



Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska Department of Agriculture Industrial Hemp Program

Industrial Hemp Program Announcement

On Monday January 27th the USDA announced the second round of approvals of State and Tribal plans for the regulation of industrial hemp production. Among those approved were the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, now one of seven Tribes in the United States granted the ability to individually regulate the production of industrial hemp on their reservation. Since the release of the 2018 Farm Bill, in December of 2018, State and Tribal Departments of Agriculture have patiently awaited the release of the interim final rule for the U.S. Domestic Hemp Production Program from the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, which was finally released on Oct. 30th, 2019. After its release the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, in collaboration with the Iowa Tribe Code Committee, the Iowa Tribal Police Department, and Tam Global Consultants, responded with a plan that provided the rules and regulations for how industrial hemp was to be cultivated on their reservation.

The Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska will now be able to finally put into production a plant whose history has had long roots in the local community. Dating back to the early 1900s, industrial hemp was produced for its high quality durable fibers used for the production of textiles and materials such as sail cloth, rope, and clothing. Since then, industrial hemp has evolved to become a plant with thousands of uses across multiple industries from textiles and building materials, to bioplastics and phytocannabinoid medicines. This range of applications has set up industrial hemp to become one of the most important crops of this new decade.

With a resounding approval from the Iowa Tribal Executive Committee, they have begun planning for a diversification of their own croplands to include the production of high-CBD industrial hemp with plans in the future to produce both hemp grain and fiber, as well as processing. The implementation of the industrial hemp program will now allow all farmers within the reservation as well to be able to directly apply with the Tribe's Department of Agriculture for licensure. Applicants can choose between either one-year or three-year license terms starting February 15th, 2020. On February 22nd, a week later, the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska will be hosting a town-hall style meeting to discuss with all farmers and community members what production looks like under their program, and provide some general information on producing this new crop.

Industrial hemp like any other crop has its own unique growth and environmental characteristics and it's important that any farmer new to industrial hemp production be educated on this unique plant, the risks associated with its production, and how they can take advantage of this emerging industry. The Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska plans on being at the front lines of the industrial hemp industry for Native American tribes and will be leading the integration of this plant into their already growing transition towards regenerative agriculture.

For more information on this program and the upcoming event, please send all inquiries to: ITKN.IndustrialHemp.DOA@lowas.org or call 541-225-8316 for more information.

Thank you,

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