

The **REAL FACE** of Cannabis Farming



Cannabis farming is the region's
fastest-growing agricultural sector.
Meet the farmers who work the land
and live in our communities.



Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association

A Special Advertising Supplement

FARMERS for FARMERS

Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association represents rights of members

Our region's economy has historically been built on a thriving agricultural industry. But to shape the future of farming here, we'll need to work together to build creative solutions for a changing marketplace.

That's the stance of Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association, a new agribusiness advocacy group representing medical cannabis farmers and businesses in Butte, Glenn, Tehama, Sierra and Yuba counties. The nonprofit's executive director, Jessica MacKenzie, says ICFA's chief concern is to protect the rights of its member farmers, while engaging the community in building a prosperous future for everyone in the region.

ICFA contends that medical cannabis presents a golden opportunity for inland counties. With a series of new state laws legitimizing and regulating the medical cannabis farming industry like any other agricultural crop, the rapid growth of this agricultural sector is only going to accelerate, MacKenzie asserts. Many economic experts agree.

MacKenzie says it's no longer a question of if or when to cultivate cannabis. Instead, the question is: "How do we handle it?"

Medical cannabis farming could bring additional jobs and tax revenue to the region without displacing existing farming sectors. But no inland county currently has a comprehensive set of laws for the licensing, regulating and taxing of legitimate medical cannabis farming and related businesses.

MacKenzie says what holds many back is a persistent, common misconception that the community's cannabis

farmers are the same as rogue growers or black market cartels, who grow illegally on public lands and leave environmental destruction in their wake.

But MacKenzie makes an important distinction between rogue grows and the small, family-owned medical cannabis farms that ICFA represents.

"We have an opportunity to protect small family farms," she says. "We are in agreement that cannabis farming should be legitimate. We want to be treated like any other agricultural crop. That means that we welcome regulation. We understand there should be oversight."

The farmers she represents have a long-term investment in the region and their land. They want to farm openly as law-abiding business owners. A stable, regulated industry will help them prosper and support the greater community.

"What we look for, in a policy sense, is like any other commodity," MacKenzie says. "We look for the ideal intersection between public health and safety, environmental protection, appropriate land use, individual property rights and patients' rights."

MacKenzie believes that coming together to craft common-sense local regulations that benefit legitimate family farmers and the community alike is the best way forward for our region.

"We have an
opportunity to protect
small family farms."

Jessica MacKenzie
*Executive director of Inland Cannabis
Farmers' Association*



Keep reading to learn how cannabis farming impacts the economy and the environment.



WHO ARE THE FARMERS OF ICFA?

The medical cannabis farmers of our region are just that — farmers, according to Jessica MacKenzie of Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association. They create jobs and revenue for the local economy, they send their children to neighborhood schools, and they work to build a future for their families.

They have an enduring investment in, and commitment to, their land and our region. They want to pay taxes to support the community, farm openly in a legitimate and well-regulated industry, and take good care of the environment and their land so it continues to prosper.

Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association invites open community dialogue on cannabis-farming issues and regulations, and welcomes the opportunity to help community members learn more about this growing agricultural sector and the promise it holds for the future of our region.

A Tale of TWO FARMS



Butte County cannabis farmers are
part of community's fabric

At first glance, Thomas Horchler and Alex Lyons may not appear to have much in common. Horchler, 69, is a disabled Marine veteran who has lived mostly in Butte County since 1951. Lyons, 26, moved to Oroville in 2013 after graduating from Indiana University with a degree in business. Both men are cannabis farmers who work hard to legally and responsibly grow medical cannabis for themselves and fellow patients, while remaining active contributors to the community.

While their paths to medical cannabis farming have been different, they both have firsthand experience of the plant's power to help with a range of health issues impacting the body and mind.

Horchler seeks relief for health concerns stemming from his service.

"I brought something back from Vietnam with me that I didn't understand," he says.



For years he had a hard time in public — even a quick trip to the grocery store tested his nerves. In 2001, he saw a doctor because he'd been having trouble walking and was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. His post-traumatic stress disorder was finally diagnosed at that same visit. Horchler found that medical cannabis provided relief from his PTSD symptoms, a life-changing discovery.

"Had it not been for the grace of God that I discovered marijuana, I wouldn't be alive here today," he says. "For whatever reason, it relaxed me. I didn't have the anger in me."

A few years later, Horchler was diagnosed with prostate cancer related to Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam. He uses medical cannabis to treat all three of his ailments.

