

## Hemp operation green-lighted for Westmoreland County

KEVIN ZWICK ([MAILTO:GTRCITY@TRIBWEB.COM?SUBJECT=RE: HEMP OPERATION GREEN-LIGHTED FOR WESTMORELAND COUNTY STORY ON TRIBLIVE.COM](mailto:GTRCITY@TRIBWEB.COM?SUBJECT=RE: HEMP OPERATION GREEN-LIGHTED FOR WESTMORELAND COUNTY STORY ON TRIBLIVE.COM)) | Thursday, March 2, 2017, 1:06 p.m.



In this Oct. 5, 2013 photo, Derek Cross, a chef who specializes in cooking with hemp, helps harvest the plant in Springfield, Colo. Although it can't be grown under federal drug law, about two dozen Colorado farmers grew marijuana's non-intoxicating cousin in the summer. This is the first known harvest of the industrial version of *Cannabis sativa* in the U.S. since the late 1950s. (AP Photo/Kristen Wyatt)

A coalition of Westmoreland County farmers, academics and industry officials in April will start growing hemp on a site in South Huntingdon Township.

The group on Thursday received conditional approval for one of 15 industrial hemp research certificates from the state Department of Agriculture. Rep. Eric Nelson, R-Greensburg, who helped spearhead the coalition, said the plan is to prepare the crop for the 2017 growing season.

The hemp will be planted at a site behind Levin Furniture near Interstate 70 on land owned by the Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corp. The University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg will conduct a market analysis study, and Penn State Extension will assist two Hempfield farmers in growing the product.

"From an industrial side, we're looking at the new technologies to process the hemp into unique new forms," including petroleum and textiles, said Matt Mallory, president of Commonwealth Alternatives Medicinal Options (CAMO) in Pittsburgh, which submitted the coalition's application.

---

A long-term goal is to develop infrastructure to make industrial hemp viable for Pennsylvania.

**TRIBLIVE**  
“We import \$600 million worth of hemp products,” he said. “We could be producing these products here. (Industrial hemp) offers farmers new opportunities and creates new jobs in a new industry.”

([HTTP://TRIBLIVE.COM/HOME/](http://triblive.com/home/))

Nelson said the coalition's goal is to create “hemp-crete” for building products as well as high-end horse bedding, food, vitamin supplements and clothing. Other goals for the industrial hemp use include injection molded plastics and a refinery in Derry Township's Porcelain Park, site of the former Westinghouse facility.

Industrial hemp is related to marijuana but has a lower concentration of the psychoactive chemical known as THC. It was commercially grown in the United States until after World War II.

Industrial hemp seeds can produce oil used in food, fuel, paint and personal care products. Plant stalks can be processed into fibers for clothing, insulation and carpeting.

“We still got more work to do,” Nelson said, noting there is an ongoing dispute with the Department of Agriculture over how much of the plant can be used. The bill approved by state lawmakers to start the industrial hemp research program granted authority for full use of the plant, Nelson said. Regulators, however, placed limitations on what parts of the plant can be used over concerns of violating federal law.

“Financially, that makes it less profitable for the farmers,” Nelson said. “We need to clarify we can use the full plant, and we need to increase the allowable acreage to be grown so that we can capitalize on economy of scale.”

Agriculture Department guidelines said the permitted projects should concern “the growth, cultivation or marketing of hemp exclusively for industrial purposes (fiber and seed) and not for the purposes of general commercial activity.”

Kentucky approved 12,800 acres for its industrial hemp program, far more than the 75 acres Pennsylvania approved this year. Each of the 15 projects certified in Pennsylvania can use up to five acres.

“The good thing is there are a significant number of federal grants that Pitt and this group will be able to pursue to bring federal dollars to our district,” Nelson said. “That brings more money, investment and research to Pennsylvania.”

Kevin Zwick is a Tribune-Review staff writer. Reach him at 724-850-2856 or [kzwick@tribweb.com](mailto:kzwick@tribweb.com) (<mailto:kzwick@tribweb.com>).

---

## RELATED CONTENT

### Colorado weighs strategy for guarding against pot crackdown

DENVER — Colorado is considering an unusual strategy to protect its nascent marijuana industry from a potential federal crackdown, even at the expense of hundreds ...

(<http://triblive.com/usworld/world/12118075-74/colorado-weighs-strategy-for-guarding-against-pot-crackdown>)

### Medical pot advocates converge at Pittsburgh conference

Thousands of medical marijuana advocates, among them former NFL players, kicked off Pittsburgh's first-ever medical pot conference Friday at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, ...

(<http://triblive.com/news/healthnow/12218461-74/medical-pot-advocates-converge-at-pittsburgh-conference>)

---

## Around the Web

Ads by Adblade (<http://www.adblade.com>)



(http://reviews.comparisons.org/mortgage/top5\_V2.p  
aff=1443)  
Best & Worst Refinance Mortgage  
Companies of 2017  
(http://reviews.comparisons.org/mortgage/to  
aff=1443)  
Comparisons  
(http://reviews.comparisons.org/mortgage/top5\_V2.p  
aff=1443)

(http://www.earth.com/best-image-  
galleries/dangerous-roads-world/?  
utm\_source=ab&utm\_campaign=dangerous-roads)  
The Most Dangerous Roads In The World  
(http://www.earth.com/best-image-  
galleries/dangerous-roads-world/?  
utm\_source=ab&utm\_campaign=dangerous-roads)  
roads)  
Earth.com (http://www.earth.com/best-image-  
galleries/dangerous-roads-world/?  
utm\_source=ab&utm\_campaign=dangerous-roads)

(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/landers/pa  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display&utm\_c  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
The smartest way to handle \$25,000 or  
more in debt  
(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/l  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
Freedom Debt Relief  
(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/landers/pa  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display&utm\_c  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])



(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/landers/pa  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display&utm\_c  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])

People in Heavy Debt May Be in For a Big  
Surprise  
(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/l  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
Freedom Debt Relief  
(http://www.weeklyfinancialsolutions.com/landers/pa  
settlement.html?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=display&utm\_c  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])



(http://legitfeed.com/10-things-your-nails-are-  
telling-you-about-your-health/?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=referral&utm\_c  
nail-d30&utm\_term=[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
10 Disturbing Things Your Nails Reveal  
About Your Health (http://legitfeed.com/10-  
things-your-nails-are-telling-you-about-  
your-health/?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=referra  
nail-d30&utm\_term=  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
Legit Feed (http://legitfeed.com/10-things-your-  
nails-are-telling-you-about-your-health/?  
utm\_source=adblade&utm\_medium=referral&utm\_c  
nail-d30&utm\_term=[EncodedAdbladeTracker])



(http://omglane.com/2436/?  
utm\_medium=adblade2436d1us1ol&utm\_source=adt  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
When He Rescued It From the Sidewalk,  
He Had No Clue What It Would Become  
(http://omglane.com/2436/?  
utm\_medium=adblade2436d1us1ol&utm\_so  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])  
OMG LANE (http://omglane.com/2436/?  
utm\_medium=adblade2436d1us1ol&utm\_source=adt  
[EncodedAdbladeTracker])

0 Comments

Sort by



Add a comment...

Facebook Comments Plugin

**TribLIVE commenting policy**

f (https://www.facebook.com/triblive)

t (https://twitter.com/triblive)  
(/home/rss/)

@ (https://instagram.com/triblive/)



[\(HTTP://TRIBLIVE.COM/HOME/\)](http://triblive.com/home/)

---

