









EDITORIAL

Dig for Victory

Britain's rulers hate a winner they haven't sanctioned. Look at the early Rave pioneers, the "Evil Acid Barons", as they were characterized in the press and Parliament. Model Thatcherite entrepreneurs who laid the groundwork for a global, multi-billion dollar business encompassing fashion, music, media and psycho-chemical experience-augmentation.

But because the rave promoters and creatives didn't have the right background or pay their respects to the established hierarchy, or play by the accepted rules of what public entertainment "should" be, they were slagged off left, right and centre.

Now Britain is experiencing another boom business that doesn't fit the establishment model of how decent people make their living: the home growing business. According to The Observer, "An explosion in the amount of cannabis grown in people's homes has alarmed senior police officers, with some forces reporting a six fold increase in seizures."

The number of outlets selling seeds and paraphernalia has gone from 50, five years ago, to more than 2,000. The independent drug advice group Drugscope says the proportion of home-grown cannabis being consumed now accounts for half the total market.

What a success story! As the shops we review each issue never fail to mention: this is a booming business. Now let's assume each grow and head shop employs three people, add the growing, distribution and new manufacturing companies (making everything from bongs to lamps), and we're talking about a business that provides a good living for tens of thousands of people, many of them tax and VAT paying. If the armaments or automobile industries had added so many to the workforce, Labour would be trumpeting it from the roof of Parliament and The Times would be writing editorials in praise of Britain's new growth sector.

Think of the billions that used to be sent abroad paying for dodgy Leb, over-priced Black and dried bricks of crappy, seed-filled grass, funding (if Tony and George are to believed) all manner of crooks, terrorists, militant armies and Oliver North-style maverick loons. The home grow revolution is boosting our balance of payments, while funneling the money saved into local businesses and cash-only consumer goods purchases. We're reversing the offshore relocation of manufacturing jobs - dammit, we're probably saving the UK economy!

Back in WW2, the buzz phrase was 'Dig for Victory', and it is the market for seeds and growing equipment that is most booming. The victory being dug for this time is no less important: our right to safe self-intoxication without the interference from or criminalization by the state. We wouldn't be the first commentators to refer to the War on Plants and Drug Users as the Third (or even Fourth) World War.

Whether it's the silent majority of stair-cupboard partisan growers, raising the odd plant now and again, or the organized, well funded squadrons of large-scale growers raising 20,000 plants every eight weeks, we all have a part to play.

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So are we festooned with Oueens Award for Industry gongs and are places in the House of Lords made for the captains of our industry? Of course not. We're criminalized, not in any clear-cut black and white way, but in a flimsy you-can-do-this-but-not-that, here-but-not-there kind of way. We get the fudge of reclassification and the possible flip-flop on it; we can sell seeds but not clones; maybe you can get caught with 49 plants of any size and get a caution, but grow 50 and go to jail; BBC Online reports that police are warning shopkeepers of the consequences of selling drug paraphernalia following the first ever conviction for selling equipment which police believe was going to be used to prepare drugs. The Glasgow shop had 3,000 guids-worth of stock seized. including "bongs, cannabis pipes and magazines about marijuana cultivation." Divisional drugs awareness officers from each of the UK force's will now identify and visit shops within their own areas to offer guidance on the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971. This makes it an offence to supply any product which may be used in the administration or preparation of a controlled drug. They will advise the shopkeepers what contravenes the act (chiefly, "smoking implements" and "snorting equipment clearly designed for the administration of powdered drugs"), and if the friendly advice is not taken on board, the shopkeepers run the risk of being charged and having their stock seized. Do keep us informed of any experiences, good or bad, you might have as industry retailers, producers or consumers, and vivre la revolution!

Page 3 Girl Chronic

This medium height, not too dense lady is the perfect combination of good yield and excellent quality. Smokers that know and grow choose this plant for its combination of appearance and sweet smell. This once predominantly Indica breed has been updated with a Sativa cross and is stabilizing since 2000, which improved both the strength and resin content, while leaving the subtle sweet spicy scent intact. This easy to grow lady can produce up to 600gr per square meter under 600w lights. This has been achieved on hydro and in soil. Chronic wants to grow a huge end bud, and any side buds are much smaller, making it a perfect candidate for a SOG grow. Serious Seeds advises against topping to promote bigger side buds, which will only result in decreased yield (she doesn't take it well, unfortunately). Chronic flowers early and shows gender easily.

Type: sativa/indica hybrid - (Indoor/Outdoor)

Indoor clone grow time: 5–10 days Indoor flowering time: 56-63 days

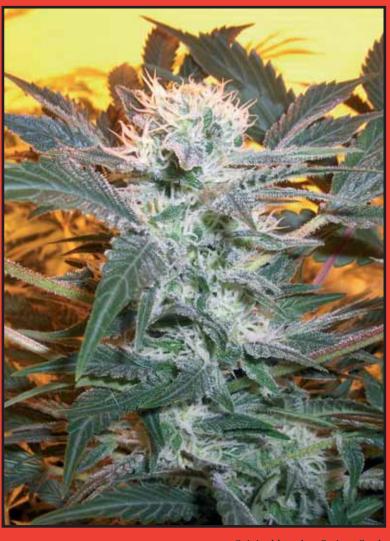
Height: medium height

Indoor yield: 400-600 grams/m2

Recommended technique: SOG (do NOT top)

Outdoors/Greenhouse harvest time: 15-31 October

1st prize Hydro category Highlife BCN 2004 2nd prize Hydro category Highlife BCN 2004



Original breeder: Serious Seeds



We want to inform you via this channel about our company, I.G.T., and that is why we have conceived of this campaign for you. You will receive this discount on \pm 80% of the articles we offer.

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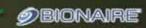
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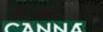


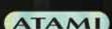




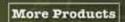






















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Aff they

General Manager

PoBox 17250, 1001 JG, Amsterdam, Holland or E-mail SSUK@softsecrets.nl

Dear Soft Secrets



This are my sexy ladies 2 Blueberries and 1 PR. I had these on veg for 6 wks and now 4wks to go to flush at time. This is my 2nd attempt in coco after 1st attempt in NFT went bad big time. Thanx to your ace advice in SSUK I was well chuffed and hopefully worthy of a place in your paper. It's now 1 month since cropped and dried but testing the ladies has taken time to be sure it nice enough to taste, hehehe. Cheers, nicely STONED-again in yorks.

