

# Healthful hemp poised to grow in US

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The U.S. hemp industry has suffered from an association problem. Antidrug officials say distinguishing the plant from its psychoactive cousin, marijuana, is too difficult, so growing it has largely been banned. But the tide could be turning for the nutrient-packed crop thanks to the increasing demand for healthful foods and wider acceptance of marijuana, according to an article in *Chemical & Engineering News* (*C&EN*), the weekly newsmagazine of the American Chemical Society.

Melody M. Bomgardner, a senior editor at C&EN, notes that hemp's nutritional profile is impressive. The seed is 25 percent protein, and contains all nine essential amino acids plus omega-6 and omega-3 fatty acids, which research suggests have health benefits. Its seeds and oil are sold plain or used in granolas, protein bars and other food products, as well as skin creams. But most hemp doesn't come from growers in America. The U.S. gets much of its hemp from Canada, where farmers have been growing it legally since 1998.

However, that reliance on outside sources could change. The 2014 Farm Bill opened a door for states to oversee industrial hemp farms if they were set up for research purposes. Kentucky was the first to take advantage of that opportunity. And, although it could take years for new growers to identify the best varieties for their locations, 20 more states are now working to launch hemp programs.

**More information:** Health Boom Boosts Hemp - [cen.acs.org/articles/93/i46/He ... Poised-Comeback.html](http://cen.acs.org/articles/93/i46/He...Poised-Comeback.html)

Provided by American Chemical Society

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