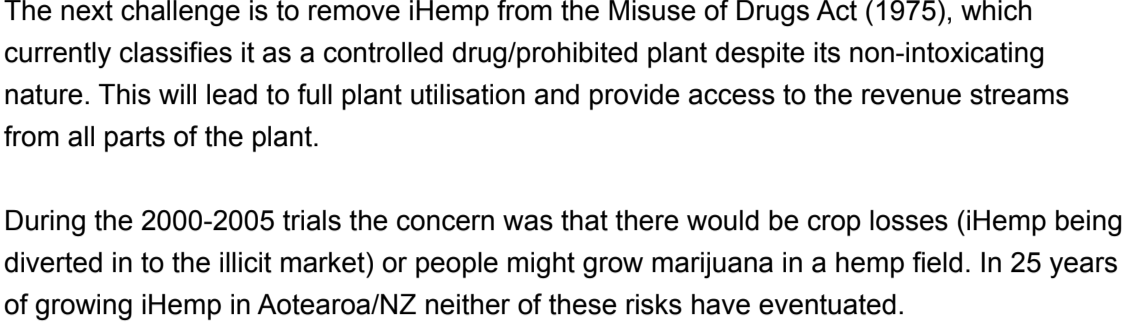
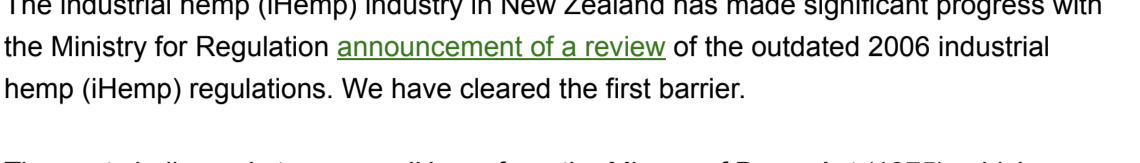


Kia ora,

Welcome to your NZHIA February/March Public newsletter; here's a preview of the news and events in this issue:

IN THIS ISSUE:	UPCOMING EVENTS:	25 - 27 JUNE 2025
• Giant leap forward for iHemp	10 - 12 APRIL 2025	Hemp-Connect Forum
• Government Committee Update or Regulatory Review	NOCO Hemp Expo	La Trobe Institute for Sustainable Agriculture & Food, Melbourne, AUS
• Industrial Hemp's Role in the Bioeconomy	Estes Park, Colorado, USA	
• Historic Milestone: MPs and Officials Visit Aotearoa's Industrial Hemp Fields	26 - 28 MAY 2025	1 - 3 OCTOBER 2025
• Media Campaign Part II - write a letter	E Tipu - The NZ Future Food and Fibre Summit	Cannabis Research Conference (CRC)
• Hemp Connect Forum - Melbourne 25-27 June 2025	Palmerston North, NZ	Colorado State University, USA

We thank our 2025 sponsors:



Giant leap Forward for the iHemp industry

The industrial hemp (iHemp) industry in New Zealand has made significant progress with the Ministry for Regulation [announcement of a review](#) of the outdated 2006 industrial hemp (iHemp) regulations. We have cleared the first barrier.

The next challenge is to remove iHemp from the Misuse of Drugs Act (1975), which currently classifies it as a controlled drug/prohibited plant despite its non-intoxicating nature. This will lead to full plant utilisation and provide access to the revenue streams from all parts of the plant.

During the 2000-2005 trials the concern was that there would be crop losses (iHemp being diverted in to the illicit market) or people might grow marijuana in a hemp field. In 25 years of growing iHemp in Aotearoa/NZ neither of these risks have eventuated.

The government also highlighted the risk of confusion among the public over the legal status of iHemp, that could undermine long-term support for hemp cultivation, resulting in increased or unnecessary controls, costs and lost economic opportunities.

This has happened and highlights a significant challenge for the iHemp industry in New Zealand. Misunderstandings can create barriers to growth and hinder public acceptance. To address this, it's crucial to establish clear legislation that distinguishes low-THC industrial hemp from cannabis products with higher THC content, ensuring that iHemp is recognised as a legal, non-intoxicating, agricultural product.

