



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Thomas F. O'Mara

Senate and Assembly host Cornell University 'Hemp Forum' in Albany: Farming, education and government reps, researchers and advocates will discuss strategies to continue growing NY's industrial hemp industry (UPDATED: Watch a replay of today's forum)

THOMAS F. O'MARA May 22, 2018

| ISSUE: **INDUSTRIAL HEMP AGRICULTURE MANUFACTURING**



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**Albany, N.Y., May 22**—State Senator Tom O'Mara (R,C,I-Big Flats) and Assemblywoman Donna Lupardo (D-Endwell) today hosted a legislative “Hemp Forum” that featured experts from Cornell University’s College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, and the university’s Industrial Hemp Plant Breeding Project, leading a panel discussion on the growth, manufacturing, and processing of industrial hemp in New York State.

The forum took place this afternoon in the Legislative Office Building in Albany.

The discussion was led by Dr. Larry Smart and Dr. Christine Smart of Cornell’s Industrial Hemp Research Team. Other panelists include Geoff Palmer, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets; Christopher Logue, Plant Industry Director for the Department of Agriculture and Markets; Jeff Williams, Director of Public Policy for the New York Farm Bureau; NYS Hemp Industry Association President Joy Beckerman; Dr. Jennifer Gilbert Jenkins of Morrisville State College; Marc Privitera, CEO/Principal Engineer of PreProcess, Inc.; and Henry Vincenty, Founder and CEO of Endoca.

The panel addressed a series of topics critical to the ongoing expansion of the industrial hemp industry in New York State, including:

- > legal issues and the ongoing development of appropriate regulatory and statutory frameworks;
- > economic growth and support for emerging industrial hemp processing businesses; and
- > availability of seed and testing facilities.

[A replay of today's entire forum will be available [HERE](#).]

Since 2014, O'Mara and Lupardo have worked closely with Governor Cuomo and his administration to enact new laws and policies that have jump-started the industry's growth in New York State, as well as help secure an economic foothold for state farmers in the nation's burgeoning industrial hemp industry. O'Mara and Lupardo are also members of the state's Industrial Hemp Working Group, established last year as part of a new law they sponsored (**S.6787/A.8509, Chapter 88 of the Laws of 2017**). The group is comprised of researchers and industry leaders, and works to examine and develop policy initiatives, and promotion and marketing opportunities.

**O'Mara, Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee and a member on the Senate Agriculture Committee**, said, "I have valued the opportunity to work in partnership with Assemblywoman Lupardo, Governor Cuomo, legislative colleagues and advocates over the past several years to move New York State to the forefront of a new industry with the potential to diversify our agricultural economy, generate revenue and create jobs. We are moving forward to ensure that the development and growth of the industrial hemp industry will provide valuable new economic opportunities and a competitive edge for farmers and agribusinesses statewide. Now we just need to keep taking the next step and that is the focus of Tuesday's forum."

**Lupardo, a member on the Assembly Committee on Economic Development, Job Creation, Commerce and Industry**, said, "The collaboration between farmers, producers, academia, and government is exactly what we envisioned when we first began working on this topic. These partnerships have already positioned New York State as a national leader in the industrial hemp industry. Tuesday's forum will provide stakeholders with the most updated information about New York's groundbreaking program. I'd like to thank the Governor, Senator O'Mara, and my colleagues for their ongoing support for this new agricultural commodity."

**Christine Smart, Director of the School of Integrative Plant Science at the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Cornell University**, said “Industrial hemp is one of the more exciting emerging crops we’ve seen for New York agriculture. As New York State’s Land Grant university, we’re conducting cutting edge research and providing outreach that will provide hemp growers with valuable tools that are optimized for New York growing conditions and the many possible economic usages for industrial hemp. I truly appreciate the support received for our efforts from New York State.”

Cornell University has identified industrial hemp as a valuable commodity crop. Clothing, consumer products like soap, insulation, and more are made from the plant’s stalks and seeds. Hemp stalk and seed is also used to produce a variety of other goods including textiles, building materials, paper, food and environmental products such as biofuels, as well as being utilized for fiber, hempseed oil, and seed production. It is also a source of cannabidiol, a chemical compound 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. Hemp products generated nearly \$600 million in U.S. sales in 2015.