minutes later by Gardai with a warrant related to offences under Misuse of Drugs legislation. The woman handed over her purchases to the Gardai who said they would let her off with a warning.

Also in the past week, Enterprise Ireland has introduced a further layer of debilitating restrictions on the Irish industry. Stating that FSAI research justifies its refusal to support this industry, the Enterprise body has now begun refusing local enterprise grants to farmer-processors - in some cases these grants had already been approved. This combined action of state Departments and agencies effectively denies access to EU green CAP funding for Irish hemp farm enterprises and allows the state to avoid ever having to have the conversation about the huge economic, agroecological and environmental potentials of the industry.

Since 2018, and without anything approaching a scientific justification for its actions, the Irish state has, through its Departments and agencies, systematically changed almost every rule and regulation governing the Irish hemp industry so as to transfer it

out of the hands of farmers - all of which was done without any consultation whatsoever with Irish industry stakeholders!

Hemp Federation Ireland whose members include some of Europe's foremost industry experts again calls for the immediate withdrawal of the FSAI Market Survey Report, if the report is not withdrawn then an urgent critical review by a competent independent body is required because the substance of that report does not provide, by even the most rudimentary of measures, a scientific basis for the actions it is currently being used to justify.

Hemp is an agricultural crop with extraordinary environmental and nutritional health benefits, it is a vegetable that contains a tiny trace amount of THC (0.2%) just as poppy seeds contain trace amounts of morphine. And, just as poppy seed is not a dangerous drug, hemp foods and any other products made from hemp are also not.

A very important conversation needs to happen in Ireland, it needs to be allowed to happen now and it needs to involve the whole of Ireland.

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