A public education campaign is essential to clarify the difference between iHemp, medical, and illicit/recreational cannabis. This initiative could involve collaboration between the government and industry stakeholders, focusing on the low-risk nature of industrial hemp, as acknowledged by the Ministry of Health. Providing accurate, evidence-based information will help alleviate public concerns and reduce confusion.

A light (or no) regulatory approach is crucial for the industry's growth, allowing iHemp to thrive domestically and compete in global markets, for nutritious and healthy foods, high quality building materials/composites and the growing demand for naturally occurring (and high value) terpenes, flavonoids and cannabinoids like CBD.

A plant that can feed cloth and house you, should be promoted, the public need to know about healthy eating, living in mold free healthy hempcrete homes. And how their endocannabinoid system can be supplemented from plant based cannabinoids.

Getting out of MODA, would give us a level plating field and access to all parts of the plant, then it will be industries challenge to scale up and ensure their "hemp products" meet international standards and regulations, in local and export markets.

Moving forward, regulatory change, public education to clear legal confusion, product standards/specifications, and international collaborations will be essential. These steps will help the industry navigate barriers and establish a strong global presence, fostering long-term growth and bioregional development in regional Aotearoa/NZ.

So, looking at this way:

- Who: Everyone involved in the bioeconomy, from cottage industry to big business
- What: Full plant utilisation and revenue streams from all parts of the plant
- Where: Aotearoa/New Zealand in collaboration with the worldwide iHemp industry
- When: ASAP
- How: Regulatory change and "enabling" [the industry](#), remove barriers embrace solutions
- Why: We need to tell our story? – see [Part III of our media](#) campaign coming soon!

Government Committee Update

The Ministry For Regulations [announced](#) a review of the industrial hemp regulations on 21 Feb 2025.

The review of New Zealand's industrial hemp (iHemp) regulations presents a significant opportunity for the industry.

Led by the Ministry for Regulations (MFR) and the Ministry of Health (MOH), the review will present reform options to Cabinet, to rejuvenate the iHemp sector and drive economic growth, by addressing over regulation that is stifling economic growth and innovation.

This is particularly important as iHemp over the last 20 years has proven to be low-risk and global markets have moved on, various export markets now accept Low THC iHemp is non-intoxicating and should not be treated as a drug.

Our regulatory approach needs to align with industry's commercial needs.

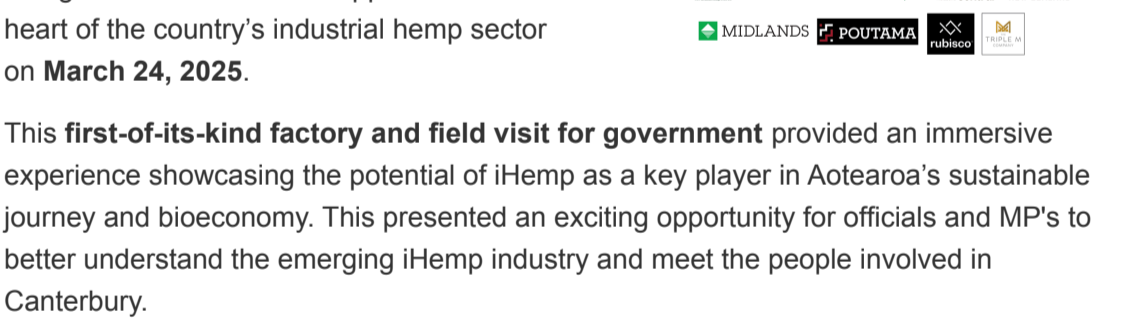
Creating a separate **iHemp-specific act**—could eliminate regulatory uncertainty, stimulate farmer participation, and boost growth in the sector.

Historically, there have been some regulatory adjustments, such as the inclusion of hemp seed foods in the food code in 2018. However, past reviews, including in 2020, revealed that MPI are not keen to take over regulation due to the link with the Misuse of Drugs Act (MoDA). Currently, while MPI supports the industry, they appear to not wish to control it, leaving MOH as the primary regulatory body.

