

# HEMP INDUSTRY



Jerry Whiting

## HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU?

**THIS SUMMER has been notable for a number of reasons. While the pandemic has impacted us all one way or another, the story of the year is climate change. Droughts, fires and floods, there's no denying that we've crossed a threshold.**

Some have denied that human activity has shifted the climate at all. Others have tried to ignore it and a few have been sounding the alarm for years, only to have warnings fall on deaf ears. Not any more. Here in the Pacific Northwest, the heat dome killed hundreds of people, millions of sea creatures and ruined millions of dollars of crops.

Moving forward, hiding our heads in the sand isn't an option. While climatologists wring their hands because the headlines contradict their models and projections, all of us – and I do mean all of us – need to take drastic action right now. When I read stories about how to address climate change, hemp doesn't feature prominently – and it should.

Trees breathe carbon dioxide, so why are we cutting them down? We need more trees, not less. Substitute hemp for the wood used for paper, packaging and building materials.

This isn't a new idea by any stretch of the imagination. In the three years I've written this monthly column on hemp, "Pack It Up" in the February 2021 issue garnered the most feedback of all. Consumers should not only look for recycled paper and cardboard, but demand hemp instead.

Wood for construction replaced by hempcrete? We all agree it's a good idea because hempcrete sequesters carbon, as well as saving precious trees.

Some of the roadblocks include updating building codes, educating architects and training construction workers. Yes, it is a tall order, but less daunting than sitting passively while the planet burns and floods.

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Yes, biofuel instead of relying on petroleum. Electric vehicles instead of internal combustion engines. But getting people to abandon their cars and trucks is a small piece of the puzzle – the biggest lifestyle change everyone on the planet can make will be harder than divorcing ourselves from what Marshall McLuan called "The Mechanical Bride."

We need to stop eating so much meat. Why? Because today we're using GMO corn with toxic chemicals to feed livestock that doesn't graze on grass. They're funneled into feedlots, slaughterhouses and processing plants that all pollute both soil and waterways. Methane from cow farts – laugh if you will – are a major source of pollution, too.

The answer? We ALL need to eat plant-based diets. We need to eat lower on the food chain. Agriculture is a destructive activity. Beef isn't a magic food. In fact, eating lots of meat is unhealthy for us as humans, and for the planet as a whole.

Turn off the television ads and set aside old habits. The Impossible Burger and Beyond Meat are options available now. I want to see people buying hemp seeds, hemp oil, hemp flour and other products as ingredients for the meals they make at home. Let's not wait for companies to make finished products, especially if we can make things from scratch ourselves.

The pandemic had many of us making bread, brewing beer and planting gardens. Let's transition our diets to include substantial amounts of hemp foods.

Lastly, the federal government can facilitate this transition via a shift to

hemp – by radically altering the rules and regulations. Fully legalize hemp so that it doesn't require a license to grow or process it.

Treat hemp like any other agricultural crop to accelerate its use. Pot is going to be legal federally sooner rather than later, and in addressing climate change, there's no time for later. Liberate the plant to save the planet. It's hot enough already. Hemp is here to help. Hemp can and must save the planet.