

Wisconsin Farm Groups: Support changes to federal hemp rule

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MADISON - With the 2018 Farm Bill legalizing industrial hemp across the country, the United States Department of Agriculture opened a comment period for making changes to the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program.

Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation, Wisconsin Hemp Alliance, Wisconsin Hemp Farmers and Manufacturers Association and Wisconsin Farmers Union submitted a letter to USDA outlining the updates needed to make the program workable and practical for Wisconsin growers.

The most worrisome parts of the current rule include:

- Testing facilities - Currently the rule requires all testing to be done at a DEA-registered lab. There is currently only one lab in the state which would cause a severe backlog.
- Compliance monitoring - The hemp crop must be harvested within 15 days of a state or federal official collecting a compliance sample. Considering the unpredictability of weather and other circumstances, this would lead to many challenges.
- Crop destruction - The USDA would destroy any crop found to exceed 0.3% THC leaving no opportunity for non-consumptive or reconditioned use of the crop.

The four groups are hopeful these issues can be addressed and corrected. If the rule was enacted as currently written, there would be little incentive for individual states to implement an industrial hemp program.

The groups would like to thank the Wisconsin Legislature; Congressman Mark Pocan; Congressman Glenn Grothman; and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection for also drawing attention to the changes.

In total, 4,701 comments were submitted to USDA. You can read the [full letter here](#).