



What Variety of Hemp Should I Grow?

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One of the first things a potential hemp grower must decide is what type of hemp to grow. There are three main types of hemp production: Grain/seed, fiber and CBD. Each uses different seed varieties, equipment and techniques, and end markets, and requires different amounts of land, labor, equipment, nutrients, and weed and pest control. Very briefly, this is what you need to know about each type of hemp crop.

Hemp for grain/seed



These cultivars are slender, and about 5-7 feet tall.

- **Planting time:** Mid-May to mid-June
- **Planting method:** Grain drill, broadcast seeder or corn planter
- **Planting rate:** 25-35 pounds/acre
- **Harvest time:** At maturity, generally 100-120 days after planting; mid-September to mid-October
- **Harvest method:** Regular combine
- **Post-harvest handling:** Clean before storage in a grain bin, where forced air dries the crop
- **Other comments:** Some cultivars may also be harvested for fiber after combining.

Hemp for fiber



These cultivars are very slender, and range from 10 to 18 feet tall.

- **Planting time:** Early May to early June
- **Planting method:** Grain drill or broadcast seeder
- **Planting rate:** 50-70 pounds/acre
- **Harvest time:** Around the time of pollination, generally 45-70 days after planting; mid-July to early August
- **Harvest method:** Mower (sickle or disc mower) and a hay baler (round or large square)
- **Post-harvest handling:** Left to field dry to 15% moisture, then baled
- **Other comments:** Some cultivars may also be harvested for seed, but special harvesting equipment may be necessary.

Hemp for CBD use



These cultivars are very bushy, and may reach heights of 6 to 12 feet.

- **Planting time:** Clones or other starters may be transplanted outdoors by mid-June. Greenhouse-only systems may plant year-round.
- **Planting method:** By hand or by transplanter when using clones or starts.
- **Planting rate:** 800-1,500 plants/acre, spaced 4-6 feet apart.
- **Harvest time:** Female plants grown to near maturity, mid-September to mid-October in fields; greenhouse harvests vary.
- **Harvest method:** Plants are cut by hand and removed from the field.
- **Post-harvest handling:** Dried in drying sheds or warehouse to processor's specifications. After drying, flowers and some leaf materials are removed from stalks, packaged and sent to processor for oil extraction.
- **Other comments:** Only the female plants are used; male plants are terminated once identified.