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COMPANY NEWS

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Sprouts Farmers Market starts selling hemp-THC drinks, even as the segment's future remains cloudy

The specialty grocer will sell the products in 115 stores, though a federal ban is looming



Heather Lalley, Managing editor

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Sprouts Farmers Market will start selling hemp-THC drinks in 115 stores in Texas and Florida. HEATHER LALLEY



Magic Cactus, Nectar, Wynk, Howdy (Texas only) and Nowadays (Florida only).

The move comes less than two months after President Trump signed a federal spending bill that would effectively ban almost all hemp-THC products starting in November.

A Sprouts spokesperson did not comment on the timing of this product rollout or what the grocer plans to do if the federal ban takes effect.

Jake Bullock, who founded hemp-THC company Cann, said in a LinkedIn post that his company and Sprouts representatives first met in a “fly by” meeting on the Expo West trade show floor almost a year ago.

“It is clear that consumers now more than ever want alternative adult beverage options as they prioritize making healthy decisions in their lives,” Bullock wrote Thursday. “These wellness consumers are already shopping at Sprouts and now can easily add a pack of Cann to their cart.”

Phoenix-based Sprouts Farmers Market operated 464 stores in 24 states as of its most-recent quarter.

The specialty grocer is known for catering to shoppers with specific dietary requirements and also for its “treasure-hunt” shopping experience, fueled by frequent new product additions.

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Sprouts joins a growing number of grocers, convenience stores, liquor stores and even big box retailers that are eyeing the sales of potential of hemp-THC drinks.

Last fall, Target said it was testing a selection of hemp-derived THC beverages in a small number of stores in its home state of Minnesota.

In 2022, Minnesota became the first state in the country to legalize the sale of products containing hemp-THC.

What many believe to be a loophole in the 2018 Farm Bill allowed for the nationwide sale of products containing no more than 0.3% hemp-THC by weight. Since then, the segment has grown to an estimated \$28.3 billion industry, with many states passing their own sets of regulations around the products.

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It is scheduled to take effect this November, though a growing coalition of suppliers, retailers and other industry advocates are working to extend the timeline for the ban while urging elected officials to create a set of federal regulations for hemp-THC products.

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Sprouts Farmers Market

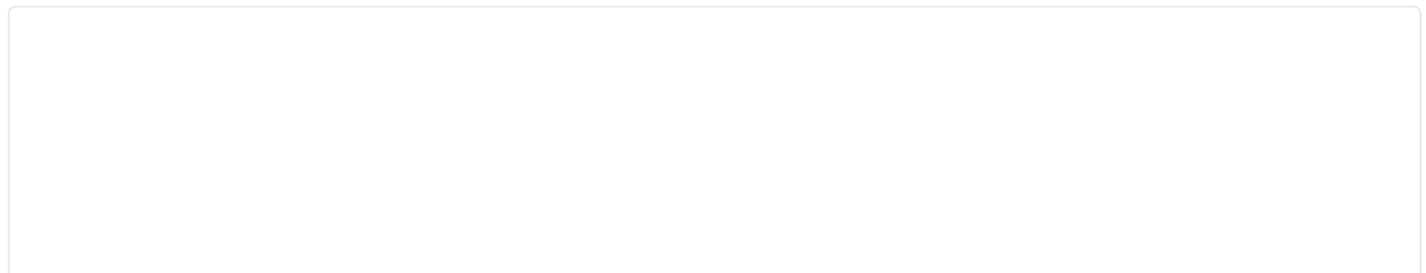
About the Author



Heather Lalley
Managing editor

Heather Lalley is the managing editor of Restaurant Business, Foodservice Director and CSP Daily news. She previously served as editor in chief of Winsight Grocery Business.

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