MOH has recognised the low-risk nature of iHemp but remains risk-averse, limiting the industry's commercial potential. As a result, there is a strong push for **bold recommendations** to Cabinet to enable the sector.

Our major aim is to remove iHemp from under the MoDA, as its low THC content does not classify it as a controlled drug and should not be limited by the definition of a CBD product.

The upcoming review offers a chance to reshape the regulatory landscape for iHemp. By moving iHemp out of MoDA and creating a more tailored legislative framework, the industry can thrive, benefiting from increased cultivation in farming rotations, wider market opportunities, and stepping up to play a key role in New Zealand's bioeconomy.



Industrial Hemp's Role in the Bioeconomy – Unlocking Potential for Growth and Innovation

As New Zealand's industrial hemp (iHemp) sector continues to grow, we are seeing increasing recognition of its **potential within the bioeconomy**. By connecting iHemp with other innovative sectors, like biochar, renewable energy, and sustainable/regenerative and organic agriculture, we can unlock significant benefits and accelerate the industry's development.

Industrial hemp has the potential to unite multiple industry sectors, creating a more connected and resilient bioeconomy. While we recognise the vast opportunities iHemp presents—spanning agriculture, the food, fibre and health sectors, and the need for development of primary and secondary tech/processing equipment—the industry remains over regulated and unable to scale in to these industries and export markets.

We are engaged across numerous sectors, regions, and projects, but the scope of possibilities can feel overwhelming. Conversations and actions are happening, with Mayors and MPs being contacted and engaging with the iHemp industry. However, greater unity and coordination are needed to fully unlock the industry's potential.

By joining forces within the broader bioeconomy, we can move forward together—faster and more effectively. Connecting with innovative industries will amplify our collective impact and drive the regulatory support needed to accelerate growth. **Collaboration fosters investment, knowledge-sharing, resilience, sustainability, and greater market opportunities for all.**

Farmers have been advocating for iHemp for years as a valuable rotational crop with economic and environmental benefits. Now, as we branch out and align with the wider bioeconomy, we have the opportunity to transform this industry into a cornerstone of sustainability and innovation.

From cottage industry to big business we can unite the iHemp sector with the broader bioeconomy and other primary producers, we can drive sustainable growth and innovation, create new circular economic opportunities, support biorefineries, and position New Zealand as a leader in the global green bioeconomy.

Let's continue to build momentum and make a lasting impact, and you can help:

- 📍 Register and put your region on the iHemp bioregional development map.
- 🗣️ Let us know what your MP says about iHemp and its role in New Zealand's bioeconomy.

Check out our [media campaign](#); see the bottom of the post for help with your letters to local MP's and mayors.

And share and like the social media posts below.



Historic Milestone: MPs and Officials Visit Aotearoa's Industrial Hemp Fields

In a landmark event, Members of Parliament and government officials stepped into the heart of the country's industrial hemp sector on **March 24, 2025**.

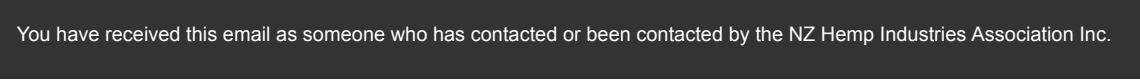
This **first-of-its-kind factory and field visit** for a government provided an immersive experience showcasing the potential of iHemp as a key player in Aotearoa's sustainable journey and bioeconomy. This presented an exciting opportunity for officials and MP's to better understand the emerging iHemp industry and meet the people involved in Canterbury.

This milestone event - coordinated by the NZHIA - marks the first official government factory and field tour dedicated entirely to iHemp.

Hosted across multiple sites, including Rubisco's fibre processing facility, Carrfields' head office in Ashburton, and Hemp NZ's food production plant, the visit offered a comprehensive, hands-on look at the potential of iHemp as a cornerstone of New Zealand's sustainable bioeconomy.

