

HEMP INDUSTRY



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ATTENTION ENTREPRENEURS!

Hemp is a valuable crop, but too few people are making money in the industry. The first step is to stop chasing CBD ... it's a crowded market with falling prices. And while there's a lot to love about hempcrete, for it to really take off, we need to update building codes, train architects and contractors, and grow enough hemp to support the industry. However, there are a number of untapped opportunities to build a new hemp company. You can start by ignoring the flower and focusing on the stems instead. Hemp stems have two parts: the bast on the outside and the hurd (or shiv) on the inside.

PHOTO BY ADOBE

*"HEMP MEET MUSHROOMS,
MUSHROOMS MEET HEMP.
NOW YOU TWO RUN ALONG
AND PLAY TOGETHER."*

WISE FARMERS WILL ADD HEMP TO THEIR CROP ROTATION.

More and more people are enjoying plant-based foods. Mushrooms are front and center, including oyster mushrooms which come in a wide range of colors and shapes. They're easy to grow, at home or at commercial scale, and they digest cellulose. Guess what? Hemp hurd is full of cellulose and oyster mushrooms can be grown on hemp hurd.

The oyster mushrooms you eat are the fruiting part of the plant. The mycelium below the surface can be put to good use. Chipped and shredded hurd can be inoculated with oyster mushroom spawn. The mycelium grows in the hurd and binds it together. This matted material can be

dried and/or pressed and can even be grown in a mold to shape the final product. Whatever you make with it is compostable. It can replace the plastic packaging used to fit irregular shaped objects into boxes or make eco-friendly containers for cremains or coffins, small pots for seedlings, ice chests to replace those horrible foam ones, and the trays at coffeehouses to hold multiple cups of coffee.

HEMP FOR GARDENS AND FARMS ALIKE

Some farmers will grow huge amounts of hemp and only hemp. Monocropping isn't good for the health of the soil and once pests discover big fields, they can wreak havoc.

Wise farmers will add hemp to their crop rotation. Small farms can sell chipped hemp in bulk to attract customers. The more pre-processing done on the farm, the higher the market price.

Peat moss is used as a mulch and in potting soils, but it's a finite resource. Peat bogs are being stripped for this market and the result is disrupting local ecosystems. Hemp fiber can replace peat moss and before you say anything, redwood mulch is no better. It takes years to break down and depletes the nitrogen in your soil while it does.

People are curious about hemp biochar. A quick Google and YouTube search will fill you in about the wonders of biochar, but keep this in mind: Hemp can be used instead of wood. A savvy entrepreneur will charge their hemp biochar by adding fertilizer and inoculants that deliver nutrients slowly over a period of time.

All of these ideas can be done by someone creative enough to put the pieces together. Reach out to your local hemp farmers and ask to play with some of their

"biowaste" – the parts of the plants they're not interested in.

Pick a project or two, read up on what others have done, and play. DIY nights and weekends, work-at-home in your basement/garage/shed type of play. And don't be discouraged.

Keep at it. Invest in your dreams.

The hemp products you make will make the world a better place for all of us.

What better mission statement and publicity can an entrepreneur have?