



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

[UPDATE, Feb 5: Application Process Now Open for Higher Education and Research Institutions ~ Read and Find Out More]
State releases final regulations for industrial hemp pilot program stemming from O'Mara-Lupardo law approved in 2014

THOMAS F. O'MARA February 5, 2016

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[UPDATE, February 5: Read and find out more from the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, "**State Agriculture Commissioner Announces Application Open for Industrial Hemp Research Pilot Program**"]

Elmira, N.Y., January 15– New York's first legal hemp seeds are set to be planted after the State Department of Agriculture and Markets published the final regulations Wednesday. Ten, three-year licenses will be issued to universities to grow industrial hemp. In turn, the universities will be able to work with local farmers to study methods for growth, harvesting, storage, transportation, and marketing of the crop.

The law (S7047/A9140, Chapter 524 of the Laws of 2014) authorizing the new pilot program was sponsored by State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D-Endwell). Research of industrial hemp by states was permitted as part of the 2014 US Farm Bill (§7606). Preliminary New York State regulations were released last spring. Following a public comment period, revised regulations were released in the fall and were followed by a final opportunity for input from stakeholders.

"The New York Farm Bureau, Cornell University researchers and other agricultural leaders and farm advocates recognize industrial hemp as a potentially lucrative way to provide new economic opportunities and a competitive edge for our farmers," said O'Mara, a member of the Senate Agriculture Committee. "Getting this critical pilot program underway will help New York State start to secure a strong position at the forefront of an industry that can diversify and strengthen our agricultural economy, generate revenue, and create jobs."

"Since the Federal Government opened the door for states to begin researching industrial hemp, we have been waiting to get the licensing process going," said Lupardo. "We know of at least two universities who will be pursuing licenses and have heard from many farmers who are interested in getting involved. This is the first of many steps we'll be taking to develop this new and highly lucrative new crop."

Cornell University and Morrisville State College have already expressed interest in applying for licenses. Licensees will in turn be able to work with farmers to conduct research.

Universities interested in applying for a license should contact Chris Logue, Director for the Division of Plant Industry for the Department of Agriculture and Markets, by calling (518) 457-2087 or emailing christopher.logue@agriculture.ny.gov.

"I am so pleased that the necessary regulatory process is now in place to allow Cornell University, and other research and academic institutions, to apply to become permitted research facilities," said Dean Kathryn J. Boor, the Ronald P. Lynch Dean of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University. "Industrial hemp is a crop with great potential for New York farmers as it has wide-ranging applications throughout multiple sectors of industry, including as a cost-effective animal feed ingredient for the agriculture sector, novel fibers for the textile sector, and multiple new therapies for the pharmaceutical sector. I look forward to our scientists producing thoughtful research on varietal selections and the agronomic needs of industrial hemp in the Empire State. I applaud Senator O'Mara and Assemblywoman Lupardo for their tireless efforts surrounding this issue."

"We are very excited about the prospect of working with Morrisville students and faculty to conduct applied research on industrial hemp" said Mark Justh, owner of J+D Farms in Madison County. "We believe this crop has the potential to stimulate strong economic growth across a broad spectrum of industries to include agriculture, manufacturing, energy and livestock. This research program will go a long way towards providing New York with a competitive advantage before more states across the country follow suit. We look forward to spreading the knowledge we collect to other New York farmers in hopes of establishing the state as a leading producer of industrial hemp and are eager to begin putting seeds in the ground."

"New York Farm Bureau is pleased with the final regulations for the industrial hemp pilot program. The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets worked to provide a sensible, yet responsible approach, with the final outcome at the urging of our members and we

are hopeful the end result will be new economic opportunities for farmers looking to diversify their operations. Assemblywoman Lupardo and Senator O'Mara have been following the process carefully, and New York Farm Bureau appreciates all the work they've done to make this program a reality," said Dean Norton, New York Farm Bureau president.

Both the stalk and seed from hemp can be used in the production of a variety of goods including textiles, building materials, paper, food, body products and environmental products such as biofuels. It is also a source of cannabidiol, the oil used in medical marijuana applications, and is rich in Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids, which gives it numerous health benefits to both humans and animals. In 2012, retail sales from imported hemp products were estimated at \$500 million.