

# Montana State Hemp Pilot Program

## Hemp Research License Informational Sheet

March 30, 2021

The Hemp Research License application is to seek approval for growing hemp strictly for research purposes. Hemp grown under this license is exempt from routine regulatory THC testing if all conditions are met. This license is required in addition to the standard hemp grower license. In the context of this license, 'research' means "growing hemp in a manner which the resulting hemp may not conform to the USDA guidelines in some manner. This includes but is not limited to the use of a pesticide not approved for hemp, efforts to lower a cultivar's THC level through hybridization, or development of new cultivars which are not from certified seed. Research must be conducted with the intent of improving or expanding upon the genetics and/or cultivation practices of hemp".

Not every person who wants to experiment or conduct research with hemp varieties will require a research license. If a person is interested or believes they require the research license, contact Hemp Program personnel to discuss your operation and plans.

Unlike the Hemp Grower license, the Hemp Research license application process does not require a Stage 2 Planting Report. **Applicants must provide the full list of all research projects planned for implementation during the license year with this application.** Upon approval of this application, eligible applicants will be issued the Hemp Research License so they may purchase seed or live plants, seed or transplant hemp and conduct research throughout the growing/harvesting/processing stage. Additionally, the applicant **must** submit the Annual Research Plant Disposal Report reconciling all plant inventory and listing disposal events. **Any applicant that does not meet the conditions of the Annual Research Plant Disposal Report will forfeit their license and be subject to enforcement actions.**

Hemp research license holders are responsible for:

1. submitting an application for approval of research trials to be conducted, including variety/strain names, inventory of hemp required for each project, project goals, location of research, timeframes of research cycles, and landowner signatures;
2. paying the non-refundable \$500 application fee;
3. conducting hemp research only for the purpose of improving or expanding upon the genetics and/or cultivation practices of hemp and not in pursuit of growing marijuana;
4. their own sampling/testing of each hemp variety or strain to monitor Total THC levels;
5. submitting written request for approval by the department before entering new genetics into a non-research phase and commerce;
6. ensuring all hemp plants and plant parts:
  - will not enter commerce;
  - will not be used for personal use or gain;
  - will only be grown indoors unless granted an exception from the department;

- shall be destroyed when research is complete, other than seed for propagation used for further research and potential future genetics; and
  - must be grown in a separate indoor structure from hemp plants (and any other cannabis) grown under the hemp grower license unless granted an exception from the department;
7. documenting and maintaining complete and accurate records, which may be subject to auditing, associated with the research for a minimum of three years, including but not limited to:
    - the quantity of plants of each variety and strain planted;
    - the growing location(s) of each variety and strain planted;
    - the quantity of plants of each variety and strain destroyed; and
    - research findings;
  8. submitting the Annual Research Plant Disposal form by December 1st, which includes:
    - date and number of plants discarded due to dead, diseased, or culled;
    - date and number of plants destroyed when research is complete; and
    - date and number of plants destroyed due to non-compliance.

The department will not inspect, sample, or test varieties or strains grown under the purview of the research license as a part of its routine regulatory program. However, the department reserves the right to inspect, sample and test any hemp as a result of a complaint or investigation.