



South Carolina
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Hugh E. Weathers, Commissioner

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Newly Signed Law Allows For Hemp Program Expansion

(COLUMBIA, S.C.) – Today South Carolina Governor Henry D. McMaster signed into law a bill which expands the number of growers who can participate in the state’s hemp program and the amount of acreage they can grow. The hemp program, administered by the South Carolina Department of Agriculture, and set forth by state law previously only allowed for 40 permits for up to 40 acres each to be issued in 2019.

“I’m excited additional farmers will be given an opportunity to grow hemp in 2019, and I greatly appreciate Governor McMaster’s support of this bill, as we continually seek to grow South Carolina’s largest industry,” said South Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture Hugh Weathers.

Under the new state law, anyone who previously applied for a grower permit for 2019 will now be eligible to grow hemp in South Carolina, so long as they successfully pass a federal and state background check (*“No person who has been convicted of a felony relating to a controlled substance under state or federal law during a ten-year period from the date of his conviction shall be eligible to obtain a license to cultivate, handle, or process hemp”*) and have accurately provided: full name, address, GPS Coordinates of where hemp is being grown and a signed letter of intent with a purchaser. The new law also removes the cap on acreage and allows permitted growers to grow an unlimited number of acres.

“Interest in hemp continues to grow each day and this expansion will help South Carolina become competitive throughout the entire country. Our farmers are very passionate about what they do and we stand ready to assist in growing the state’s hemp industry” said Weathers.

For more information about the Hemp Program, please contact Vanessa Elsalah, 803-734-8339, velsalah@scda.sc.gov or visit agriculture.sc.gov.

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