Alleviating his own pain was not enough; Horchler wanted to help others. He gathered fellow disabled veterans and slowly built a farming collective, first on an eight-acre ranch and later on a larger property outside Oroville. At his farm's peak, he grew medicine for up to 30 veterans.

Lyons has also found relief through medical cannabis. He's experienced depression and anxiety for most of his life. He prefers cannabis to pharmaceutical antidepressants because he has greater control.

"I'd rather medicate organically and naturally," Lyons says.

Plenty of his neighbors agree, so Lyons established an eight-member patient farming collective. Lyons donates his farm's excess crop to Northern California dispensaries, in exchange for covering growing costs. He does not profit from his farm, and runs a side business for income. Lyons is a farmer at heart, with deep family farming roots, and grows organic produce, including oranges and lemons, alongside his medicine.

"I love working with the land," he says. "I love planting a seed and watching it grow."

But in 2015, both farmers lost most of their crop. In November, Horchler's farm was robbed. Since Horchler's father served as a police officer and, later, deputy marshal in Butte County, Horchler respects the law.

"I have an open-door policy [with police]," he says. "I've done everything by the law all the way down the line. We are agricultural people. It doesn't seem right

Top right: Thomas Horchler, 69, is a Vietnam veteran who grows medical cannabis for fellow disabled vets. Bottom left: Alex Lyons, 26, is a cannabis farmer with a small collective in Butte County.



**"Had it not been for
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be alive here today."**

Thomas Horchler
Vietnam veteran and cannabis farmer

that you should be a second-class citizen for growing marijuana."

Lyons' farm fell victim to a new local ordinance that imposed restrictions on the size of cannabis farms, a move that disappointed him. He says he loves Butte County and wants to see it thrive, but may be forced to move on to another county or state that is more supportive of cannabis cultivation.

Sharing the WEALTH



The economic potential of
cannabis in the region

Jeff Pflueger has worked in agriculture production and distribution for more than four decades in Butte County. Now semi-retired, he wants to help grow the county's cannabis industry.



Butte and surrounding counties could be sitting on a gold mine. With the proper regulatory framework, cannabis farming could potentially pump millions of dollars into the region's economy. But without a framework for licensing and taxing medical cannabis farmers, county governments might be leaving much-needed funds for public coffers on the table. Members of Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association are working to change this by engaging with lawmakers to help create a safe, responsible and prosperous industry around the crop.

Pinning down actual numbers on the economics of cannabis is difficult, but the local Sheriff's Office estimates there are upward of 2,500 marijuana gardens in Butte County alone. If accurate, that figure suggests an annual market value of more than \$270 million for Butte; similar numbers are likely in neighboring inland counties.

But a lack of viable regulations that support this growing industry make it hard to guarantee that everyone plays by the rules. New state laws have paved the way toward aligning the regulation of the medical cannabis crop with the rest of the agricultural industry, but some counties have been slow to embrace the shift. Sam Kornell, board member with the association, says they're missing an opportunity.

"If counties can regulate this closely, they can ensure that everyone who is growing and harvesting marijuana is doing so by the book," he says.

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Kornell says he understands the concerns residents and county officials have about whether cannabis is being produced in compliance with local codes and environmental regulations. Farmers and proponents of safe and legal

cannabis farming believe the best approach is to support, not criminalize, the market.

"This industry is developing faster than the government knows what to do," says Jeff Pflueger, a founding member of Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association. Pflueger began growing medical cannabis to treat his pain from a rattlesnake bite in 2005.

With more than four decades of experience in commercial agriculture production and distribution, the Chico resident has ideas on how to make this burgeoning industry successful. He says cannabis should be treated like any other agricultural product. Farmers could help establish grades and standards to ensure fresh, consistent quality. Instead of making cannabis farming a criminal justice issue, he says following existing agricultural models will enable Butte County to better build a legitimate market and reduce crime.

Pflueger worries that the county and the entire state could fall behind on this growing economic opportunity. Colorado, one of four states where recreational use is legal, is projected to have a \$1 billion cannabis industry in 2016.

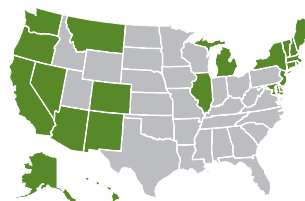
"Us California guys are losing the football game and we're not even getting the chance to put on our uniform," he says.

A GROWTH INDUSTRY

California has a brisk demand for medical cannabis, and our state is home to several regions, including our own, with an ideal climate for cannabis farming. Here is a look at the economic impact of this booming agricultural sector in California and the nation.

