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Box Elder and Cache's New Cash Crop - THC and CBD



Dr. Bruce Bugbee, professor of crop physiology at Utah State University (USU), standing next to the Cannabis plants he and his team are currently researching to develop best practices for growing hemp in the U.S. He and Dr. Bill Doucette, professor of environmental engineering at the University of Utah, are partnering to learn more about the physical and chemical properties of the plants, now that the State of Utah is allowing them to be grown for various uses. The two universities are doing cutting-edge research on the species that has not been done before in the U.S. (Photo courtesy of ksl.com).

Are farmers now legally growing marijuana in Cache and Box Elder Counties? Well, not exactly. As you have likely heard in the news and from other sources, in December of 2018 the Utah State Legislature passed House Bill 3001, the Utah Medical Cannabis Act. This bill, "...provides for the cultivation, processing, medical recommendation, and patient use of medical cannabis (le.utah.gov)."

Under this new act, cannabis can be grown by producers that are selected by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food as either a medical cannabis or industrial hemp grower. It also provides very specific regulations on the types of plants that can be grown, providing precise limits for cannabinoid compounds which are or are not allowed

to be in the products. Both medical cannabis and industrial hemp are strictly regulated by the state as to who can grow the plants and how they can or cannot be used.

Medical cannabis producers, for example, cultivate a type of cannabis species that has higher levels of THC (greater than 0.03%), a chemical that has psychoactive (mind-altering) effects (cdc.gov, 2019). Medical cannabis is often used to treat nausea, muscle spasms, anxiety, insomnia, and pain, often from MS and cancer treatments under the direction of a physician (healthline.com). Only ten cultivation licenses for medical cannabis are currently allowed in Utah,

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CALENDAR

- **Oct. 21** - Bear River Heritage Area Council mtg. 10 AM @ BRAG Cache County Office.
- **Oct. 25** - Caregiver Burnout Prevention Workshop, 5:30 to 7:30 PM @ the Cache County Senior Center (dinner and education).
- **Nov. 1** - BRAG HEAT program begins. Contact the front office at 435.752.7242 with questions.
- **Nov. 7** - Cache Summit. Bringing people together to discuss the future growth and development of Cache Valley. More info @ cachesummit.com.
- **Nov. 12** - CDGB How to apply mtg. 3 PM @ Box Elder County Courthouse.
- **Nov. 13** - CDGB How to apply mtg. 3 PM @ BRAG Cache County office.
- **Nov. 13** - CDGB How to apply mtg. 7 PM @ Rich County Courthouse.
- **Jan. 23, 24, & 25** - Annual Homeless Point in Time Count. Contact Emily Hart with questions @ 435.752.7242.

BRAG Services



HEAT Program 2019-2020

The HEAT (Home Energy Assistance Target) Program will begin November 1, 2019 and be open through April 30, 2020 or until federal funds are exhausted.

The HEAT Program is a federally funded assistance program designed to help low-income, elderly and disabled households with home energy costs. The benefit amount is based on household income, household size, type of fuel used and energy burden. HEAT benefits are a one-time payment and will help pay a portion of fuel bills over the cold winter months.

Beginning November 1, 2019, residents can call to schedule a HEAT appointment:

- **Cache County Residents:**
(435) 713-1444
- **Box Elder County Residents:**
1-435-723-1116
- **Rich County Residents:**
1-877-772-7242

BRAG Updating the Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan

Over the past few months, BRAG's planning staff have been working on an update of the regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan for Box Elder, Cache, and Rich Counties, and each city and town in those counties.

In accordance with FEMA regulations

and the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000, plans need to be updated every five years and re-adopted by participating communities if they would like to be eligible in the future to apply for federal hazard mitigation funds. BRAG received a grant from the State of Utah to update the plan last year and is about halfway through the planning process.

The plan identifies natural hazards in the region, assesses risks and potential losses to each jurisdiction from those hazards, and documents mitigation strategies for each community to help reduce losses of life and property. FEMA also uses these plans to determine which projects to fund with pre-disaster mitigation grants.

Natural hazards identified in the Bear River Regional plan include:

- Air Quality
- Aluvial Fans
- Avalanche
- Climate Change
- Dam Failure
- Drought
- Geologic Hazards
- Insect
- Infestation/ Plant Disease
- Problem Soils
- Radon
- Severe Weather
- Tornado
- Seiche
- Volcanic
- Wildfire



In August of this year, the Gun Range Fire in Bountiful (above) destroyed three homes, damaged eight others, and threatened about 400 homes total. Flooding and landslides now threaten the community, and similar risks currently exist in our region (Photo courtesy of gephardttdaily.com).

