

Hemp genome-edit startup brings hope for farmers incomes and the climate

A research team developing the UK's first genome edited hemp seed aims to raise £2m to accelerate the development.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, June 19, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Precision Plants](#) is leading hemp innovation in the UK through the research and development of hemp using genome editing technology, CRISPR-CAS9.

Precision Plants is in its third year of research and has already successfully

validated its method to introduce DNA into the hemp genome as well as the process for precise genome editing to improve specific genes in hemp DNA – in order to develop a hemp seed that is stable and grows consistently with certain traits and characteristics ideally suited for UK farmers.

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‘It’s critical that we develop our first genome edited hemp seed faster as farmers are in desperate need of crops that repair farming incomes, improves soil health and sequesters carbon dioxide’

Mark Turner



Mark holding hemp seeds with Charles from Precision Plants

Mark Turner, co-founder of Precision Plants commented;

‘It’s critical that we develop our first genome edited hemp seed faster as farmers are in desperate need of crops that repair farming incomes and achieve regenerative agriculture principles’ developing a superior hemp seed, precision-tailored for UK growing climates with characteristics that optimise hemp fiber for hempcrete and at the same time improves soil health and sequesters up to 22 tonnes of carbon dioxide per hectare each year –

more than any other crop or woodland, meaning that farmers do not need to set aside land for woodland, peat bogs and salt marshes to suck up carbon dioxide – has to be a priority’

Hertfordshire based Precision Plants is well placed to succeed. The founders have previously researched and developed the UK’s best CBD Oil brand, [Bud & Tender](#), giving them unparalleled insight and expertise in hemp. With a forecasted turnover in excess of £700m by 2040, Innovate

UK are providing mentorship along with an illustrious Advisory Board that includes the Chairs of all three UK hemp associations which work closely with the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs: Kyle Esplin - Chair, Scottish Hemp Association, Nathaniel Loxley - Chair, British Hemp Association and Varin Marshall - Chair, Northern Ireland Hemp Association.



The Precision Breeding Act became law in March 2023 receiving Royal Assent from the King. The Act enables the development and marketing of gene edited crops in England and is a major step towards modernising crop breeding.

In April this year the Government announced hemp licensing changes to support farmers to grow hemp as the UK's strategy known as Hemp-30 aims to increase the annual cultivation area by a hundredfold to 80,000 hectares by 2030.

Minister for Crime and Policing, Chris Philp said:

'This government will always seek to reduce unnecessary regulatory burdens placed on businesses so that they can flourish and grow.'

The changes outlined today will help farmers and manufacturers in the UK to fully realise the economic potential offered through the safe and legal cultivation of hemp.'

Minister for Farming, Mark Spencer said:

'Industrial hemp has huge potential across the UK to unlock new revenue streams, expand our bioeconomy without permanently removing land from food production, and bring wider environmental benefits.'

The licensing changes announced today recognise industrial hemp as a field-grown agricultural crop and will enable more farmers to add hemp to their crop rotations, sequester carbon, and sell their harvest to the textile and construction industries.'

Turner commented;

'It's been a terrible year for weather, fields are flooded everywhere and crops wasted however hemp is incredibly versatile, recovering that land very quickly and providing a very valuable end crop. Farms of all sizes can benefit from farming hemp, from small holdings in Somerset to behemoths like Jeremy Clarkson's Diddly Squat Farm.'

The team is now balancing our research work whilst actively seeking the right investment partners’.

PICTURE DETAILS:

On the left: Mark Turner - Chief Innovation Officer

On the right: Charles Clowes - Chief Executive Officer

Charles

Precision Plants

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