

World Ag Expo 2002 REPORT
Tulare, California, USA
<http://farmshow.org>
February 12-14, 2002

CAIR - Campaign for Agricultural and Industrial Renewal and the HIA - Hemp Industries Association hosted a booth space at the 2002 World Ag Expo, the largest farm show in the world, on February 12-14th. Contracted at the request and bequest of cotton and wheat farmer Charles Meyer of GCM Farms, the exhibit generated interest in growing industrial hemp as an alternative crop for farmers. People thanked us for being there and asked how to help support hemp. They were invited to buy products and to write their Congressional Representatives asking for Industrial Hemp to be moved under the regulation of the US Dept. of Agriculture. This simple request met with great enthusiasm and concern.

Thanks to those companies who donated product for the demonstrations. We had separate tables for Foods, Body Care, Paper, Textiles, Building/Industrial Materials, and Books/Education. The US Hemp Flag, Declaration of Independence on Hemp Paper, the Vote Hemp Pollock Poster, Hemp Trivia's poster of George Washington - Hemp Farmer, and HIA Posters decorated the backdrop, along with a picture of a Mercedes featuring the hemp parts currently used by 2 million cars in the USA. Time Magazine conveniently published their Hemp article that week, and many had read news about the current DEA regulations issue. Mainstream America knows the difference between hemp and marijuana. I could have sold a hundred hats saying "Warning: Do Not Smoke This Hat!"

We served Humboldt Hemp Food's Oh Mega Chips, and Nutiva Nut Bars. HempNut™ bars and cookies easily convinced the public of the flavorful nutrition of hemp foods. Hemp Oil Canada's toasted hempseeds were displayed, and their coffee was one of the first things to be taken by some overzealous hemp lovers. Other food products shown included: Hempzel's Pretzels, Hempola Salad Dressings, Pancake Mix, and cold pressed organic Prima Hempseed Oil, Alpsnack, Govinda Hemp Bars, Humboldt Hemp Foods Cake Mixes, Ruth's Salad Dressing, Hemp Soda, Nature's Path Waffles and Granola, Cool Hemp non-dairy frozen desserts, and Hogtown Beer. We hope to serve a lot of hemp beer next year!

Thanks to these body care companies' participation - hundreds of Dr. Bronner's Magic Soap Bars, packaged in hemp paper; Hemp House Maui lotion, soap, and bath salts; Hempola soap and lip balms; Azida Sunscreen, lip balm, shampoo and conditioner; The Body Shop hand cream, shampoo and conditioner, and bath buzz ball; Canolio Cosmetiques lotion; Banana Republic Skin Nutrients; Nature's Gate Body Lotion; Alterna Hair Care; Sun Dog Shampoo and Conditioner, and Patchouli Soap; Ohio Hempery Healing Salve; Kaleidoscope Naturals Massage Oil; Earthly Body Hand & Body Lotion; and Prairie Emerald Hand & Body Lotion. All the ladies loved testing all the different lotions and raved about the smooth feel hemp oil adds to these products.

The Paper display was enhanced by Hemp Trivia's wonderful collection of artistic and historical postcards, and notepads. Living Tree Paper's selection of hemp blended papers and professional brochures were popular. Other papers by Ecosource, Crane, and Domtar were also shown.

Textiles are the common product known by most of the public. The hemp/silk tablecloths were a welcome surprise to many who thought of hemp as rope and canvas. A beautiful brochure "Hemp Textiles" supplied by Hemp Traders was a good introduction with a photo of how hemp looks growing. Hemp's bags, an Artisan Gear purse, Pan World Trader's backpack, some HIA t-shirts, Natural Order sox, Island Hempwear shoelaces, and Manastash jacket, an Aware Bear, the Hemp Dragon Puppet by Ida Arts, and Twine samples from E.M.Kenderfono were appreciated by onlookers.

Kenex sent a variety of fiber samples including the non-woven matting used by the automakers for composites. The Hemp Bedding flyers were a hit with the horse set. Ron Holton from Hempcore helped with the booth, talking with the visitors and displaying his skateboard which uses a layer of hemp fabric adding 20% strength. Hemp Fuel and Fiber's newest product, CannabiSorb, was featured. It is an industrial sock filled with hemp core material for absorbing oil spills, etc. Information about BioDiesel Fuels was presented. Samples of Hemp Plastic from Zellform used for guitars, drums and didgeridoos was available. Fiberboard from Hungary and the Roofing Shingle from Wellington Polymer in Canada both worked to get the guys excited. I even brought a piece of adobe made from Sonoma mud and hemp fiber mixed with a bit of cement. Piles of hemp core and fiber cascaded under the CAIR Banner, featuring the old fashioned farm scene logo.

Thanks to Chris Conrad for donating two boxes of books "Hemp, Lifeline to the Future" for distributing to the serious crowd. Many books and videos were on display, and flyers for The Hemp Report. com were popular because it offered data to the farmers curious about yields, pests, and harvesting. HIA Hemp Facts, VoteHemp Flyers for Lobbying, and other printed educational materials were handed out. The HIA hang tags work well for business cards and pens printed with the HIA logo, website and phone number are a great promotional tool.

The HIA is planning to scale this all down into a travelling presentation for libraries and other display opportunities. If you would be interested in hosting or arranging for this to visit your town, let us know. Fees involved would be for shipping. Once developed and ready we will be letting you all know more about the particulars and begin scheduling.

Charles has invited us to come back next year to the Ag World Expo, and plans to donate for the space again. His father grew some hemp as a green crop in the 50's and he remembers having to cut it down for turning into the soil. He hopes to be able to set up some hemp processing facilities in the area in the near future. Many farmers are interested in organizing a local group to facilitate the expansion of the hemp market. All realize the development of the industry will take time, money and dedication. They sure want to grow it!

Respectfully,
Candi Penn
HIA Executive Director
VoteHemp Board Member
CAIR Board Member