**Cannabis is the
fastest-
growing
industry
in the nation,**
according to ArcView
Market Research.

Medical cannabis is **legal in 23 states**, including California; recreational cannabis is permitted in four states and the District of Columbia.



Californians made up nearly
50%
of cannabis sales
nationally in 2014.

In the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the state of Colorado collected more than

**\$31.4
million**

in retail cannabis sales tax, up from \$17.9 million in the previous year.

Small Farms Make a **BIG DIFFERENCE**



Local businesses help
keep local communities
in the black

Judith Schreuder is a deeply compassionate person. With a background in nursing and social work, she has seen firsthand how medical cannabis can effect positive changes in the lives of patients suffering from epilepsy, cancer, AIDS and other chronic, and often painful, conditions.

“People don’t have a clue what these [patients] go through,” she says. “I met patients who would come with boxes full of pills and ask, ‘Isn’t there something else?’ So I started experimenting with cannabis.”

In 2012, Schreuder founded Dutch Farms Organics, a wholesale company that provides medicinal cannabis and products, such as tinctures and balms, to dispensaries. Her products, which she often donates, go to help patients in hospice, the elderly, and even children with severe epilepsy. Schreuder is hands-on in every aspect of the business, from manufacturing to delivering the products.

According to Sam Kornell, Inland Cannabis Farmers’ Association board member, Dutch Farms Organics’ small

business model, which is typical in the industry, tends to spread the wealth locally. Not only do small cannabis farms supply coffers by paying sales and property taxes, but unlike large corporations, small business owners usually do business with other local businesses.

“Cannabis is one of the few remaining industries in America that is dominated virtually entirely by small-holder producers.”

Sam Kornell
Inland Cannabis Farmers’ Association board member

counties can do to protect the ability of small, ordinary families to make a decent living is to allow them to responsibly cultivate their crop and bring it to market while abiding by the law.”

“Cannabis is one of the few remaining industries in America that is dominated virtually entirely by small-holder producers — ordinary, independent Americans working to support their families,” Kornell says. “But corporate interest in the industry is growing very rapidly, and you need fewer people to run a large corporate farm than you do a series of small, independently owned farms. Consequently, you’re looking at less employment, lower wages, and more money going to the very top and not staying local. What

As a small business owner, Judith Schreuder, founder and CEO of Dutch Farms Organics, is hands-on in every aspect of the production, packaging and sales of her farm’s products. A majority of the income from her business, including taxes, goes right back into the local economy.



BOOMING LOCAL AG BUSINESS



Cannabis farming is one of the country’s fastest-growing industries. In 2014, cannabis sales hit \$2.7 billion, half of which was in California alone. By 2019, it’s projected to reach \$11 billion. Harnessed effectively, the industry could be a boon to those that choose to lay effective regulatory groundwork now. Counties have a unique opportunity to support small cannabis businesses and farms, which tend to keep their spending local and keep good standing in the community.

“As in all industries, early adopters enjoy economic benefits by being first to market,” says Sam Kornell, Inland Cannabis Farmers’ Association board member. “If you do have responsible rules and local cannabis farmers know what to expect, they’ll be happy to set up shop in your county, abide by those rules and make money for themselves, your tax coffers and the community at large.”

Environmentally CONSCIOUS CROPS



Cannabis farmers welcome regulations

CANNABIS: SUSTAINABLE & WATER-FRIENDLY



Cannabis is ideally suited to our region's Mediterranean climate. Long, hot and dry summers lend themselves to high crop yields with relatively low water usage.



Outdoor, sun-grown cannabis plants are a sustainable and carbon-sequestering crop.



A mature cannabis plant requires on average **5 gallons** of water a day.

The average California family consumes **360 gallons** of water a day.



In 2015, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board created environmental regulatory guidelines for cannabis farming.



Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association is in favor of industry regulation that would help bring legal farmers in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and help eliminate cultivation on public lands.

Successful farming depends on sustainable practices and good land stewardship. Whether it's almond orchards, rice paddies or cannabis fields, farmers' best interests lie in keeping their lands healthy. Cannabis farmers are no different. Members of Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association welcome regulations that will not only protect the environment, but will also result in better quality crops for consumers.

Judith Schreuder, founder and CEO of Dutch Farms Organics, is one of those farmers. Schreuder and other cannabis farmers are eager for regulations that would reinforce some of the agricultural practices to which many successful farmers already adhere, some of whom have been cultivating for decades.

