

# Hemp Establishment

## Speakers:

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## Objectives:

To demonstrate the impact of following treatments on plant stand of hemp:

- 1- Seeding Depth
- 2- Soil Compaction
- 3- Excess Moisture

**Collaborator:** Hemp Genetics International

## Demonstration Summary:

1. Seeding depth - 0.75"
2. Seeding depth - 1.5"
3. Seeding depth - 2.5"
4. Soil compaction - no compaction
5. Soil compaction – 1 x compaction with mini land roller
6. Soil compaction – 2 x compaction with mini land roller
7. Excess moisture – no excess
8. Excess moisture – 3” prior to emergence

## Demonstration Summary:

When it comes to growing hemp, one of the more top-of-mind risks for producers is crop establishment — how do I grow this crop, and what on earth do I do when it comes to harvesting it?

Jeff Kostuik, director of operations in central Canada and the U.S. for Hemp Genetics International (HGI), says that hemp — that’s been around since 1998 — has been a bit of a rollercoaster ride, as the markets have changed, and different parts of the plant have become available to sell. As the industry has changed and more varieties have become available, interest levels in the crop have soared. “As of August of last year, is when we as farmers became eligible to play in the game of CBD (cannabidiol) and flower. Previous to that, we could take the seed off the field, and we could take the stalk off the field, but all the flower material had to stay on the field. We were essentially missing out on what’s become a billion-dollar industry worldwide,” Kostuik explains to RealAgriculture’s Lyndsey Smith at Crops-A-Palooza in Manitoba. For many that remember hemp in its early days, they remember when the plant would stand up to 12 feet tall in the field, which made harvest a very tricky process.

“Many of those varieties that came from eastern Europe and places across the pond were fibre crops predominately. As we became more knowledgeable with the nutritional benefits of hemp as a food product — thanks to the likes of Manitoba harvest and Fresh Hemp Foods that did a lot of that work with hemp oil — we now know that. And that’s really what’s been driving the industry. ” To accommodate some of the changes in the industry, HGI has begun offering different seed varieties that allow for harvest to flow more efficiently.

“Our breeding program has essentially taken that two-foot large seed head, that was 12 feet in the air before, and have got it that much closer to the ground. So we essentially tried to shorten that crop to increase our harvest index per se, and to minimize combine issues. That along with learning the proper procedures — when to harvest, and what to look for — has really sort of enhanced the grain industry for sure in Canada.” Now that farmers are able to harvest the whole plant, it has created some definite changes in what the harvest pass looks like.

“We’re moving from harvesting the seed or the stalk, which is quite visible — we know how it is, we’ve got machinery and infrastructure in place to do that,” says Kostuik. “Now, we’ve got really small hair-like structures, like the hair of a frogs back, where our CBD, our cannabinoids are located, how in the heck do we harvest those small hairs, and maintain quality, and maintain the actual percentage of CBD. So looking anywhere from chaff collecting, to round-baling the whole plant and extracting, to hand-harvesting, to a number of different methods. “The race essentially is to be the most efficient and cost-effective as possible.”