



HEMP FEDERATION IRELAND

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PRESS STATEMENT

New day dawns for Ireland's hemp industry as the European Court of Justice declares rules and regulations were unwarranted and unlawful

Hemp Federation Ireland has welcomed the binding ruling of Europe's highest court saying the judgement is a lifeline for Ireland's long established hemp industry. HFI said the EU ruling came just in time to save Irish owned farms and businesses and that a comprehensive recovery package was now required to ensure the survival of the Irish industry.

The national stakeholder body said the ruling of the five court judges is clear and unambiguous:

- Agricultural products with no narcotic value cannot be controlled under the criminal drugs laws of EU member states
- Products which pose no actual risk to human health cannot arbitrarily be declared unsafe by government agencies
- Farmers cannot lawfully be denied access to the full use potentials of their crops
- The legal right of the industry to unrestricted trade in all of its products within the EU is also protected

In 2018, framed in the context of Irish Misuse of Drugs legislation, reports of garda raids on hemp retail outlets first began to appear in the Irish media. In February 2020 the FSAI published a report claiming foods made from hemp were unsafe and dangerous.

According to the CJEU ruling these interventions were without any legal or scientific basis.

Chris Allen, Executive Director Hemp Federation Ireland, said "it is very important that the government is now seen to support Irish industry and any failure on its part to implement this binding EU law would clearly signal the extent of its support for corporate interests over the interests of Irish owned industry and enterprise.

Control of the entire Irish industry, including its crops and all of its products, was transferred to pharmaceutical companies during the earlier lockdown and so clarifications are urgently needed from government Ministers." She said.

"The ruling of the CJEU is important to the Irish hemp industry but it is also important for Ireland's entire SME and farming sectors, as well as for Irish democracy. The European Court of Justice has done its part and now others must do theirs."

Ms Allen said that the Irish government had not consulted the industry representative body over the past two years and national media had never represented its expert views. She said that this situation was unacceptable in a functioning democracy.

Hemp Federation Ireland wrote to Minister Donnelly last Thursday but has not received any response.

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