Many cannabis farmers grow organically to meet the high standards of their patient consumers and are very ecologically conscious, according to Schreuder.

"We welcome regulation. We want to work with the water board. We want to work with Fish and Game. We don't want to poison our streams and creeks," she says. "We only want to improve the earth, we don't want to take from the earth."

**"We welcome regulation.
... We only want to
improve the earth, we
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the earth."**

Judith Schreuder
Cannabis farmer

Farmers explain that cannabis as a crop is environmentally friendly in that it requires relatively little water, and has, because of its high value, a very small overall land footprint. As with any agricultural industry, the key to success is to strike a balance between economic interest and environmental protection. According to Crystal Keesey, biologist and owner of Eastside Environmental, a consulting firm helping farmers comply with state environmental regulations, cannabis farmers now face regulatory requirements similar to other California agricultural industries.

"Today's cannabis farmers are experiencing a situation similar to what grape growers faced at the end of alcohol prohibition," Keesey says. "The farmers that I work with are good land stewards who simply want to be able to farm for their family's livelihoods. [They] want to become compliant with the state environmental laws. They want to just be able to get up and go to work, tend their plants and tend their land, and then come back home to their families and reflect on a good day's work."



Crystal Keesey, owner and biologist with Eastside Environmental, helps cannabis farmers comply with California's environmental laws.

Growing **TOGETHER**

Cannabis farmers invest in their land and local community

Cannabis is an annual crop. Each year, cannabis farmers make significant investments of money, time and energy. And from seed to sale, their investment supports local businesses and workers at every step of the way. Here's a look at how cannabis farmers boost the local economy.

Step One: Acquire and improve land



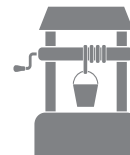
Farmers ...



Pay **property taxes** and **building fees**



Spend at **local stores** to **prepare infrastructure**



Install **irrigation systems**, drill wells

Benefits:

- Contributes to the local tax base
- Increases sales at home improvement and specialty shops

Step Two: Prep land, begin crop



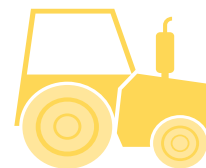
Farmers ...



Acquire locally mixed **soil and compost**



Build specialty **propagation systems**



Rent **equipment**, hire **labor** to plant

Benefits:

- Supports equipment suppliers and contract labor
- Increases sales at soil and ag supply stores
- Increases sales at local lumber and hardware stores

Step Three: Plant and tend



Farmers ...



Purchase farming and maintenance **tools and equipment**



Hire **laborers and foremen** for planting, watering and monitoring crops



Provide **nutrients** and additional **amendments**

Benefits:

- Provides employment
- Increases sales at local agricultural supply and hardware stores

Step Four: Harvest



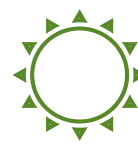
Farmers ...



Hire **seasonal laborers** to hand-harvest and process this labor-intensive agricultural product



Pay **laborers** an industry-standard wage, which laborers spend locally



Make capital improvements and **invest for the future**

Benefits:

- Provides high-wage employment
- Increases sales for retail shops, grocery stores, restaurants and more

As the cannabis farmer's crop thrives, so does our community!

Building a Bright **FARMING FUTURE** for Our Region



Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association
invites community dialogue

Our region's medical cannabis farmers have an ongoing commitment to and investment in their land and the greater community. They work hard to bring their medicine to market while farming in a manner that is environmentally, legally and socially responsible.

The nonprofit Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association is working to protect the rights of these farmers and to collaborate with community members and leaders to build a prosperous, transparent, well-regulated and environmentally conscious future for cannabis farming in our region.

New state laws recognize the need to regulate cannabis as an agricultural crop like any other. As the fastest-growing agricultural sector in the region, state and nation, cannabis farming is here to stay.

As a community, we have an opportunity: We can work together to create sensible and effective local regulations for the cannabis farming industry, and ensure a vibrant future for farmers and the greater community alike.

The future of the region is ours for the making, and you can play a part.



Get Involved!

Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association invites you to **learn more, join the conversation** and **stay informed** on local news and issues related to cannabis farming.



Join!

Cannabis farmers and related businesses in Butte, Yuba, Glenn, Sierra and Tehama counties are encouraged to join Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association. Offering regular **meetings**, educational **workshops**, **political action** and **networking**, ICFA makes farmers stronger together.



Inland Cannabis Farmers' Association



www.inlandcannabisfarmers.org



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