

The Good Seed Grain Merchants

Why Hemp Seed?

There are three reasons why The Good Seed Grain Merchant has decided to focus on hemp as our crop of choice. These three reasons are:

1. **Hemp Agriculture, if done properly, is very good for the environment.**

The hemp plant does not require any pesticides, herbicides or chemical fertilizers, if the producer uses the correct organic methods.

First of all, hemp grows so fast and is so bushy, that it will crowd out all competing weeds and starves the competition of sunlight. This is the reason that hemp has no use for herbicides, beside the fact that hemp is very sensitive to herbicides and will mutate or die very easily if sprayed with any.

Secondly, the Canadian prairies do not have very many crop pests compared to farms farther south. The only real threatening insect for hemp is the Bertha Armyworm, which will eat the developing seed pods on a hemp plant and lessen the overall yield. To combat this pest, farmers can simply seed small amount of canola in with their hemp and the Bertha Armyworms will eat the canola instead the hemp.

Finally, hemp requires a lot of Nitrogen from the soil. In order to avoid using toxic agricultural fertilizers such as anhydrous ammonia, farmers can plant 'green manure' crops the year prior to the hemp crop. Green manure crops fix nitrogen from the atmosphere naturally, using beneficial microorganisms on their root. When the green manure crop is only about 55 days old, the farmer cultivates the crop down, adding natural nitrogen to the soil for the next year's hemp crop. Beware of misleading advertising within the hemp industry that claims their products are free of pesticides or herbicides. Although this claim may be true, it does not tell what fertilization methods are used. If they are using conventional methods of chemical fertilizers they are definitely unsustainable and are responsible for adding toxic nitrates to the soil and water tables, as well as contributing to the massive nitrous oxide emissions that result from such methods of conventional fertilization.

2. **Hemp Seeds are a nutritionally complete, whole food for humans.**

Hemp seeds are nutritionally complete, offering a source of essential fatty acids and essential amino acids from one single source. Hemp contains Omega 3 & 6 in the perfect balance that humans need to absorb them both fully, as well as containing the rare Omega 9 GLA. Omega Fatty Acids are vital in performing functions such as carrying oxygen throughout the body, expelling toxins, improving circulation, maintaining tissue elasticity, lowering blood pressure and lowering blood cholesterol. Hemp contains Essential Amino Acids, which are the basic building blocks of the protein world. Our bodies use them to build and maintain all the cells in our bodies, from our muscles to our brain cells. In addition to containing all 9 Essential Amino Acids, hemp also contains a healthy protein called Edestin. Edestin is the most easily-digested form of protein, and is the main protein for building enzymes, hormones, blood plasma, hemoglobin, antigens and fibrogin. Hemp contains more edestin protein than any other plant protein in the world.

3. Hemp Seeds are currently one of the only crops grown on the Canadian Prairies that are purchased following Fair Trade principles.

In Canada, grain prices have not changed in over thirty years even though production costs have continued to increase steadily. Grain is bought, sold and measured in bushels, and one bushel contains over 60 lbs of grain. The average price of food grade grain in Canada is 6 dollars per bushel, working out to about 9 cents per pound of food. At this price, for example, a Canadian wheat farmer will earn about 4.5 cents on every loaf of bread baked and sold on the market. That means a farmer has to grow hundreds, if not thousands of acres of land just to make a meager living. The cost of equipment to farm thousands of acres of land is absolutely monumental, with modern tractors, harvesters and seeding machines costing hundreds of thousands of dollars each.

On the other hand, hemp grain is a very new Canadian crop, and has been met with an instant demand. Hemp farmers have been receiving far better prices for their grain since the industry began, with conventional farmers earning 25 dollars per bushel and certified organic farmers earning more than 50 dollars per bushel. Fair Trade principles and prices mean that farmers are paid enough to cover their cost of production and to make a profit for re-investing in their land. For this to work in Canada, farmers have to begin receiving more than cents per pound of food and more dollars per pound of food produced.

At The Good Seed Grain Merchant, all of the grain which we buy from Certified Organic producers has been purchased for 95 cents per pound, working out to 60 dollars per bushel. This is the highest price paid to Canadian farmers for food-grade grain products. Prices like this allow smaller farmers to be successful, as well as giving more opportunities for producers to focus more on sustainable stewardship practices