

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS



Department of Agricultural Resources

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BULLETIN 2020-13

To: Hemp Industry

From: John Lebeaux, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources

Date: April 17, 2020

Re: Hemp, Essential Service Designation

On March 10, 2020, the Baker-Polito Administration declared a state of emergency due to Coronavirus (COVID-19). On March 23rd the Governor issued an order for non-essential services to cease. On March 31st, the Order was extended to May 4th. As part of that announcement, an updated list of what was considered an [essential service](#) was provided. The Department has been receiving inquiries relative to whether the Hemp industry is considered essential. The following stages of Hemp have been inquired about:

- Cultivation
- Processing of raw hemp
- Manufacturing of products

Since the 2018 Farm Bill passed, Hemp is no longer a controlled substance and is considered agriculture. Therefore, the cultivation of Hemp is considered essential under the following descriptions:

- Farmers, farm workers, support service workers, and their supplier employees to include those engaged in producing and harvesting field crops; commodity inspection; fuel ethanol facilities; biodiesel and renewable diesel facilities; storage facilities; and other agricultural inputs.

Processing of raw hemp and manufacturing of products is considered essential under the following descriptions:

- Food manufacturer employees and their supplier employees—to include those employed in food ingredient production and processing facilities; livestock, poultry, seafood slaughter facilities; pet and animal feed processing facilities; human food facilities producing by-products for animal food; beverage production facilities; and the production of food packaging.
- Workers who support sawmills and the manufacture and distribution of fiber and forest products, including, but not limited to timber, paper, and other wood and fiber products.

*Please note that the FDA and MA Department of Public Health have prohibited any food or other consumable products containing CBD. For more information, please visit: www.mass.gov/info-details/cbd-in-food-manufactured-or-sold-in-massachusetts. Hemp products such as hulled hemp seed, hemp seed protein powder, and hemp seed oil are allowed by FDA and MA Department of Public Health.

While this is a very challenging time, please know that the Department is committed to serving its constituents and stakeholders and will continue to work in the most helpful and supportive manner possible. We appreciate your patience and understanding, as together, we navigate this rapidly evolving situation.

If you have any questions about this Bulletin, please contact Sarah Grubin, Hemp Program Coordinator, Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, at Sarah.Grubin@mass.gov.

[COVID-19 Resources for Agriculture](#)