

HERBCLIP

FILE: Hemp (*Cannabis sativa*)

DATE: June 11, 1997

HC 061171

RE: **Popularization of Hemp as Food**

Muhlke, Christine. Hemp: Out of Fields and Onto Menus. *New York Times* (The Living Arts), May 28, 1997, p. B8.

At the Galaxy, a restaurant in the Gramercy Park area of Manhattan, patrons can choose from an eclectic menu where many of the items have one ingredient in common: hemp. The seeds and oil of hemp (*Cannabis sativa*), imported from producers in China, Hungary, and Switzerland, will not get you high, unlike the other strain of *Cannabis*, but they will add an interesting taste, described as a cross between hazelnut and walnut, to your dinner.

Owner Denis Cicero has been experimenting with hemp as food since the late 1970s, but had never been able to convince a chef to cook with it. Then, when he opened the Galaxy in May 1996, he hired Deb Stanton on as chef. Stanton turned out to be a kindred spirit, and began experimenting with the seeds, toasting, milling and mixing them with other flours and seeds. Today, the menu at the Galaxy boasts the fruit of Deb's experimentations: hemp waffles, hemp seed oil vinaigrette, catfish blackened with hemp flour, a garden burger containing hemp seeds, and even apple pie with a hemp flour crust.

Although he admits that hemp is a good marketing tool, Cicero explains that the idea "started as a way to increase dialogue about hemp and public awareness of its nutritional and ecological benefits." Growing (but not eating) hemp became illegal in the United States in 1937. Before that time, Cicero said, "it was inconceivable for an economy to function without hemp."

Sharon's Finest, a health-food company in Santa Rosa, California, also experiments with hemp as food; the company produces Hempteh Burger and the cheese substitute Hemptrella. Meanwhile, Cicero and Stanton are collaborating with hemp growers around the world to create more uses for edible hemp seeds and oil, such as candy bars, breadsticks, and even herbal infusions. —*Ginger Webb*

The American Botanical Council (ABC) provides this summary as an educational service. ABC cannot guarantee that the data in the original article is accurate and correct, nor does distribution of the summary constitute any endorsement of the information contained in the original article or of the views of the article's authors.

Reproduction of the summaries is allowed on a limited basis for students, colleagues, employees and/or customers. Other uses and distribution require prior approval from ABC: telephone: (512) 331-8868; fax: (512) 331-1924. (Refer to Bin #112)