



# **CANNABIS FRAMEWORK AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (CANPLAN) FOR THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)**

### **1. What is the difference between Cannabis and Hemp?**

The defining difference between hemp and medicinal cannabis is their psychotropic component tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC. Hemp has 0.2% or less THC as per the current definition, meaning hemp-derived products don't contain enough THC to create the "high" traditionally associated with cannabis. CBD (cannabidiol) is a compound found in cannabis. CBD and THC are both cannabinoids found in cannabis plants. Though similar in structure and what they may help treat, the most important difference is that THC will cause a person to experience a high, while CBD will not.

Put simply, hemp is the name given to strains of the cannabis plant with extremely low levels of the psychoactive compound THC, making the versatile plant viable to use in dozens of different industries. Cannabis is typically grown for own use or for medicinal purposes.

In order to legally be called hemp in South Africa currently, the strain of cannabis sativa must contain less than 0.2% THC. CBD and other Cannabinoids are regulated under the Medicines Act through SAHPRA.

### **2. Is there a National Cannabis plan?**

Yes, the National Cannabis Masterplan was released by the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) in 2021. The Cannabis Master Plan aims to provide a broad framework for the development and growth of the South African cannabis industry in order to contribute to economic development, job creation, inclusive participation, rural development and poverty alleviation. The plan is currently under revision. The Western Cape CanPlan is aligned with the 9 pillars of the National Master Plan.

### **3. What is the mandate of the National Department of Agriculture Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) in comparison to that of the Provincial Department of Agriculture when it comes to Cannabis?**

The Provincial Department of Agriculture cannot issue any licenses for cannabis for medicinal purposes or permits for hemp as this is a national mandate and not a provincial mandate.



**Hemp** was declared an agricultural crop by the National Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development (DALRRD) in October 2021 under the Plant Improvement Act no 53 of 1976. This declaration now allows importation, cultivation, sale and research of hemp in South Africa and DALRRD also issues the permits for the cultivation of hemp. More information on the DALLRD website (<http://www.dalrrd.gov.za>).

**Medicinal cannabis** licenses are issued by the SA Health Products Regulatory Authority (SAHPRA) and more information can be obtained from their website (<https://www.sahpra.org.za/licences-and-permits>).

The Western Cape Department of Agriculture can, however, assist with research, production support, extension and advisory services and other support for the cannabis and hemp industry.

#### **4. What does the CanPlan entail?**

The Cannabis Framework and Implementation Plan for the agricultural sector in the Western Cape, also called the CanPlan, was compiled by the Western Cape Department of Agriculture and released during March 2023. The plan sets out to position the Western Cape Department of Agriculture in terms of medicinal cannabis and hemp production and processing and its entire value chain, and also identifies the initiatives where the Department can support, lead or co-lead.

The CanPlan is aligned with the National Cannabis Masterplan (2021).

#### **5. What are the focus areas in this framework?**

- Policy, legislative and regulatory context
- Growing requirements and fit with Western Cape conditions
- Current production and value chain activity in the Western Cape
- Role player map
- Value chain, competitor and market analysis
- Opportunity and gap assessment
- Theory of change and assessment of potential initiatives
- Potential outcomes of value chains
- Framework including recommendations on priority initiatives



The plan is intended to inform the decision making and strategic planning of the Western Cape Department of Agriculture and other role players.

**6. Do you need a license to grow medicinal Cannabis for commercial purposes?**

Yes, refer to question 3.

**7. Where do you apply for a medicinal Cannabis license?**

See question 3.

**8. Do you need a permit to grow hemp?**

Yes, see question 3.

**9. Where do I find hemp or cannabis seed or seedings?**

A variety of private nurseries and grow clubs can help to source growing material. The ARC is also testing varieties and supporting propagation.

**10. Will there be funding opportunities for cannabis and hemp production in the Western Cape?**

Yes, for specific actions and within the funding frameworks of the respective Departments of the Western Cape Government.

**11. Is Cannabis and hemp easy to cultivate in the Western Cape and what are the conditions required for production?**

The Western Cape growing conditions are not optimal for current cannabis and hemp varieties without modification, in particular in terms of rainfall and light levels which makes growing less competitive. In the case of hemp, irrigation would be required in most locations, and supplementary light could be needed to extend growth. The Southern Cape is the only area in the Western Cape somewhat suited to dryland hemp production, although there is still a rainfall shortfall. In the case of Cannabis, greenhouse or indoor production would be required. These sub-optimal growing conditions would mean higher input costs. This is likely to impact the competitiveness of primary production relative to other growing locations in both Southern Africa (e.g. Pondoland, KZN, Lesotho, Malawi) and globally (e.g. Colombia, Thailand). This may change if new varieties are developed that are better suited to Western Cape growing conditions.

**12. Where can one find the full Cannabis framework and Implementation Plan (CanPlan) for the Agricultural Sector? (This can be the last question and we can include the cover and the QR Code).**

Please visit our website at [www.elsenburg.com](http://www.elsenburg.com) and search for “CanPlan”.



Copies of the CanPlan can be accessed at:

**CanPlan Implementation Plan** - <https://www.elsenburg.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/W.Cape-CanPlan-Final-report-8-March2023.pdf>

**CanPlan Literature Review** - <https://www.elsenburg.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/W.Cape-CanPlan-literature-review.pdf>

