



COLORADO
Governor Jared Polis



COLORADO
Department of Agriculture

Gov. Polis, Dept. of Agriculture Submit Comments on USDA's Proposed Hemp Rules

DENVER – Gov. Jared Polis and the Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA), in partnership with Attorney General Phil Weiser, today submitted the State's official response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) interim final rule related to the establishment of a Domestic Hemp Production Program.

The comments are reflective of the feedback received from numerous Statewide stakeholders, including farmers, state and local government agencies, law enforcement, and academic institutions. The feedback from the State points to significant concerns with the interim final rule, which include concerns about the negligence threshold for crops that go over the THC limit, overly restrictive disposal requirements, burdensome sampling protocol, and the unnecessary requirement of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) registered labs to test an agricultural crop.

"Colorado is the top state for hemp production, and we are proud of our work to increase good jobs and honored to help the Department of Agriculture figure out what we already know about hemp in Colorado," said Governor Jared Polis. **"We want to unleash this industry to grow and innovate. The proposed interim final rule, as currently written, does not support best practices in hemp production at a critical time in the development of this important industry. The recommended changes we've put forward will support the hemp industry while establishing appropriate guidelines."**

"These regulations are not scalable or easily implemented in a state with a robust hemp industry as large as ours is in Colorado," said Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture Kate Greenberg. **"Small farming operations will have the hardest time complying with these rules and we are working to help ensure all hemp producers in the state can be successful."**

"The USDA's interim final rule for hemp production claims to respect principles of federalism and to allow the 'laboratories of the states' to continue their efforts at innovation. The rule, however, unnecessarily upsets the delicate federal-state balance, trampling on states' ability to develop their hemp industries effectively. Colorado is a leader in hemp cultivation and we need to protect Colorado's regulatory system that enables our local industry to develop and protects consumers in a sound manner," said Attorney General Phil Weiser.

To highlight the economic potential for this new crop, copies of the State's comments were sent to USDA leadership on paper made from hemp grown in Colorado. In addition, the Colorado State Legislature unanimously passed a resolution in support of the State's comments and a [letter of support](#) was sent to the USDA from the majority of Colorado's federal delegation.

As one of the first states in the nation to implement a hemp program, expanding to more than 87,000 registered acres and 2,600 registrations over the last five years, Colorado can provide leadership in the development of the industry and crafting an effective regulatory environment that will allow the industry to flourish in Colorado and beyond.

The Colorado State Hemp Plan will soon follow the comments provided to the interim final rule and the USDA will have 60 days to approve Colorado's plan after it is submitted. The Colorado Department of Agriculture will continue to operate under the current state plan through the 2020 growing season.

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