

Reasonable rules can avoid a 'shitstorm'

The following are remarks by Daniel Kruse, Board Member, European Industrial Hemp Association before the European Commission's Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed (PAFF), March 12, 2019 – Brussels.

Dear Member States,

Dear Commission!

Thank you for giving EIHA, our association, the opportunity to be in dialog with you, and thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak today.

My name is Daniel Kruse, a board member of the EIHA and a veteran of the hemp business for 26 years.

Due to this hemp business, hard work and good investments I am financially secure and could retire tomorrow. I am telling you this to make it very clear that my personal case is not about more profit. In fact my case is about legality of industrial hemp products, consumers health and a free European market.

Obviously, hemp flower as a vegetable has been farmed, used, processed and consumed for thousands of years. It is one of the oldest crops of mankind.

Obviously, due to 70 years of discrimination and prohibition of all kind of cannabis products including industrial hemp, product developments in the recent years sound new to you – but they are for sure not. Meanwhile just one single part of the worldwide hemp industry, the modern market of hemp extracts and CBD products in North-America, is worth billions of dollars. Since 2011 the North American CBD market has proofed to yield safe and healthy food and food supplements.

Obviously, there have been so called “cowboys” in the very beginning of the market, riding for the fast profit. But meanwhile the market regulated itself.

Three years ago the “CBD boom” crossed over to Europe.

EIHA wants to work with the commission and the member states to have a safe and regulated but successful hemp market in Europe. EIHA wants to ensure the safety of the consumer and at the same time establish a professional European hemp industry. We are not only talking about billions of Euros turnover, we are talking about additional income for farmers and new jobs for the working class. But additionally, we also talk about the political idea of a free European market.

Europe is built on the idea of a united liberal market as well as united liberal people.

I do consider myself a European first, and then a German. I show this by wearing a blue tie every time I come to Brussels – as Mr. Verstraete will confirm.

As a European I urge you to stop the discrimination of industrial hemp and create sound scientific, legally correct and liberal regulations.

The demand for hemp products, hemp extracts and CBD oils is real. The information and knowledge regarding their health benefits is public.

Due to the internet and globalization, the success story of the American hemp industry is known to the European people.

Please take this not only as a forecast but also as a fact: that if we do not find together a sound scientific, reasonable and realistic regulation for our market, the European hemp industry and the European people will find a way to make them hear: By press and media and “shitstorms” louder and more stormy than you have ever heard.

And does Europe really need more unsatisfied people looking at Brussels? I believe we already have enough “exits” and right wing propaganda against the European idea.

Our hemp industry, similar to the natural food and food supplements industry, makes profit by keeping customers healthy. Surely there is an industry out there that makes profits by having sick customers. Hoping that this other industry is not having direct influence on the current discussed regulations, it might create doubts and uncertainty regarding the benefits of our natural products. There might be a conflict of interest.

It is up to you and us to find the legal and correct way to handle hemp products comparable to other food and food supplement products with a similar history to hemp – like valerian, garlic and hops.

I´m sure you will agree that this is in the best interest of Europe!