Swampy`n`greeny, Bradford

Guys, what would you do when your mother caught you like this in the loft?



Howdy all. Wow! What can you say about this wonderful magazine that hasn't already been said a thousand times by thankful readers? It just doesn't get any better. I

thank you from the bottom of my bong! I have just started harvesting my Heavy Duty Fruity plants, and one of my mates said "Hey! Let's send a picture to Soft Secrets and get some primo seeds!" So, here ya go! Oh...and I just wanted to say that I absolutely adore big, hairy, stinky, girls with great big tips and really tight buds!

Mojave Dave

Is that bud from the garden in the pic? It looks like a completely different strain... Anyways, you look like a happy chap, so if you're happy, we're happy...



Dear Soft Secrets,

After years of experience as a smoker of cannabis I decided to endevour into the world of cultivation, but where to start? I interigated my son and and he advised me to look at your magazine, in doing so I stumbled across a bible, and now as you can see I have spawned this K2. It's my first go indoors. How does it look (1 week into flowering)? Thank you for all your valuable information, I am in your debt.

Father + Son, Brighton, UK.

GOOD LORD! What have you done, man? Why the hell did you strip her to the bones? Even a Christmas turkey looks better than this!



Dear Soft Secrets.

This is my most recent crop, which I'm quite pleased with. The strain is Heavy Duty Fruity, grown from seed in my bedroom cupboard under a 400W GroLux HPS. The medium used was coco mixed



with Diahydro in a plain old bucket and fed by a simple dripper system. The light cycle was 18/6 for the first month then 12/12 for the final 7 weeks of flowering. I estimate the final harvest to be approximately 6 ounces. I reckon that's not bad for 1 plant grown for 3 months in a tiny cupboard.

Paul, Birmingham

That's some great growing, Paul. This plant is a very healthy specimen and her roots get all the space they need. Well done!

Attention Guerilla Growers!

Fancy a FREE packet of High Quality Seeds? Then send us a picture of your garden, including a visible copy of SSUK, and we'll send you the seeds. BUT: should your garden happen to feature your topless girlfriend or wife, you even get a pack of Black Label stock, the label of the champions!

NEW! Editor's choice of the month will receive 3 packs of choice of prime Black Label stock, so you better start snappin' away!

Send all entries to Soft Secrets, PO Box 17250, 1001 JG, Amsterdam, Holland, or e-mail them to SSUK@softsecrets.nl

NOTE: All entries are handled with the utmost discretion. We don't publish out of focus pics, and we don't like photos of plants in veg stage. It's fat buds & hot tits we want to see!



Here are a few pictures of my near done Citral plants and my mature male Jack Russel, I found the biggest pots I could and used Canna Terra-Flores soil mix and this the result 1-2 weeks from finish! I used several lights in the process and graduated from a 250HPS and finished with a 600HPS. What do you think? T.C., Norfolk

We think those are some great looking girls. However, you probably overfed them since the leaves are a bit yellowish. Flush with pure water and add some calcium to the substrate to try and restore the damage.

Dear Soft Secrets,

My Shiva Shanti II, I've been feeding her in Ionic bloom and booster, and also put her on PK-13-14 for a week in week 9 - RESIN!

Smokey & R, South Wales







Dear editor,

Brilliant mag! I've just purchased a small system after reading all the tips in your great mag, I'm sure that with a little trial and error I'll soon have my own beauties.

Phil, Kent

We hope it too, mate





Skunk Special, 5 weeks into flower, grown in a Atami Wilam system. All fed with B'Cuzz and finished off with Bio Power Power Top.

Stinger, North Of England

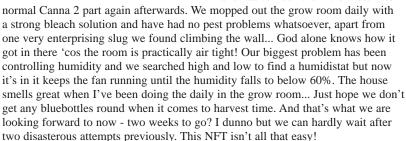
Stinger, we see a clear potassium deficiency in this girl, and we find it hard to believe you didn't notice it vourself...

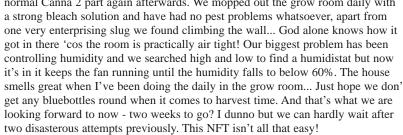


The main pic is 4 out of 6 germinated

Dear Soft Secrets,

Jack Herer's fast approaching harvest. I thought there might have been a bit more bud on the plants to be honest, but the guy down the grow shop says that while JH aren't big yielders they ARE a real quality hit. Initially we had huge problems with the seedlings turning yellow the minute they went onto the NFT tray - it turned out to be the pump flow rate was set far too high, I assume the flow of fluid over the small root balls was actually leaching goodness out of the seedlings - but once we had dropped the rate to a trickle the plants picked up wonderfully and began to thrive. Germination was in rock wool mini cubes then the seedlings were grown on for a 4 weeks veg period then put onto 12/12 and I've just shifted them to 13/11 a couple of weeks ago. They were fed Canna 2 part veg up to the third week of flowering then shifted to Canna 2 part flower. At 6 weeks they were given 1 ml. per litre of PK-13-14 and a slack handful of brown sugar disolved in warm water - that was probably a mistake but I read somewhere it makes the buds much stickier... All it seemed to do was cause slime to grow in the NFT tank but the H2O2 stopped anything serious happening! I did get some nutrient imbalance with that amount of PK-13-14 and had to flush them then return to