Throughout the day, officials engaged directly with 15 industry representatives from the NZHIA, sponsors, and coalition partners. Conversations focused on regulatory barriers, full-plant utilisation, and the opportunity for iHemp to support economic diversification, environmental regeneration, and rural innovation.

This event could not have happened without the support of our dedicated industry sponsors. Their continued commitment to the NZHIA (along with our members and grassroots industry) and to progressing regulatory change is helping pave the way for a thriving, future-focused hemp economy in Aotearoa.



Media Campaign Part II getting us out of MoDA

Our [3 part media campaign](#) started with Part I, a Call to Action to get iHemp out of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1975 (THC) and Medicines Act 1981 (CBD).

Part II was a call for the regulations to be reviewed. The work the industry did with Ministry For Regulation (MFR) on the [Agricultural and Horticultural Products Regulatory Review](#), the NZHIA presentation to the [Primary Production select Committee in November 2024](#) and all our meetings with MP's have highlighted the need for a review.

The "Hemp Industry Strategic Proposal for Regulatory Change" highlighted and focused on 5 key objectives/barriers, solutions, and targeted outcomes. The proposal was created in collaboration with the Aotearoa Hemp Alliance and the NZ Medicinal Cannabis Council. We thank them for their efforts and support as it shows a true pan-industry approach.

These actions and the effort put in by grass roots and the big businesses involved in the iHemp industry helped focus government attention on the issues, along with the many letters from the Hemp Army, and led to [the review announced by the MFR](#) on Friday 21 Feb.

The Primary Production Select Committee asked for a [briefing from the Ministry of Primary Industries and the Ministry of Health](#). MFR got a word in at minute 27.31. This briefing was held on 20 February, a day before the announcement, and gave great insight into how the Ministries feel about the industry. (It is worth a watch).

With the announcement, we have made a step forward, and as such, [Part II of our media campaign](#) has pivoted from writing to MFR to writing to your local MP/MAYOR, to register your region's interest in an iHemp industry.

This is necessary as [Part III is "the Plan"](#) and we need to know which areas of Aotearoa/New Zealand are interested in having a local iHemp industry.

Register your region's interest in the iHemp industry by writing to your MP or local mayor, and put your local area on the iHemp bioregional development map.

See the bottom of our [Media Campaign II](#) post for details on how we can help you write a letter and please don't forget to cc admin@nzhia.com.

Hemp-Connect Forum 2025: Driving Investment in iHemp Construction

25-27 June 2025, La Trobe Institute for Sustainable Agriculture and Food (LISAF), AgriBio Building, La Trobe University – Melbourne, Australia.

Interested in sustainable building? This event is for you!

Connect and learn from investment-ready iHemp building businesses working with high-performance, carbon-negative iHemp building materials for modern construction.

A key highlight of the Forum will be a comprehensive exploration of the iHemp biomass industry, including hurd (stem pith) and fibre (stem bast), which can be integrated into Australia's building industry to help meet growing demand for carbon-neutral, fire-resistant materials.

Early-bird tickets are on sale now, offering discounted rates for a limited time. This is an opportunity for industry professionals, investors, and innovators, to be part of the iHemp revolution in construction.

For more information, including ticket sales and event details, visit the Hemp-Connect Forum website at [Hemp Connect Forum - Australian Hemp Council](#).

iHemp industry news from Aotearoa and around the Globe.

Country Life: Farmers weed into wellness products

NZHIA Members, Hopefield Hemp, where industrial hemp grows alongside wheat, barley, and peas at Blair and Jody Drysdale's farm in Balfour.

[Read more via RNZ+](#)

GB News	Northern Advocate	WSU Insider
Aldi to stock new 'CBD' pillow that 'can help and improve any sleep' - available for £13	Industrial hemp could be game-changing crop for Far North	New study takes long-term look at how biochar and hemp improve yields, crops
See More +	See More +	Read More +

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- New Zealand Hemp Industries Association -
Promoting the Economic, Environmental, Health and Social Benefits of the NZ Hemp Industry