

Marijuana sales surge during COVID-19 pandemic

Retailers reporting high sales figures amid shutdown of non-essential businesses

Story and Photos by Luke Whittaker
Coast River Business Journal
lwhittaker@coastriverbusinessjournal.com

PACIFIC COUNTY — Personal care and personal protection equipment have become hot commodities across the U.S., but many are pursuing a decidedly more herbal approach locally.

Marijuana retailers are reporting high sales figures since early March, largely driven by customers buying in bulk amid fears of the spread of the COVID-19 respiratory virus.

“We saw a heavy increase,” said Freedom Market budtender Kathryn Randall. “They were coming for quantity — mostly flower.”

Another marijuana retailer reported a 25% increase in daily sales.

“Volume is way up,” said Mr. Doobees owner H.J. Norris. “Day sales have had the most increase.”

Stores take steps to keep customers safe

Marijuana stores were deemed among the essential businesses in Oregon and Washington permitted to remain open during the on-going shutdown issued by state officials that’s closed many retailers and limited restaurants to takeout and delivery while confirmed cases of COVID-19 have spread across the U.S.

Stores have taken proactive measures to help keep customers safe during the outbreak, including limiting customers inside and offering drive through services. Plastic shields have been erected at checkout counters at several local grocers. Only one customer is permitted in the store at a time at Freedom Market in Ilwaco.

At Mr. Nice Guy in Astoria call-in and drive-through ordering has been incorporated.

Marijuana sales remain strong

The Freedom Market had \$126,791 in sales in February, according to the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board figures, the most of the three recreational marijuana stores in Pacific County.

Freedom Market has had approximately \$5.5 million in sales overall since opening at the Port of Ilwaco in October 2016, the most in the county.

Growers Outlet, in South Bend, had \$76,000 in sales in February and approximately \$4 million overall since April 2015.

Mr. Doobees, in Seaview, has sold approximately \$3 million overall since December 2016.



Marijuana retailers are reporting high sales figures since early March, largely driven by customers buying in bulk amid fears of the spread of the COVID-19 respiratory virus. “We saw a heavy increase,” said Freedom Market budtender Kathryn Randall.



A customer waits outside the Freedom Market recreational marijuana store at the Port of Ilwaco on Monday, March 30. The store is only allowing one customer to enter at a time as a measure to enforce social distancing standards amid the spread of the COVID-19 respiratory virus.



Freedom Market in Ilwaco is only allowing one customer in the store at a time as a way to enforce social distancing standards.



A half-ounce bud of marijuana is pictured at Freedom Market in Ilwaco.

CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL



34963 Hwy 101 Bus. • Astoria
503-325-1562

Q: What are good options for edibles that can be planted now?

A: Choose things that you enjoy eating and will use. Greens of all kinds for salads, onions, kale, Swiss chard for stir fry, soups or sauces; potatoes, tomatoes and peppers along with some easy herbs like parsley or basil. Choose seeds that will mature for you before our first frost, usually around Halloween, depending on the location. Generally, stick with crops that mature in less than 90 days. Growers are having a tough time keeping up with the demand for vegetable starts. This is a very good year to grow your own. If you are gardening with kids, consider a family pumpkin patch! Visit our website's nursery/seed page for a link to our seed starting document. brimsfarmngarden.com.

Brim's Farm & Garden
www.brimsfarmngarden.com



Call me for your Bookkeeping, Organizing, Event Planning, and Management needs!



Luey Anderson
360-777-0074

Practical Accounting and Creative Business Solutions
Serving Pacific County, Washington State