

**Mendocino County Department of Agriculture**  
**Industrial Hemp Pilot Program**

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**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) FOR THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO APPLY FOR AN INDUSTRIAL HEMP CULTIVATION  
LICENSE IN MENDOCINO COUNTY**

Proposals submission deadline:

March 26, 2021

by 4PM

All submittals must be submitted electronically to the following address:

[agcomm@mendocinocounty.org](mailto:agcomm@mendocinocounty.org)

For questions call:

Mendocino County Department of Agriculture

(707) 234-6830

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#### **Section 1: Introduction**

The California Industrial Hemp Farming Act (Senate Bill 566, Chapter 398, Statutes of 2013) was signed into law to authorize the production of Industrial Hemp in California. The Act became effective on January 1, 2017, due to a provision in the Adult Use of Marijuana Act (Proposition 64, November 2016).

As directed by this Act, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) has developed a program to administer these new laws. The Mendocino County Industrial Hemp Pilot Program was made possible through the promulgation of the Mendocino County Industrial Hemp Pilot Program Ordinance Chapter 10A.18 and was passed and adopted by the Board of Supervisors on October 20, 2020.

The Mendocino County Ordinance is a pilot program that will run two years. The program requires a license to cultivate industrial hemp in Mendocino County.

This Request for Proposal (RFP) announces the intent of the County of Mendocino to implement an Industrial Hemp Pilot Program that regulates the cultivation of Industrial Hemp in a responsible manner to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Mendocino County and to enforce rules and regulations consistent with the Mendocino County Industrial Hemp Ordinance Chapter 10A.18.

The purpose of the RFP is to invite parties interested in cultivating Industrial Hemp and submit a proposal to be entered into the selection process for obtaining a hemp cultivation license.

Steps in the RFP Process

The County's RFP process to select persons to apply for an Industrial Hemp Cultivation License will occur as follows (see Table 1 for dates and deadlines):

- i. The County of Mendocino publishes the RFP on its website and sends notice to those who have asked to be on the email notification list.
- ii. The Mendocino County Department of Agriculture (MCDA) conducts a mandatory meeting for all those interested in applying for the cultivation license.  
The meeting will address questions and administrative procedures to apply for a license.
- iii. Proposals are evaluated by a County staff team. The evaluations will be supplemented with information from oral interviews and site visits for Proposals that achieve a minimum score (16 points). The County team will include representatives from the Department of Agriculture, the UC Cooperative Extension, the Executive Office and a board member(s) from Mendocino County Board of Supervisors.
- iv. Letters will be sent to applicants selected by the County Staff Team inviting them to apply for an Industrial Hemp Cultivation License.

#### Steps after the RFP Process

Applications will be processed by MCDA in accordance with Mendocino County Code Chapter 10A.18. Selected applicants will fill in, submit all forms required by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and submit payments for fees required by CDFA.

#### Important Notices Regarding the RFP Process

- i Applicant shall provide the following evidence of secured land for hemp cultivation:
  - a. Proof of ownership of property where hemp is to be cultivated or if applicant is leasing land written consent of the owner of the property.
  - b. Property Address
  - c. APN Number(s)
- ii **ZONING DESIGNATION:** The property proposed for Industrial Hemp cultivation shall be no less than ten (10) acres in size and located in a zoning district, which allows row and field crops as a permitted use
- iii **MAP:** area within the parcel (s) to be cultivated. Specify roads, driveways, buildings scale and cardinal direction.

All persons submitting Applicant Proposals must submit all materials electronically by the specified deadlines. No late proposals will be accepted.

## **Section 2: Schedule**

<b>Scheduled Activity</b>	<b>Proposed Date</b>
RFP Release Date	<b>March 15, 2021</b>
Mandatory Applicant Meeting	<b>March 24, 2021</b>
Proposals due	<b>March 26, 2021</b>
Proposals evaluated, ranked and scored by County staff team. Oral Interviews and Site visits (by appointment)	<b>March 26-April 2, 2021</b>
Selected applicants notified	<b>April 5, 2021</b>
Applicants submits all necessary forms and fees before planting Industrial Hemp	<b>April 5-9, 2021</b>

## **Section 3: RFP Instructions**

### Submittal of Proposal

A party must submit a proposal in response to the RFP to the MCDA before the close of the submittal period. All proposals will be reviewed and ranked by a County staff team. Proposals will be scored according to the Scoring Guidelines shown in Table 2 of this RFP.

### Proposal Format:

In order to ensure consistent evaluation of proposal, each proposal must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided below.