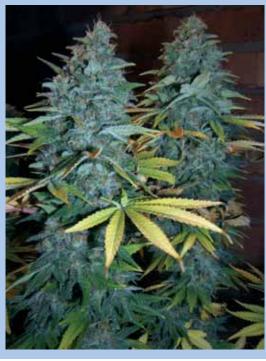




Martin from Lancashire

Growing Jack Herer can be tough. JH is a very demanding plant who needs the utmost attention of the grower. The longer a plant blooms (JH easily blooms for 10 weeks), the stricter the grower has to be with nutrients, EC and pH values. We don't understand at all your decision to scale the lights to 13/11, 12/12 during the whole veg period would have been much better. Giving plants more light during veg, only increases stress levels. The plants think summer is around the corner and hence they will produce more grow hormones. The plants will even come to a stand still, since it takes a lot of time to switch back from grow hormones to bloom hormones (if you switch back to 12/12that is). Furthermore, you managed to prolong the blooming period of the plants. For example, two weeks messing about with the light schedule, means a two week delay in the development of the plant, and thus a two week longer than normal blooming stage! Judging from your photos, these ladies are far from ready. As a grower, don't get fixated on the numbers of weeks for blooming, these given number of weeks only applies when you did everything right, so to say. And remember: the longer you grow your plants, the longer they need to be put into bloom. The buds on a JH develop at a rapid pace only in the very last weeks of bloom. It is therefore essential to give JH all the time she needs to develop. JH is, as you may have guessed, a plant that is often harvested much too early. Also, try to keep humidity down with this variety.







Hi to everyone at Soft Secrets, Here are a couple of pics of my LST'd AK-48 and Afghani #1 at 56 days flower after their 3 week flush just before the chop, the AK could go another week, but I chopped it anyway, I like to leave the Afghani as long as I can for that couchlock stone, and I'm hoping the AK-48 is the strong pheno I had last time which blew my head off, great mag by the way keep em coming! Kenny, UK

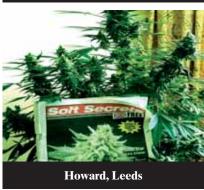


Here is a pic of some respectable Brighton buds! These are Bubblegum that weighed in at 3 ounces together minus the rest.

Chris, Brighton

Smile dude! You're in Soft Secrets!







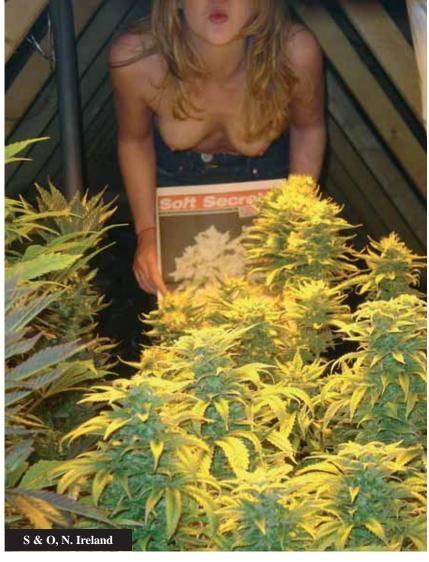


Dear Soft Secrets

Thanks to your brilliant paper I have taken lots of growing advice on board to produce some very fruity plants! This is the last of our AK47 crop.... I took the advice from Serious Seeds who told me to keep the plants small in a SOG method. I would have to vegetate them only for one week from seed before going into flowering. The result was these Bonsai type plants with dense fat and fruity, cherry drop tasting Buds! I grow with my Brother and we use 'Bio Bizz all mix with all organic BioBizz nutrients and a basic set up with one 600 watt son T lamp.

Martin from London

Decent looking gal you bro's got there, if they smoke as good as they look, you guys are in for a lung feast.



I read in Soft Secrets with some amusement that again a polilician states, pot induces paranoia. I wonder how some of their decision making processes happen and how they reach these wild conclusions, perhaps it's something like this: "We keep banging people up and persecuting them for smoking and growing pot and for some reason they think people are out to get them, they must be paranoid!"

W.T.F. Theres a War on Drugs, WE are the supposed enemy. DAMN FUCKING RIGHT I THINK PEOPLE ARE OUT TO GET ME! THEY FUCKING ARE, THATS WHY!

Dr. John Chanvre

Well said, John... Now light up that fucking spliff, ey..?







which is firm favourite in the Dutch House & Garden invites you to try a revolutionairy growth stimulator Do your buds fail to grow or lack stubstance and solidity? SHOOTING POWDER, market.

asks you to buy it. At House & Garden, we believe that Every company claims it has the best fertilizer, then we produce the best fertilizer, and ask you to try it.

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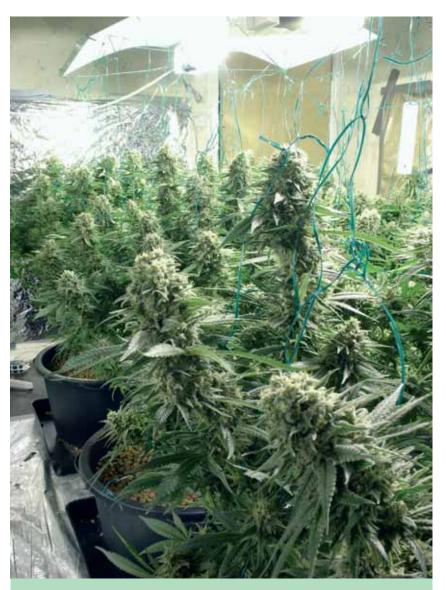
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Hi guys, Crazy Munk here. Wicked mag, here's a couple of shots of a Big Bud Hybrid and my princess. Fetched 12oz per plant dried. 72oz from 6 plants, hand watered, Canna, Pebbles.

Crazy Munk, UK

This is a professional set-up. Growing in cement tubs filled with hydro granules is a very professional thing to do. The ladies look happy 'n' sweet, and we guarantee you a succesfull harvest. Well done, Crazy Munk, you're top dog on this page!



Clive, Dublin

Clive, who needs an expensive rolling board with such a girlfriend, ey? She's a good girl! Why can't they all be like her.?