Pre-disaster mitigation grants are available to fund approved mitigation actions in one of the following four categories:

- Local Planning and Regulations
- Structure and Infrastructure Projects
- Natural Systems Protection
- Education and Awareness Programs

Communities can create mitigation strategies that fit into any or all of these four groups. Most of the time, applications for funding are for structure and infrastructure projects, which are very effective for reducing loss to life and property. However, local planning and regulations are a low-cost and very effective way to keep people, structures, and assets out of harms way.

Many communities around the state and country have implemented natural hazards ordinances for reducing losses from flooding, geologic hazards, wildfire, and others. The State of Utah now has some great resources and model ordinances for these hazards. Some are readily available, and others are being created as we speak.

Towards the end of this year, meetings will be held in each county where local elected officials and staff can learn about ways to reduce losses to life and property. They will also have the opportunity to create customized mitigation strategies for their city, town, or county that will be included in the plan and are required in order for FEMA to approve the plan. Details for those meetings will be forthcoming.

For more information or to become more involved in the pre-disaster mitigation planning process, contact Zac Covington at 435.713.1423 or zacc@brag.utah.gov.

Box Elder and Cache's new Cash Crop

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eight of which have already been selected through a rigorous state bidding process. The remaining two spots will remain open until the state decides they are ready to regulate more growers (Salt Lake Tribune, 2019). Four out of the eight companies selected as medical cannabis growers are located in Box Elder County, one of which is Standard Wellness of Utah.* As of September 5th, the other company names have not been publicly disclosed. Following are the eight companies that were selected for growing medical cannabis in Utah:

- Dragonfly Greenhouse
- Harvest of Utah
- Oakbridge Greenhouses
- Standard Wellness of Utah*
- True North of Utah
- Tryke Companies Utah
- Wholesome Ag.
- Zion Cultivars

Recently, Box Elder County Commissioner Jeff Hadfield visited the Standard Wellness medical cannabis facility near Cleveland, Ohio to learn about implications for the development of a new facility near Corinne. The Corinne plant is anticipated to employ between 40 and 50 people when it is running at full capacity. Hadfield noted that the Ohio facility was very clean, low key, and that you could barely tell what it was when viewing it from the street. He said that the facility was run with a high level of security, with fencing and cameras surrounding the property (Box Elder News Journal, 8/28/19).

"It was quite interesting to see how they manipulate the environment for those plants to thrive and get the most out of them. They basically have to document everything,



The Standard Wellness medical cannabis facility in Gibsonburg, Ohio. Box Elder County Commissioner Jeff Hadfield visited the facility earlier this year to better understand what a facility in Box Elder County may look like and how it may operate. The company, which was founded in 2017, grows medical cannabis for residents of Ohio, looking for alternatives to opioids and other pain killers (Photo courtesy of Standard Wellness Company, LLC).

Adidas Bucktown Athletic Shoe (top right), made with a "breathable and lightweight hemp upper... (journeys.com)." More hemp products are being produced and sold world-wide as the hemp industry grows due to recent legalization.



CDB oil (bottom right), is often used for relief from nausea, pain and seizures (canaroza.com). CDB oil is now legally being sold in Utah, and is one of the many products that can be derived from hemp grown by industrial hemp growers in the Bear River Region and throughout the state.



if there's anything left over that needs to be destroyed it's all documented and logged. Their management is involved in everything, and they're very thorough. I was quite impressed with how they run the operation, and how smoothly it's going there (Commissioner Jeff Hadfield as reported to Box Elder News Journal, 8/28/19)."

Medical cannabis is not the only type of cannabis that can now be grown in Utah. Hemp, a cousin to the marijuana plant, is now being grown in the state as well, and is not used for psychoactive affects like those associated with medical marijuana. In fact, the 2018 Farm Bill removed hemp from the definition of marijuana in the Controlled Substance Act (fda.gov). It is a type of cannabis with low values of THC (under 0.3%) which can be used for creating a myriad of useful products.

According to Forbes Magazine, industrial hemp can be used to produce plastic composites, biofuels, health foods, clothing, body care, construction materials, and more. There are already almost two-hundred industrial hemp growers currently registered in the State of Utah, some of which are in the Bear River Region.

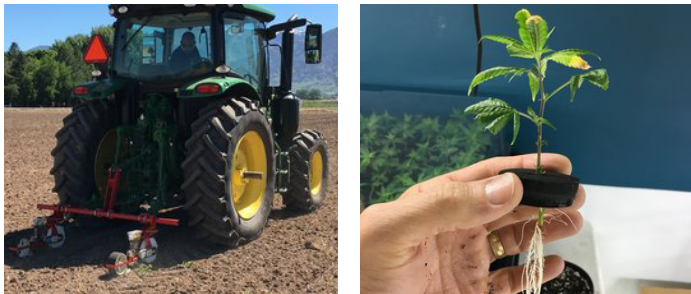
One of the most commonly used products derived from the hemp plant is Cannabidiol (CBD). Use of this extract is growing dramatically in the U.S. since it can now be purchased online without a cannabis license. There are currently no known addictive or psychoactive effects from CBD. According to the World Health Organization, "In humans, CBD exhibits no effects indicative of any abuse or dependence potential.... To date, there is no evidence of public health related problems associated with the use of pure CBD (health.harvard.edu)."

