

The Project Green Challenge | 2017

HEMP

DAY 19

GREENER



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"Enormous Health Benefits"

"Cancer Fighting Potential"

"Endless Consumer Possibilities"

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Reflection/Response

Robert shares a personal connection to hemp during his childhood, when he still lived in China:

In the few years I spent living in *Sichuan China*, I always had to detour around this miles-long patch of a “tall useless grass” as I called it, creating such a long and unendurable ride from my house to the nearest city. I have always wondered, Why has nobody ever touched or built on this desolate field?...

...until I saw my grandma sitting on a stool, knitting another blanket for me with some fine material I had never seen before. I asked her where it came from, and she matter-of-factly pointed to the fields past the window, full of that same tall grass. And to my surprise, after knitting everything together, her finished product felt exactly the same to the touch as all my other quilts and sweaters had! Immediately after my realization, I felt an overwhelming amount of gratitude for the fields, for I never expected to be dependent on this “tall useless grass”.

One day that is not so far from us, I and millions of others will be grateful and dependent on this crop; not just for our soft quilts and sweaters, but for much more. It all starts with a movement - a movement that has the power to inspire millions, from farmers to entrepreneurs to lawmakers about the importance of growing hemp: that hemp may be our only feasible way to a sustainable future.

One day in the near future, people will reminisce about a distant past when water was made scarce for their parents by unsustainable steel and cotton manufacturing. Others may recognize paper in the same way we recognize papyrus today. But they are all reassured that the days when humankind distressed over the health of their planet are long gone - buried in the archives of history. But not until they can see where most of their clothing, houses, cars, fertile soil, energy, and a healthy planet can come from, will they be grateful. Until then, the field of tall useless grass is still a long detour.



3 things we learned:

An Efficient Crop

1)

IN TERMS OF LAND USE, HEMP IS A VERY SPACE-EFFICIENT CROP. BY SWITCHING FROM COTTON AND WOOL IN THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY, SIGNIFICANTLY FEWER TREES WILL BE CUT DOWN, AS LESS LAND IS REQUIRED FOR INDUSTRIAL HEMP. HOWEVER, NOT ONLY DOES HEMP CONSERVE TREES: ITS ROOTS ALSO CONSERVE THE SOIL'S FERTILITY. LASTLY, BY SWITCHING TO WATER-EFFICIENT HEMP, THE CLOTHING INDUSTRY WILL DRASTICALLY REDUCE ITS WATER FOOTPRINT WITHOUT SACRIFICE OF QUALITY OR QUANTITY.





3 things (cont.)

Biofuel

2)

HEMP, IF GROWN IN LARGE AMOUNTS, CAN PROVIDE A RENEWABLE SOURCE OF ENERGY FOR MILLIONS. BECAUSE HEMP CAN BE GROWN IN DENSE PACKS, CONSUMES FOUR TIMES MORE CARBON DIOXIDE THAN A NORMAL TREE, AND TAKES ONLY 4 MONTHS TO HARVEST, THIS CROP CAN EASILY BE MASS PRODUCED AND USED FOR BIOMASS COMBUSTION.





3 things (cont.)

Versatility

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3)

HEMP IS MUCH EASIER TO GROW, MORE SUSTAINABLY PRODUCED, AND FAR MORE VERSATILE THAN MANY MATERIALS THAT ARE COMMON TODAY. FOR SOLID STRUCTURES SUCH AS CARS AND BUILDINGS, HEMP FIBERS CAN BE WOVEN INTO TIGHT PATTERNS, FORMING BEAMS AND FRAMES THAT CAN ENDURE LARGE AMOUNTS OF COMPRESSION AND STRAIN. AND IF WOVEN INTO SHEETS, HEMP CAN MAKE CLOTHING THAT IS COMPARABLE IN QUALITY TO COTTON.