Dear Soft Secrets,

2 BB, 2 WW & 1 Super Silver Haze, all in 3 gal. buckets – soil mix + 1/3 perlite on Vermiculite mix. Hand fed Canna Veg/Flora. Lighting is 1 x 600w HID in flower and a Venture HIT 600w in veg. 4th attempt, avergae 5/6 oz per plant. Keep on rootin – Keep on tootin!! **Denzil, Yorkshire**



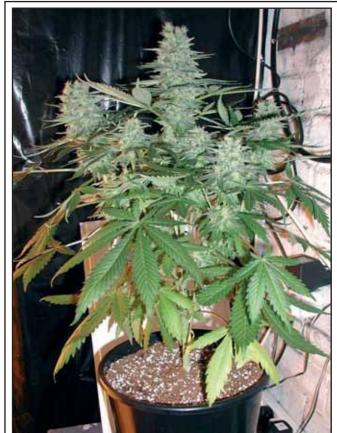
Dear Soft Secrets,

Here's ma Afghani, grown in coco, fed organic feed, Shooting Powder, excellent stuff!

H, Devon

Mate, these buds were harvested too early. Why? Because the THC hairs are still white! Are you sure that's an

Afghani? It reminds us of a Jamaican Pearl. This cross contains some Haze influences, and the smoke is an absolute killer.



Dear Soft Secrets,

Some pics of Master Kush and Skunk #1 on coco, under 400w.

Mr C., England

A soil mix containing perlite is almost a guarantee for succes. Why don't you remove those lower yellow leaves? They have no value on this babe.



Dear Soft Secrets,

Master Kush on the day I chopped her down. 2 x 600w Sodium, NFT. It all looked a bit twisted, like a haunted forest. Love your paper – it has helped me out no end.

Mate, we can clearly see some fat burns on the flowerheads, watch out with those lamps!



Dear Soft Secrets,

Here's a pic of my White Widow and a sexy Spanish Angel. You've been a massive help, thanks, the articles are the very best of their kind, and great spot on advice. Love, peace & coconuts.

BD, London

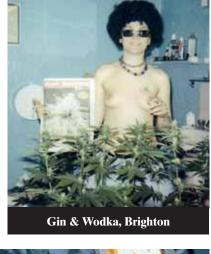


















Silvercalyx of the Shire







By Chris Marchand

VIALOX NAV 4Y Sodium Lamp from Osram



High Intensity Discharge lamps can be used for many things; mostly outdoor lighting, shop displays and lighting up churches according to Osram's website. However, the best thing to do with them is to grow fat buds under them! Though they might not be too quick to admit it, Osram have just done indoor ganja growers a big favour by improving the good old sodium lamp. The new Vialox

NAV 4Y is their improved model HID sodium lamp that boasts a lifetime of 16,000 hours (or 4 years hence 4Y, geddit?) and premature failure rates down to 5%, so they last longer and shouldn't fuck up very often. The design has been tweaked to prevent gas losses at the bushings as well as adding high-performance ceramics to reduce sodium diffusion AND a patented Breha shock absorber in the mounting. Who could ask for more?

Ever notice that the first crop under a new bulb is better than the fifth? Usually sodium lamps would noticeably drop in efficiency after a few crops and need replacing but with the Vialox the bulbs lifetime should be considerably extended. After the full 16,000 hours of continuous use it is doubtful that the spectrum delivered by the bulb would still be optimum, after all specific light spectrums are not a big concern in outdoor lighting. Nevertheless, any improvements are welcome ones and anecdotal evidence says that there is an obvious increase in light output.

Remember: Light is the plants real food; all the nutrients do is allow the plant to use the light, so any extra is a real bonus. Next time you buy a Sodium bulb ask for a Vialox NAV 4Y and your plants are sure to appreciate it!

Osram lamps should be available from all good grow shops Wholesale info: Brouwers Lichttechniek

Tel.: +31(0)13-467 1888 / Fax: +31(0)13-463 76 12.

Power Top from Bio-G-Power



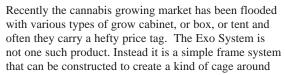
Bio-G-Power boasts "25% more profit" with their latest development in natural floral boosters, Power Top. A 100% natural floral stimulator (or Top Blaster as they like to call it) made up of botanical extracts, minerals and plant hormones designed to give explosive growth your buds, Power Top is designed for use in the last four weeks of the flowering stage prior to the all-important flush. The specially selected plant hormones stimulate the plants natural maturation process towards the end of the floral stage, in other words it sends a message telling the plant that it is time to ripen and fatten up. This ensures that all of its energy is redirected into floral growth resulting in swollen up prized buds.

Due to it's natural make-up Power Top won't increase the EC of the nutrient solution or create

any blockages in pipes and tubes, so you needn't worry about overfeeding or clogging up your system. For optimum results the manufacturers recommend using Power Top in combination with a base nutrient and bloom stimulator, both available from Bio-G-Power (Soil Compo 1/ Multi Hydro and BIO 3), although Power Top can be used with any nutrient regime and system, including coco.

Power Top and all other Bio-G-Power products are available from New Age Hydroponics, Lancs. Tel.: +44(0)1254 661177

Exo Modular Frame Systems from Nutriculture



the grow area. There are many advantages to having your plants surrounded by a frame. The frame gives you numerous points to hang lights, circulation fans and ventilation ducting (though probably not a carbon filter) in just the right places, thus giving you extra control over the environment. In short, no more hooks in the

Bounce from Atami

Coconuts have been known to root floating in the sea so it's no surprise then that coco fibre provides an ideal growing medium either on it's own or added to soil. Considered by many to be the ideal middle ground between organic and hydroponic cultivation, coco provides an interesting alternative to standard growing methods. Atami, who have been known for their high quality substrates for many years, have now produced Bounce, a completely new compressed coco-substrate made from coarse coir fibres taken from Sri Lanka and other tropical islands. Before being sold the coco is washed, steamed, and even buffered making them very high quality coco that is

easy to use. You don't even need to buffer it before you use it. All you need do is add 5 to 7 litres of water and watch it swell to a height of 20cm in its block bag. Plants settle quickly in the coco putting out strong roots due to the large numbers of rooting hormones found naturally in the coir, while the medium itself holds its structure allowing for good drainage and plenty of oxygen to the roots. Particularly handy for all you guerrilla gardeners; just load a few of these in your backpack and off you go merrily planting out in the countryside. As long as you find some water you'll be just fine.