A proposal must include the following six sections in the following order:

- 1) COVER LETTER/OWNER QUALIFICATIONS
- 2) LOCATION SUMMARY
- 3) BUSINESS AND OPERATION PLAN
  - a. Business Plan
  - b. Site Plan
  - c. Operation Plan
  - d. Satellite Site Map

- 4) Proposed Industrial Hemp clone cultivar to be used
- 5) Water Source to be used for cultivation
- 6) Contract to sell harvest or intent for harvested hemp
- 7) Pest Management Plan
- 8) Pollen Management Plan

Instructions for Preparing Proposals:

1) Cover letter/Owner Qualification

All proposals must include a cover letter that provides the following information: A description of the business and cultivator qualification in production agriculture.

2) Location Summary

Using GPS Coordinates, County APN Number, cultivation site address, provide a description of the proposed business location in terms of its surroundings, access, neighborhood characteristics as well as a summary of the appropriateness of the location. The summary should identify the nearest sensitive sites such as schools or parks.

3) Business and Operation Plan

The Business Plan should include the proposed clone cultivar to be planted, the source and the amount of acreage to be planted. The water source(s) to be used for irrigation. The information on the contract to sell harvest or intentions of the harvested hemp and any other information describing the security and responsible operation plans of the cultivator with regard to adjacent production agriculture.

4) Pest Management Plan

A Pest Management Plan is an essential to the pilot program to document how the cultivator will confront a pest issue on the hemp. The use of cultural practices and biological control help to mitigate the use approved chemical pesticides. The thoroughness of an applicant's pest management strategy will document the experience and determination of the cultivator to grow hemp in a responsible manner.

5) Pollen Management Plan

In order for Industrial Hemp to be successfully grown for CBD production and for Industrial Hemp cultivators to cultivate near to legal cannabis cultivators, it is essential that the Industrial Hemp Cultivator implement a rigorous Pollen Management Plan to avoid any males in the cultivation site. An applicant must demonstrate their strategy to prevent any male hemp plants from growing in the fields thus preventing pollen from being produced. Pollen in the Industrial Hemp setting can be considered a nuisance and may constitute a violation and possible proposed action and destruction. It is imperative that the cultivator be extremely vigilant of male production and demonstrate to the County staff a

comprehensive strategy on how they will prevent males in the cultivation or rogue males that may be found.

#### **Section 4: Scoring and Selection Process**

The County staff team will use the criteria detailed in the table below to evaluate, score and rank proposals. To be considered eligible to be invited a minimum score of 12 points.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum score 22</b>	<b>Actual score</b>
<b>Distance from permitted cannabis</b>	3	
<b>Quality of surrounding buffers</b>	3	
<b>Established Water Rights</b>	3	
<b>California permitted operator</b>	2	
<b>Pest management plan</b>	2	
<b>Pollen management Plan</b>	4	
<b>Total Score</b>	17	0

#### **Scoring Criteria Explanations:**

Distance from permitted cannabis (pollen):

(Distance in miles)Distance from an applicant's property to that of a permitted cannabis property will be considered weighted scoring criteria. The greater the distance an applicant's hemp cultivation site to the closest property line of a permitted cannabis site, the more points the applicant will earn. The purpose of this weighted scoring system is to put as much distance between the hemp cultivation and a permitted cannabis to prevent accidental cross-pollination to either crop.

Quality of surrounding buffers:

Quality of surrounding buffers adjacent to a hemp cultivation will be considered weighted scoring criteria. This is cross-pollination prevention measure that the applicant must consider when planting in proximity to a permitted cannabis site. The quality and quantity of buffers that applicant chooses to put between their hemp cultivation and a permitted cannabis property, the higher the score the applicant will receive.

Water Source:

The reliability of the water source to irrigate the hemp cultivation will be considered weighted scoring criteria. It is critical that an applicant have a source of water that will irrigate the hemp throughout the growing season with no threat of running low or out of water. Municipal water sources or districts, well water, river-draft, approved spring or trucked-in water will vary in scoring weight.

**California Permitted Operator:**

A California Permitted operator will be considered weighted scoring criteria. The purpose of this criterion is to rate experience of a cultivator and their knowledge of production agriculture based on years of experience. An applicant must verify how many years they have held a California Operator Identification Permit or been registered in a verified Cannabis Program.

**Pest Management Plan:**

A pest management plan will be considered weighted scoring criteria. During the mandatory applicant interview, the applicant must explain to the interview team their strategy to combat any type of pest they may encounter during the hemp cultivation season. The applicant must present an Integrated Management Plan and its individual components in detail.

**Pollen Management Plan:**

A Pollen management plan will be considered weighted scoring criteria. The purpose of the Industrial Hemp Pilot Program is to demonstrate the ability to effectively and successfully cultivate Industrial Hemp in proximity to a permitted cannabis cultivation without cross-pollination. Applicants must demonstrate a method and a plan to avoid any male plants or hermaphrodite-clones from growing in the hemp field. The amount of time and method of inspections the applicant chooses to schedule to keep males from growing in the hemp field will determine a score.

A total score of 17 points is possible. The score needed for an applicant to be invited to the pilot program is 12 points, which is a score that is approximately 70%.