



HEMP FEDERATION IRELAND

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Press Release

HFI calls on the Irish government to explain why its agencies are engaged in criminalising Ireland's agricultural hemp sector and destroying the livelihoods of Irish farmers and business owners.

Hemp Federation Ireland (HFI) is extremely concerned over the increasingly aggressive nature of recent attacks on the hemp industry following further police raids on Irish hemp businesses.

Hemp is an agricultural crop with no narcotic value.

Supporting and enforcing regulations that suggest otherwise is in total contravention of WHO and UN policy recommendations "to remove hemp completely from all drug scheduling." HFI calls on the Irish government to explain its position on this matter; to stop representing hemp as a banned substance; to acknowledge hemp's relationship to normal agricultural activity, and to remove all new barriers to trade in our industry.

Global Pharmaceutical companies wishing to supply the Irish medical cannabis market have a significant interest in how the Irish state regulates Hemp. Whatever decisions Minister Harris makes in constructing that market will have enormous consequences for our industry. Minister Harris and relevant state authorities have not consulted the Irish hemp industry - only the views of pharmaceutical companies are being considered.

Now, as these negotiations draw to a close - (an announcement on Medicinal Cannabis access is expected shortly) - state agencies have mounted an increasingly aggressive campaign of attacks on our crop and industry. HFI therefore calls on the Department of Health to confirm that its programme to allow for access to medicinal cannabis in Ireland will also protect Irish farmers and the economic, environmental and social potentials of the Irish agricultural hemp sector.

Enormous damage has already been caused to individual businesses and to the Irish hemp industry as a whole by the recent, unexplained actions of state regulators. EU and Global suppliers are refusing to ship products to Ireland, our investments are no longer secure, the profitability of our businesses is being impacted, as is employment in the sector .

HFI also calls on the Irish government to provide our industry with the round table forum we have requested; to acknowledge that current regulatory standards are not robust enough to protect domestic supply chains and Irish consumers - Irish state agencies must work with our industry experts to support Ireland's continued leadership and participation in the rapid expansion of European agricultural hemp markets.

End.

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