Available from all good grow shops Info: Atami, The Netherlands Tel.: (+31) (0) 73-5223256 Fax: (+31) (0) 73-5213259 Website: www.atami.com / E-mail: info@atami.com

The Amazon from Nutriculture



Areoponics represent a step on from hydroponics in terms of cultivation technology. In a hydroponic set up nutrition is delivered to the plant in liquid form directly to the roots whilst an inert medium, such as clay pebbles or rockwool, replaces the structure of the soil to support the plant. The difference with aeroponics is that no medium is required leaving the roots to hang in the air and be fed by a fine mist of nutrient enriched water. The advantage is that

nutrients are applied even more directly to the root system giving quicker growth. The root system also has access to unlimited oxygen and CO2 adding to the enhanced performance. This space-age technology has been applied in commercial fruit producing greenhouses for years but until now has been economically out of reach for the average home-grower.

Nutriculture have looked into this growing technique and come up with a simple, cheap and effective solution that is affordable for any hobby grower. Normally aeroponics would require expensive high-pressure fittings to create an adequate mist for the plant to absorb directly. To get round this problem the Amazon comes with a powerful MaxiJet1000 pump that feeds four spinning jets. These jets convert the pressure of the water into individual droplets that are dispersed 360 degrees ensuring that the whole chamber is covered by the miniature rainstorm. The Amazon has a 50litre reservoir and a plastic moulded lid to hold the plants and is based around the same principles as their aeroponic propagators. The difference is that the Amazon is designed to accommodate plants to full maturity. The lid comes with three different options; either for eight, sixteen, or thirty-two plants in mesh pots; now you can have your own areoponic jungle in your cupboard.

Available from all Nutriculture stockists.

Check www.nutriculture.com for your local stockist.

ceilings, chain hanging down or web of bud supports. Also, the frame can be covered in reflective sheeting t

Also, the frame can be covered in reflective sheeting to create a more light-intense enclosed chamber or grow tent where the environment can be easily controlled. Supporting branches with fat colas can be a real headache as harvest time approaches but with an Exo frame the buds can be tied to wherever suits them best. What's more the Exo frame gives not only a tidier but safer grow room allowing you to get all dangling cables and electrics off the floor and out of harms way. The frames are made from sturdy metal and fit together with high quality adapters. The Exo System includes five kits that are suitable for a wide variety of Nutriculture hydro systems, although all the components are available separately allowing you to tailor the frame to your specific space.

Available from Nutriculture stockists.

Check www.nutriculture.com for your local stockist.

Wilma Pot Systems from Atami



Not Fred Flintstone's wife but rather a new growing system from Atami, who have built a solid reputation in the hydroponic industry for quality nutrients, additives and substrates. With the Wilma Pot they extend this reputation to their latest growing system.

The Wilma is a re-circulating system that can be adapted to any growing medium.

The planter tray sits in a reservoir tank and

has two channels. Each channel is designed to hold four or five square plastic pots giving you either an eight or ten plant system. The plants in their pots are fed by individual pipes and drippers attached to the central feeding tube running directly from the pump up the central channel. The planter is designed to be lower at one end so that it simply needs placing on a flat surface. In other words you don't have to spend time adjusting the angle of the tray to get the right flow-rate; it's built in.

The advantage of the Wilma system is in its versatility. What you get is a small Sea of Green system where rather than the plants growing together with roots entangled etc the plants are in individual pots. This means that each plant gets the same treatment. In similar set-ups where the plants grow together (e.g. NFT / Flood and Drain) problems can occur. Depending on whereabouts on the tray the plant is placed will usually determine how successful it will be. For example, where the flow rate is not perfect, pooling can occur around individual plants resulting in poor feeding and possible root issues. Once one plant has a problem there is no way to stop that problem from becoming multiplied to all the plants. In a Wilma System, because the plants are in individual pots, if one has a problem it can be quickly removed and treated with out fear of contaminating the other plants.

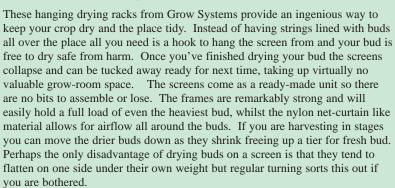
Another part of the Wilma's versatility is in your choice of medium. The pots can be filled with whatever your preferred medium might be: be it clay pebbles, rockwool (mapito) coco fibre or even soil. The type of medium you choose will determine which stakes you use to feed each pot. If you are using Clay Pebbles you will want to use a woodpecker stake that gives a fairly rapid flow whereas for more water-retaining soil-type media an arrow stake will give a slow drip.

The Wilma Pot System is made from very high quality plastics that have been moulded to a very high standard and should resist nutrient residue from forming. Drippers and pipe work will need to be checked every so often to prevent salt buildups but otherwise Wilma pretty much takes care of herself.

Available from all good grow shops Info: Atami, The Netherlands Tel.: (+31) (0) 73-5223256 Fax: (+31) (0) 73-5213259 Website: www.atami.com / E-mail: info@atami.com



Eight Tiered Drying Screen from Grow Systems



Available from all Grow Systems Stores: Norwich Tel.: +44 (0)1603 662655; Cambridge Tel.: +44 (0)1223 244704; Peterborough Tel.: +44 (0)1733 891525; Ipswich Tel.: +44 (0)1473 720555, Stoke-on-Trent Tel.: +44 (0)1782 414448.

Pythium Alert PF Test Kits from Growell



Pythium is root-based fungus that can decimate your beautiful crop in no time at all. Usually growers get their first indication that something may be amiss from discoloured roots and the dreaded boggy smell emanating from the dark waters. Up until now this was the "best guess" answer to dealing with the problem but now Growell have these Pythium Test Kits that will tell you if you have the dreaded fungus at the roots for certain. The Kit works in a similar way to a pregnancy test kit (NB do not piss on the

Pythium Test Kit, this will tell you nothing) based around a lateral flow device. The kit gives you everything you need to extract a valid test sample as well as the lateral flow device to give the result. All you need to do is take a sample of the affected root and place it in the bag provided. Add the extraction fluid and crush as if with a rolling pin until the root is broken down and the liquid is cloudy. Then take a sample of the root mixture and drip into the device to get a result. Just like a pregnancy test kit the display on the device a line will appear indicating that Pythium is present or not if it isn't. Once you have pythium a UV sterilizer is most likely your only option to save the crop, if you don't have it then prevention is the best cure. Using enzyme formulas such as Guardian Angel will help as well as air bubblers in the reservoir and particularly around the roots. Adding oxygen to the water will stop harmful bacteria and fungus from being able to take over the whole root system.

