



## Hemp License Applications, Registration Open for 2020 Season

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MADISON – Hemp licensing applications and registrations are available for the 2020 Wisconsin growing season starting Nov. 1, 2019. The deadline for current licensees to renew their registration is March 1, 2020. New licensees can apply at any time during the year.

Wisconsin’s research pilot program requires that anyone who wants to grow or process hemp obtain a license from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, and register their intent to grow or process in the coming season. Hemp can contain no more than 0.3 percent total THC, the psychoactive ingredient present in marijuana.

People who received licenses in 2018 or 2019 will not need a new license, but will need to register if they plan to grow or process in 2020. Anyone who does not already have a license will need to apply for a license and register if they intend to grow or process in 2020. They can do both online, or download printable forms, at <http://datcp.wi.gov>. DATCP will not issue licenses until the application is complete and payment is received. Current licensees must also have paid all sampling fees from the 2019 growing season and submitted their 2019 final production report before their 2020 license will be issued.

“This year we had 1,247 growers and 556 processors who were licensed and registered to be active in 2019,” said Brian Kuhn, Director of DATCP’s Plant Industry Bureau. “Ultimately, about 850 growers reported actually planting a crop, totaling approximately 5,000 acres.”

Kuhn said similar to 2018, the first year for the program, growers in 2019 were plagued by persistent cold and rainy weather during planting season, which likely kept some from getting their crops in. Nevertheless, said Kuhn, DATCP collected about 2,200 hemp samples and certified approximately 1,911 fit for commerce certificates, meaning they met the low-THC requirement.

State law requires that growers and processors pass a background check with no state or federal drug convictions. Growers pay a one-time licensing fee of \$150 to \$1,000, depending on how many acres they intend to plant. Processors also need a one-time license, at no cost. The annual registration fee is \$350 for growers and \$100 for processors. Fees cover a portion of the cost of administering the program.

Growers must also develop a research plan, sign a research agreement, meet other reporting and recordkeeping requirements, and pay to have their crops sampled for THC levels. Hemp varieties that test higher than 0.3% total THC are considered illegal by state and federal law enforcement and will be required to be destroyed by DATCP.

The USDA released its Interim Final Rule for the US Domestic hemp program on October 29. DATCP is reviewing that information to evaluate its potential impact on our hemp growers. During the 2020 growing season, DATCP will continue implementing the existing hemp pilot research program, authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill.

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