Industrial Hemp: Crop for the future?

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The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
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Accredited to ISO 17025 by A2LA since 2016
Pesticide Residues, Aflatoxins and Arsenic in Food

Committed to expanding our scope of accreditation to hemp testing in fall of 2020

*Testing this summer followed the same quality management system as our accredited programs*
Agricultural Improvement Act 2018 Definitions

1. Sec. 297A Definitions – “HEMP.—The term ‘hemp’ means the plant Cannabis sativa L. and any part of that plant, including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, with a delta9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of not more than 0.3 percent on a dry weight basis.”

2. Sec. 297B. State and Tribal Plans requires: “a procedure for testing, using postdecarboxylation or other similarly reliable methods, delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration levels of hemp produced in the State or territory of the Indian tribe”

3. Two critical points for testing:
   1. Analysis of THC includes THC-A
   2. Dry weight is not defined

4. Our lab decided to test total delta-9 THC using gas chromatography with flame ionization detection. Testing is quick and easy providing total THC in one step. Testing includes analysis for CBD that includes CBD-A
Method Considerations

• Quick turn around
  • Only two weeks from sample to harvest

• Total delta-9 THC for compliance with farm bill
  • Includes THC-A (new for 2018)

• Report specifies “pass” if <0.3%, or “fail” if >0.3%
  • Decision includes the measurement uncertainty
  • New USDA guidance states MU must be on the report

• Measurement Traceability
  • Is the lab getting the same result regardless of time or analyst?
  • Is the lab getting the same result as other labs?
Overview of Testing

Dry sample overnight in oven at 90 °C
Extract 0.2 grams of sample into 25 grams of methanol
Inject Gas Chromatograph-Flame Ionization Detector
run time is 10 minutes
Measurement Uncertainty
Affected by both accuracy and precision

**Accuracy:** How close a measurement is to the true value

**Precision:** How close two or more measurements are to each other
Quality Control

- Certified reference material with each daily run
- Blank (oregano) with each daily run
- Samples run in duplicate
- Successful completion of Proficiency Testing
Ensuring Accuracy and Precision in our Testing

Ran certified reference material with each batch of samples

Certified value = 0.194%
Lab value = 0.227%

This particular material has an interference resulting in a bias in our result, about 117% of the true value

Same interference noted in about 8% of submitted samples

Standard deviation = 0.019%
95% confidence interval = 0.170% to 0.284%
Proficiency Test Results 2020

Dried hemp from Kentucky

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample ID</th>
<th>True Value</th>
<th>Lab Value</th>
<th>Z-Score (3 to -3)</th>
<th>HorRat(r) (0 to 4.9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample 1</td>
<td>0.284%</td>
<td>0.287%</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample 2</td>
<td>0.136%</td>
<td>0.144%</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample 3</td>
<td>0.300%</td>
<td>0.300%</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample 4</td>
<td>0.0686%</td>
<td>0.0653%</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Z-score is a measure of closeness to the true value (accuracy)
HorRat(r) is a measure of how close the three reported lab values are to each other compared to the expected difference based on data from other labs (precision)

Our lab is getting the same result as other labs
Lockwood Farm Plot

- Grew five varieties:
  - Cherry 307, Cherry 308, Youngsim10 lot “2018WFS1” and Youngsim10 lot “2018WFS17A” and Z-1 (Tried germinating hemp seed purchased on Amazon, but no germination)
- Started from non-feminized seed in greenhouse, planted in field on Friday, June 21, 2019
- 5 Rows spaced 5 feet apart, plants spaced 2 feet apart
- Used black plastic to control weeds within the rows and hose irrigation under the plastic
Lockwood Farm Plot
June 28, 2019

Probably root rot
Lockwood Farm Plot
July 22, 2019

Maybe female??
Lockwood Farm Plot
August 20, 2019

Corn borer
Lockwood Farm Plot
Sept 10, 2019
Lockwood Farm Plot
October 4, 2019
Summary of Growing Experience

1. Youngsim 10 varieties bloomed first beginning around end of July and continuing for about three weeks

2. Started culling males the first week of August, but by then they were in full bloom and loaded with native bees (but not honeybees)

3. The other three varieties started blooming around the second week of August

4. Blooming continued in all varieties until the end of August!

5. The Z-1 variety was about 25% female, others were roughly 50% female

6. Plants subject to corn borer, but also probably viral infection, as well as root rot
Total Delta-9 THC testing Results

Sampling Started August 16 and ended on October 8
Total CBD testing Results

Sampling Started August 16 and ended on October 8
Leaf Material versus Bud Material

Collected on September 7, 2019, dried and separated
Test of Individual Plants

Collected on Sept 30, 2020

Only two of eight plants of the Youngsim10 variety failed the THC test 6.7% and 3.1% THC
High Pressure Liquid Chromatograph (HPLC)

- **Solvents**
- **High Pressure Pump**
- **Column (Separation)**
- **Samples (Injector)**
- **UV and FLD Detectors**
Linearity of Analysis 4 ppm – 100 (300) ppm

Standards of THCA / CBDA and THC / CBD are prepared separately and monitored for degradation.
LC-UV Analysis
Separates THCA and THC

Total THC = Amount of THCA * 0.87% + Amount of THC

delta-9 THC by LC-UV = 6.1%

delta-9 THC by GC-FID = 5.6%

RPD Between Methods = 8.5%

GC-FID Analysis
Converts all THCA to THC

MeOH Soak

Total THC = Amount of THC
Conclusions

- Gas Chromatography with flame ionization detection is a robust method for analysis of total Delta-9 THC
  - Quick sample run time, robust and reliable
  - Virtually no maintenance on the instrument, no down time
  - Results between GC and LC are equivalent

- CBD and THC began to spike around the beginning of September
  - Early testing of THC levels may not be indicative of later test results

- Hemp varieties appear to have higher variability and poorer predictability than other plant varieties
  - Plants look different
  - THC levels different within the variety
  - *Both Youngsim 10 varieties failed the total delta-9 THC testing*

- The lack of definition of “dry weight” may lead to significant differences in test results
  - This is potentially a significant source of difference between test results from different labs
Acknowledgements

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Thank You!!