Available from Growell: Order Hotline +44(0)845 345 5177 or for questions Shop/Technical line +44(0)845 345 5176 Website: www.growell.co.uk

The Supernatural Brand Terrapot and Air Table from Terraponics





Theses grow bags from Terraponics couldn't be easier to use. Simply open, plant your cutting and leave. However, behind the simple instructions is a highly developed system that

Terraponics' own Fearless Gardener likes to call "Sythentic Organic". In other words, synthetic compounds have been added to the organic mixture, but the Fearless Gardener has gone to such great lengths to ensure that all the salts are of the very highest quality and completely toxin-free so they feel justified in using the "O" word. It's not going to pass the Soil Association or OMRI test, but hey... The mixture starts with the very finest organic soil, minus any acidic peat moss that the plants do not like, before twenty three proprietary nutrients are added including: macro/micro nutrients, humic and fulvic acids, hormones enzymes, leonardite, three types of calcium (best use rainwater in hard water areas then!), two types of diatomaceous earth, volcanic rock to name just a few. What makes the Terraponics stand out is the structure of the soil itself. Having observed that in Mother Nature soil is layered the Fearless Gardener decided to replicate this in the bags. For example the taproot of the plant is designed to head for ground water and so feeds from the perlite at the bottom of the bag whilst top roots need contact with the soil for full colloidal absorption. By keeping the structure good drainage helps to prevent any over-watering. There is also a specially designed Air Table to place the plants on. Beneath the tray is a seal chamber that acts as a reservoir for the nutrients. An air pump is attached forcing the water

up to flood the tray and thus feed the bags from the bottom. The advantages are that the solution becomes more oxygen enriched as well as removing the need for a water pump. Terraponics states that systems using a water pump are directly tied to a 50Hz electrical frequency that disrupts nature's natural frequency and is detrimental to the plants. What's more, magnets in the pumps strip metals from the solution thus negatively affecting the chemical profile of the nutrient. The Supernatural Grow bags come in 1.5L, 5L, 20L and 30L sizes while the Garden Air Table is available in 2'x 4' or 4' x 8' sizes.

Available from: King of Green, Essex Tel.: +44 (0)1702 347536; ProGrow, Exeter Tel.: +44 (0)1392 276998; Holland Hydroponics, Manchester Tel.: +44 (0)161 273 5995.

For more stockists and product info go to www.terraponicseurope.com.





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A organic nutrient providing the plant everything for the blooming phase, resulting in a faster heavy flowering plant.





Phytamin

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Green Sensation is a bloom booster,
to be used in the final 4-6 weeks.
It has been exhaustively researched
and developed with over 2 years of
field testing. Proper use will result
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Cocos mix: 100% buffered Coco. Ph between 5,5-6,0 and a guaranteed EC beneath 0,5. RHP Standard.



Bat Guano: 100% Bat Guano

Worm castings: 100% Worm castings

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SYSTEM OVERVIEW
Cuttings propagated into 3" blocks are planted onto prepared H&G rockwool slabs. Clones are irrigated every 3 to 4 hours during the day cycle. Vegative growth from 0 - 7 days is undertaken prior to bloom phase (genetics & species dependent).



- Advantages:

 Nutrients are supplied at their predefined
- ptimum level
 EC & pH of feed water is stable due to non-
- recirculation
 Toxins & infections are washed from the rock-
- wool during operation Accelerated vegative & floral growth
- Automised operation Highest yields possible
- Waste can be used for garden & domestic potted plants

sadvantages:

None

None

SLAB PREPARATION

Before placing the slab into the aqua tray it is necessary to make two slices through the outer white plastic sheath for drainage. First you must identify the correct way in which the slab is placed in the aqua tray, this will be indicated on the cover. Make two 20-25 cm slices through the plastic sheath leading down to the slab end toward the drain holes of the aqua tray, as shown in the diagram below.

SLAB SATURATION



SLAB SATURATION
Place the drainpipes of the agua tray in the upright position. Saturate the slabs so that rockwool is completely immersed, this uses about 15 litres per slab. Saturate with EC 1.2 & pH 5.5. You can soak rock wool slabs in basic nutrient only, e.g. H&G Hydro A&B. However adding H&G Root Execelurator to the saturation feed provides the best possible start for the clones.

Saturate the slabs, in the aqua tray, using a hose connected to a small pump (MJ1000 for example). Saturate the rockwool for 24-48 hours. Saturation is essential as it provides the necessary capillary action.

- CONSTRUCTING THE IRRIGATION SYSTEM
 Irrigation systems comprise of:
 Submergible pump
 LDPE 25mm pipe
 Astore 25mm connector
 PE filter complete with a non-return valve and 25mm connectors
 Astore 25mm elbow or elbows
 Top spin Pressure compensated 12 outlet dripper

- dripper

 Astore endstop 25mm





There are three main points to consider when constructing an irrigation system:

• All threaded connections are sealed with

- PTFE tape All high pressure connectors are "O" ring
- Top Spin & PE Filter etc. are accessible

• Top Spin & PE Filter etc. are accessible

PLANTING ONTO THE SLABS

It is possible to plant up to 6 clones per slab,
most commonly 3 or 4. Ensure that there is an
abundance of roots emerging from the base of
the 3" propagation block prior to placing on the
slab. Always plant out using the stadium technique, where the taller plants are placed on the
outside edges. Cut open the top of the slab so
that you can place the base of the 3" cube on
to it. Do not leave the top of the slab bare, to
prevent algae from developing. Insert the dripper stake into block and slab. The dripper stake
should not penetrate the slab further than 3.5cm.

