

Say hello to my little friend



(Photo by Christy Solo, Illinois Valley News)

A male rufous hummingbird at a feeder near Trail, Ore. Learn why you could be killing hummingbirds at home with dirty feeders on A-9.

Marijuana growers turning to hemp as CBD extract explodes

“This is a business. You’ve got to adapt, and you’ve got to be a problem-solver.”

Jarrod McCord, Southern Oregon hemp grower

By Gillian Flaccus
Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Ore. (AP) - A glut of legal marijuana is driving Oregon pot prices to rock-bottom levels, prompting some nervous growers to start pivoting to another type of cannabis to make ends meet - one that doesn’t come with a high.

Applications for state licenses to grow hemp - marijuana’s non-intoxicating cousin - have increased more than twentyfold since 2015, making Oregon No. 2 behind Colorado among the 19 states with active hemp cultivation. The rapidly evolving market comes amid skyrocketing demand for a hemp-derived extract called cannabidiol, or CBD, seen by many as a health aid.

In its purified distilled form, CBD oil commands thousands of dollars per kilogram, and farmers can make more than \$100,000 an acre growing hemp plants to produce it. That distillate can also be converted into a crystallized form or powder.

“Word on the street is everybody thinks hemp’s the new gold rush,” Jerrad McCord said, who grows marijuana in southern Oregon and just added 12 acres (5 hectares) of hemp. “This is a business. You’ve got to adapt, and you’ve got to be a problem-solver.”

It’s a problem few predicted when Oregon voters opened the door to legal marijuana four years ago.

The state’s climate is perfect for growing marijuana, and growers produced bumper crops. Under state law, none can leave Oregon. That, coupled with a decision to not cap the number of licenses for growers, has created a surplus.

Oregon’s inventory of marijuana is staggering for a state its size. There are nearly 1 million pounds (450,000 kilograms) of usable flower in the system, and an additional 350,000 pounds (159,000 kilograms)

of marijuana extracts, edibles and tinctures.

“Usable flower” refers to the dried marijuana flower - or bud - that is most commonly associated with marijuana consumption.

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission, which regulates the industry, says some of the inventory of flower goes into extracts, oils and tinctures - which have increased in popularity - but the agency can’t say how much. A comprehensive market study is underway.

Yet the retail price for a gram of pot has fallen about 50 percent since 2015, from \$14 to \$7, according to a report by the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis. Growers and retailers alike have felt the sting.

“Now we’re starting to look at drastic means, like destroying product. At some point, there’s no more storage for it,” Trey Willison said, who switched his operation from marijuana to hemp this season. “Whoever would have thought we’d get to the point of destroying pounds of marijuana?”

That stark prospect is driving more of Oregon’s marijuana entrepreneurs toward hemp, a crop that already has a foothold in states

like Colorado and Kentucky and a lot of buzz in the cannabis industry. In Oregon, the number of hemp licenses increased from 12 in 2015 to 353 as of last week.

Colorado and Washington were the first states to broadly legalize marijuana. Both have seen price drops for marijuana but not as significant as Oregon.

Like marijuana, the hemp plant is a cannabis plant, but it contains less than 0.3 percent of THC, the compound that gives pot its high. Growing industrial hemp is legal under federal law, and the plant can be sold for use in things like fabric, food, seed and building materials.

But the increasing focus in Oregon is the gold-colored CBD oil that has soared in popularity among cannabis connoisseurs and is rapidly going mainstream. At least 50 percent of hemp nationwide is being grown for CBD extraction, and Oregon is riding the crest of that wave, Eric Steenstra said, president of Vote Hemp, a nonpartisan organization that advocates for pro-hemp legislation.

SEE HEMP ON A-9



(Courtesy photo for the Illinois Valley News)

A hemp farm outside of Colorado Springs owned by Peak Hemp.

Grants Pass woman breaks into sheriff’s, starts fires

By Dan Mancuso
IVN Staff

A Grants Pass woman was arrested May 11 for allegedly starting 11 fires in residential areas on the west side of Cave Junction using a road flare.

Evelyn Maxine Barrera, 25, faces 27 separate charges, which include arson, criminal mischief, burglary and reckless burning.

Josephine County Sheriff’s Office (JOCO) was alerted by Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) Battalion Chief Kamron Ismaili late in the evening May 10. According to reports, Ismaili told officers that Barrera was still on the loose after allegedly lighting at least seven fires in and around 520 W. River St. with others on Ollis, Lister and Boundary.

According to witnesses, Barrera was seen in the area of Evergreen Elementary with lit road flares, lighting the fires as she walked.

Earlier in the evening surveillance cameras from the substation reportedly showed Barrera breaking into the

substation using a knife to open the door.

In addition to damaged computer equipment inside the station, a lockbox containing keys and six road flares were missing.

Outside of the substation, law enforcement found a bloodied road flare and a lockbox that was believed to be the same as the one missing from the substation.

On May 11, an Oregon State Police trooper found Barrera on U.S. 199, in the Kerby area and took her into custody. According to reports, keys that had been in the substations lockbox were in Barrera’s possession.

Barrera is listed as homeless, unemployed and no criminal history in Oregon. Her court appearance is set for May 21.



Evelyn Barrera

Humane Society to benefit from Kate’s grand opening

By Laura Mancuso
IVN Editor

Cars for show by the creek with music and BBQ!

This Saturday bring your car to shine by the creek and celebrate the one year anniversary of the new ownership of Kate’s Redwood Bar & Grill.

“We never had a grand opening so this is our ‘grand opening, anniversary and thank you for supporting us’ event!” said Sandy Maust, co-owner.

“People that would like to participate in the car show need to be here around 10 a.m. There is no entry fee and we do have goodie bags complete with dash plaques and trophies for the car participants.”

Not only is there a “Show and Shine” for cars, but there will be live music by Western Express from 3 – 7 p.m. And while you listen to music you can sit in the outdoor beer garden and take advantage of the food specials offered.

“Food specials are going to include handmade burgers with chips for \$5, pulled pork sandwiches for \$5 and all beef hotdogs for \$3.50,” said Maust. “Now that we’ve been in business for one year we know that our barbecue is really driving our business. We have barbecue on the menu at all times but we also run barbecue specials on Wednesdays and lunch and dinner Friday specials.”

Maust expressed that her husband Allan (cook and co-owner) has an award-winning barbecue sauce and at the anniversary event they will be introducing a hot and spicy sauce.

Not only have the Mausts and brother/chef Russ Ammon put time into creating new menu items, they have put a lot of work into their building, inside and out. “We completely painted the outside with help from friends and have updated a few things on the inside too!”

Another way they are celebrating their anniversary is by supporting the Rogue Valley Humane Society. According to Maust they are encouraging attendees to bring animal food to donate. “The Rogue Valley Humane Society will be at our event with a table.”

Kate’s Redwood Bar & Grill is located at 12235 Redwood Hwy in Wonder; open Wednesday – Saturday, 11:30 a.m. – 9 p.m. and Sunday from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.