There can be, however, some minor side effects from using CBD, which can include irritability, fatigue, or nausea (health.harvard.edu).

However, there are many people that now use CBD oils and other products to treat a variety of illnesses and other health conditions. The most substantial uses, and the only one currently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), is the use of CBD for treating a rare and severe form of epilepsy.

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Many are seeing health benefits from using CBD and, though not fully endorsing CBD and similar compounds, the FDA states that, "FDA recognizes the potential opportunities that cannabis or cannabis-derived compounds may offer and acknowledge the significant interest in these possibilities (fda.gov)."



Farming equipment (left) and a young cannabis plant (right). Local company Logan Leaf is now farming hemp in Cache Valley and extracting CBD and other compounds for use in various medicinal products (Photos courtesy of Logan Leaf).

At least one of the industrial hemp growers in Utah is located in Cache Valley. Logan Leaf, owned by local entrepreneur Aaron Bishop, is currently growing hemp, producing CBD oil, and selling various products online (loganleaf.com). According to Mr. Bishop, the vast majority of hemp growers are growing it for CBD oil, not for rope, soap, or similar products. CBD oils are believed to have medicinal properties and provide a much higher economic return than other products. The company sets itself apart by advertising the removal of all of the THC from select products, for those clients that may be concerned about failing a drug test, though at less than 0.03%, the THC does not have psychoactive effects.

Informational flyers provided by Mr. Bishop discuss the need for potential buyers to carefully examine the contents of various products on the market, particularly those sold online, to make sure they actually contain the compounds that are advertised.

Likewise, there are many other cannabinoid compounds that can be extracted from the hemp plant, including CBDA, CBN, CBG, CBC, and CBDV. Each of these compounds are thought to have unique medicinal properties by growers and clients for treating problems associated with cancer, sleep issues, pain, mood, epilepsy, and many others (loganleaf.com).

According to the FDA, there are still many questions that need to be answered about cannabidiol products through further research, including long-term effects of taking CBD, what happens if people take multiple types of CBD all at once (such as oil, food, skin cream, etc.), and the effects of CBD on sensitive population groups or animals.

Because the extract is now additionally being marketed as a dietary supplement, which FDA does not regulate, there are no standards or requirements for dosages or repercussions for putting unrelated chemicals in the product. Also, there are no standard dosages from the FDA for CBD since it is fairly new on the market.

With all of the recent discussions and policies surrounding medical cannabis and CBD products, it is critical to be educated about the various types of cannabis and their uses, side effects, and potential for addiction and abuse. While many states in the U.S. have now legalized regulated medical marijuana and hemp farming, as of July of 2019, 11 states and the District of Columbia have legalized small amounts of marijuana for adult recreational use (ncsl.org).

Utah is being very cautious about making sure people understand the facts about recreational marijuana and the potential impacts from using and/or abusing medical marijuana. A brochure created by the Utah Medical Association titled, "Cannabis Educational Information and Resources," lists FDA-approved marijuana products, and includes an outline of what current Utah State law allows. It states that:

"Marijuana is the most widely used illegal substance in America. There is a mismatch between demand for accurate information and availability of scientific knowledge that has created exaggerations and complacent dismissals of the short and long-term risks of using marijuana."

Other facts listed in the brochure (paraphrased):

- Marijuana is addictive and has been linked to serious mental health conditions
- Secondhand exposure to marijuana is comparable to that of tobacco smoke
- There is not a lot of data yet on the correlation between opioid abuse and marijuana use
- Marijuana use during pregnancy can have negative impacts on developing fetuses
- Marijuana use can affect motor skills, leading to potential accidents in the workplace

For more information on cannabis and cannabis production in Utah, visit utahmed.org/cannabis and ag.utah.gov.

CBD vs THC

The Potential Benefits and Side Effects

CBD Cannabidiol	THC Tetrahydrocannabinol
Non-psychoactive	Psycho-active
Neuro-protective	Relaxant
Anti-convulsant	Appetite stimulant
Antioxidant	Drowsiness
Anti-psychotic	Analgesic
Anti-inflammatory	Euphoria
Anti-tumoral	Paranoia
Minimal to no side effects	Anxiety

Potential benefits and side effects related to medicinal use of CBD and THC. It should be noted that THC is potentially addictive, while CBD is not (Graphic courtesy of coloradocannabistours.com).