Feeding Regimes:

Feeding Regimes:
When all plants are in place they require irrigation. Initially irrigate every 3-4 hours for 1-2 minutes. As the plants grow increase the duration of the feeding period from 1-2mins to 5-6mins, or so, in the last week of flowering. These times may vary with different strength pumps or larger amounts of dripper outlets. The rule is to maintain a minimum of 30% run off at all times. Following the House & Garden Hydro A&B scheme from week 1-8. Feeding is not necessary during the dark period, however if you are using dehumidification during the night cycle then one or two feeds may be necessary to maintain water levels in the foliage.

The Rockwool slab irrigation system comprises the following items:

Framework / stand

Prainage table - complete with 25mm fittings

House & Garden rockwool slabs

Aqua trays

Topspin irrigation device & fittings

Waste tank, feed tank, feed dank, feed pump & circulatory nump

Waste tank, feed ta LIGHTING, VENTILATION & ENVIRONMENTAL Lighting: As soon as all of the plants have been placed onto the slabs you must also apply lighting to the area. Initially the amount of light, in terms of power, should not be lower than 400W for every 1m². Switch the lighting system on and for the first day or so maintain a distance of at least 80cm from the tops of the plants. During the course of four to five days lower the lights so that they are 40cm above the tops of the plants. Lighting of at least 600W (800W max) is required for intense flowering.

Ventilation & air movement: from the moment that the lights are switched on for the first time air movement is needed to transport the carbon dioxide past the plants leaves. Adequate ventilation is also required to maintain specific temperatures.

Environmental conditions: the recommended limits for cultivation indoors are 40-60% humidity & 75°-85°F. To achieve constant intensive growth performance it is extremely important to ensure that you always remain within these levels. Do not allow more than 10°F differential between day and night time temperatures. Initially humidity of around 60% is beneficial. From four weeks into flowering the humidity should be reduced from around 50% to 40% this reduces the risk of rot. reduces the risk of rot.

Slab maintenance: The most important requirement for correct use of the slab system is that 30-40% of the feed water goes to waste. The reason for this is that if water does not escape from the slab then the entire nutrient that has goes into the slab remains within it. Not only this, the plant leaches toxins from within via the root system. By ensuring that 30-40% of the feed water flows to waste the toxins are flushed from the slab along with a good part of the nutrition.

To aid in the flow of the nutrient from the slab it is good practice to flush every second week systematically. This is done by mixing up and flushing through 10 liters for each slab at a reduced EC by 0.4mS/cm, relative to the current levels, at a pH of 5.8 (5.5 - 6.3 absolute range).

If you do have problems with either pH or EC levels in the slab (most are usually linked) then you need to flush, or flood and flush in extreme cases, with the appropriate EC or pH levels to offset the problem. To evaluate the condition or content of your slab you should monitor the levels from your wastewater and compare them to the levels of the feed water, enabling you to evaluate the approximate level within the slab.

RECOMMENDED HOUSE & GARDEN PRODUCTS
Action is an organic form of nitrogen that is best
used to replenish cuttings that exhibit depleted

Root Accelerator is a highly concentrated next generation organic stimulator, it produces the most aggressive root growth of any stimulator on the market. If a three inch cube is soaked with the correct dose of Root Accelerator in conjunction with A&B nutrition to the EC value of 1.2 it is possible to produce a mass of roots from the base of the cube within 24 to 36 hrs.

H&G Hydro A&B available in both hard and soft water varieties, is the most popular base nutrition and Rapid Grow A&B is a close second (it is the first choice in hard water areas). Both are just about the best you can get.

H&G MultiEnzyme this product gives big bang for the buck. It aids the processes involved in the transfer of the nutrient from the rockwool substrate to the root system, a sort of catalyst. Use it under controlled conditions and just observe how it vastly increases the size of the plants stem and branches.

H&G Bud XL used during the last three weeks of cultivation. This flowering stimulator is completely organic. It contains its own selection of enzymes suitable for the final phase of the flowering cycle. During the period of applying Bud XL it is necessary to refrain from using MultiEnzyme.

Top Booster this product is an improvement to PK 13-14, it has basically has added iron and amino acids which prevent the nitrogen being striped from the leaves during its application.

Striped from the leaves during its application.

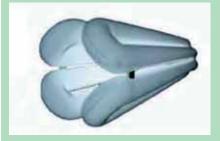
Shooting Powder this polarized potassium compound cannot be used at the same time as either Top booster or PK 13-14, you must use these products prior to using Shooting Powder which should be applied after a thorough flush. Shooting powder is the most aggressive compound yet to be produced it gives unrivalled performance with beneficial effects to the flower form and quality. This compound can be used in re-circulating systems but its true benefits become apparent when applied to flow to waste.

For House & Garden sales and product information contact Jon at CWI / Hydrochronic on 01803 323366.



Unit 2, 119-121 Teignmouth Road, Torquay, Devon, TQ1 4HA. Telephone / Facsimile 01803 323366

MaxGrow High Power CFLs





High Power Full Spectrum CFL 6400K Blau High Power Red Spectrum CFL 2100K

The debate between growers using fluorescent lamps and those with high-pressure sodium rages on. Lucky for us, as that means home growers have a much wider selection from which to choose than ever before. Due to advances in the HPS blue spectrum, CFL (compact fluorescent lamp) have gotten a bad review as outdated or ineffective equipment. However, Canadian and US growers have been enjoying MaxGrow's High Power CFLs for a few years now. While many argue that the yield of fluorescents doesn't match the energy output, this is not necessarily true.