Roger C. Jones
Executive Director, BRAG

One of our smaller, but important funding sources for BRAG's role as a "Community Action Agency" is the federal Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), about \$254,000 each year to serve low-income individuals and families.

A requirement for receiving these funds is to assess and prioritize the unmet needs of the poverty population. Even though we are experiencing prosperous times in the region, state, and nation with plentiful jobs, low unemployment and rising wages and salaries, there are still many among us experiencing poverty.

Of the estimated 190,000 people who reside in the tri-county region, 13.7% or 23,467 residents, men, women, and children, are living with incomes below the federal poverty level. There are many resources available to address poverty in the region provided by BRAG and many other public and private agencies and churches. A listing of those resources is available at both the BRAG office in Logan or in Perry.

The highest priority needs identified during the needs assessment process were employment and housing. Yes, there are many jobs available but low wages and lack of benefits are a problem. With regard to housing, the lack of affordable rentals and the high cost of homes to purchase were identified as priority needs.

Brigham City is now the Official Location of the Tournament of Champions!



Fans enjoy watching the 2019 pickleball Tournament of Champions in Brigham City, held from August 21-25, 2019. Players from 35 states and eight countries around the world competed, and \$60,000 was given away as prize money for winners of various age and player divisions (Photo courtesy of Box Elder News Journal).

On August 21st, the 2019 Tournament of Champions was held in Brigham City, hosting some of the best pickleball players in the world. "What in the world is pickleball?" you might ask.

Pickleball was created in 1965, and is a sort of hybrid sport that has been described as a combination of tennis, ping pong, and badminton. The paddle is smaller than a tennis racquet, but is stiff and more square, while the ball is similar to a large, plastic wiffle ball about the size of a baseball. It is played on a badminton-sized court which measures twenty by forty-four feet, and includes a unique seven foot "non-volley" zone in front of the net. The game can be played in singles or doubles.

Similar to other racquet sports, the ball is served kitty-corner to the opposite side, and must hit the ground before being played by the other team. The server continues to serve until they "fault" (bad serve). The game is won by the first team to make it to eleven points, and they must win

by at least two points (pickleball.com).

According to pickleballportal.com, in 2016, there were approximately 2.5 million people that played pickleball in the U.S., which is about 0.9% of the population. The average age of pickleball players is 55, but the sport is quickly growing with younger players.

Starting in 2019, the pickleball Tournament of Champions is now managed and promoted by Brigham City. This tournament was the first professional pickleball tournament with a substantial prize pool to be established in the U.S. (bc.utah.com/tournament-of-champions.htm). This tournament is recognized as one of the top three national tournaments in the country. The tournament was streamed live this year.

Brigham City now has seventeen pickleball courts located at Rees Pioneer Park, including a new covered championship court with spectator seating. For more information on pickleball in Brigham City, visit bcutah.org/pickleball-lessons--leagues.

Long-serving Governing Board Members



Rich County Commissioner Bill Cox is a native of Rich County and has served in his elected position for a total of 22 years. In addition to serving the county as an elected official, Bill directs the senior citizen program, is a mail delivery contractor, and a rancher. Bill has served and continues to serve on numerous county, regional, state, and national boards.

Bill and his wife Cay have raised five children on their Rich County ranch and they enjoy sixteen grandchildren.



Rich County Commissioner Norm Weston was born and raised in Rich County and has served as County Commissioner for 23 years. Norm is a part-time brand inspector, lifetime rancher and serves on many county, regional and state boards and councils.

Norm and his wife Debbie have six children and fourteen grandchildren. Two of their sons work full-time on the family ranch in Randolph.



Keirstin Meyer was raised in Northeast Oregon and moved to Utah after graduating from high school. After raising her children, she returned to school and earned her master's degree in gerontology. She has worked for BRAG for the past 3 1/2 years in the Aging Department. Keirstin is very social and stays busy going to concerts, dinner, dances, and other fun activities with friends.



Emily is a new caseworker in the human services department where she has interned for the past year. She graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work this last May from Utah State University and is very excited to be starting her career with BRAG, helping the people of Cache Valley. She is from Salt Lake and likes cooking and playing games.



Adam Chandler just started at BRAG in April. He's been doing government accounting for seven years and looks forward to his future here. When he's not crunching numbers at the office, he enjoys spending time with his wife Angie and their 4 children. His hobbies include spending time on the lake skiing, snowboarding, and conning everyone into thinking he's a farmer.

Please submit articles or ideas to
Karen Merkley at karenm@brag.utah.gov
or call at 435.752.7242



Bear River Association of Governments
170 N. Main
Logan, UT 84321