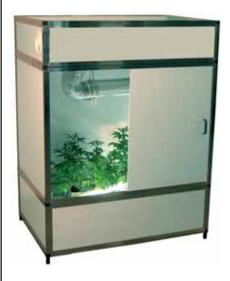
MaxGrow's line of single- and dual-spectrum grow lights will produce roughly the same yield as HPS lights for a beginning or average grower, but the company recommends that expert growers work from prior knowledge with CFLs to train and bend their plants into a nice 'tabletop' canopy. This is done in order to limit the space between the plant's surface and the bulb. Along with an integrated ballast, advantages to these lamps include: lower heat output/ increased humidity, power savings of approximately 30%, ease of cabinet growing, less emphasis needed on ventilation, lower fire hazard, and of course less chance of being burned (when gardening stoned). These babies will help your babies optimise their phototropic response, and the manufacturer has recently developed a unique high power red spectrum similar to the

SON-T PIA. Whether you grow a few plants in a kitchen cabinet, only vegetate, only flower, or require a dual spectrum, the low heat output and advanced colour spectrums of MaxGrow's full line of High Power CFLs will spoil you with choice. MaxGrow even took 2nd Place Best Indica at the IC Mag 'Grower's Cup' in 2005 with Bahia Black Head, grown exclusively under CFL lights! (KS)

For more info please visit www.mg-2.com



Unrecognisable grow cupboard design



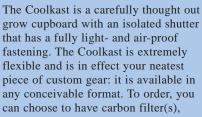
The G-Tools company has launched a series of grow cupboards on the market under the name G-kit. This grow cupboard is perfect for everyone who wants to grow at home, but has no inclination towards a complicated installation and yet still wants a good harvest. The cupboard (158 cm high x 118 cm wide x 78 cm deep.) is built out of solid PVC UVresistant panels fitted in aluminium frames. In the cupboard there is a ventilator (330 m3), air blower (160 m3), CAN carbon filter, 'Cooltube' armature with flexible air pipe, ELT pre-switch apparatus 1 x 600 Watt, 1 x Philips Son T Plus 600 Watt lamp and a junction box with VSA and timer. The G-kit is odourless, low-

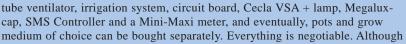
noise and light-proof. The net growing area is around one square metre. Thanks to the special cooled 'cooltube' lamp it is possible to keep the dimensions of the cupboard right down. The plants do not get singed even if they grow too close to the lamp. With this set-up you have the ideal conditions in which, with a few days pre-growth, to go straight into the bloom phase. The total cycle lasts around 8 to 9 weeks. What's more there are various options available, such as an automatic irrigation system, a thermodimmer, pH- and EC-meters, fire safety system and floor heating.

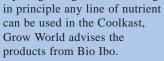
The G-kit is available in various colours, and thanks to its unobtrusive design it can be placed anywhere without attracting undue attention. Also striking are the large sliding doors, which offer you excellent access. The cupboard is delivered as a flat pack and is simple to put together without the need for any tools. The G-kit is also available in larger sizes, namely XL (175 cm x 118 cm x 78 cm), PLUS (158 cm x 154 cm x 78 cm) and PLUS XL (176 cm x 154 cm x 78 cm).

Info: G-Tools / Tel: +31 (0) 294 458 202 / Web: www.g-tools.nl

Growing now even cooler with Coolkast







Belonging to the same line of equipment is the drying cupboard, with a drying capacity of between 7 and 9 kilos. Grow World guarantees this remarkable amount can be totally dry in three days. There has never been a drying cupboard as cool as this one! Check the website for more distributors.

Info: Grow World, Tel: +31 (0) 55-5403381 E-mail: info@growworld.nl Web: www.growworld.nl



Handy second-timers





Recently the demand for second-timers has been growing. This is partly thanks to the arrival of grow containers that use frequent but short applications of water. With the current time switches it is not possible to set periods in less than one minute intervals, whether they are digital or analogue. But many of the new grow techniques involving hydro-systems work by using very short water applications, such as the grow drums mentioned earlier, where one minute is just too long.

Bio Ibo now has a second-timer available in both a digital (VOISEC 111, 16 Amp.) as well as analogue (VOISEC 471, 8 Amp.) version. These are specially made for connecting up nutrient pumps. The timer is built into a splash-resistant box with a two-metre long connection cable with earthing. The unit is equipped with a handy see-through clip on its front for programming the timer. Growers who want to be right on time will be smart to switch over to this handy second-timer.

Info: Bio Ibo wholesale,

Tel: +31 (0) 184 654 466, Fax: +31 (0) 184 654 191, Web: www.bioibo.nl

International Highlife Guide, 7th edition

Yellow pages for a Green industry

Absolutely indispensable within a border free Europe – the International Highlife Guide is nothing less than an international 'who's who' within the European cannabis industry Nowhere else will you find a guide so comprehensive and so complete that covers all companies doing business within the cannabis sector. From Amsterdam to Barcelona, Berlin to London, Zurich to Madrid, 'you name it'; this guide will provide you with thousands of addresses, in villages and cities, where professionals are actively working with cannabis

products. This standard work is an absolute must for your bookshelf. And the best part? The International Highlife Guide is being distributed for free!

Developments within Europe are unfolding at a rapid pace. Borders between countries participating in the European Community have become almost meaningless as business within Europe takes on a more international aspect. Developments within the cannabis trade have not been at a standstill either. Until the nineties of the previous century, there was a thriving cannabis industry in the Netherlands, but that has seen changes recently too. Countries such as Spain, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Switzerland suddenly list thousands of companies active in the cannabis sector now. And with the progressive economic unification of Europe, this trend can only increase. The cannabis industry has shown a consistent rise in growth over the past few years.

Discover Publisher recognised the growing internationalisation of the cannabis sector and decided the time was ripe for a standardised work listing all European companies engaged in the cannabis trade.

After intensive preparation and thorough research whereby a huge mass of information was assembled, the publisher of Highlife & Soft Secrets now presents the 7th International Highlife Guide, condensed to fill 338 pages. Never before has there been a comparable guide that lists so much accurate information about the international hemp industry. And believe it or not - you can get your own copy, completely free of charge!

The International Highlife Guide has been published in two parts and is simplicity itself to use. The first part contains information relating to the Dutch cannabis industry and is arranged alphabetically per city. The different companies have been divided into separate categories such as, coffeeshops, wholesalers, growshops, Internet and media, smokers paraphernalia, smart shops and seed companies. The Dutch section concludes with a chapter titled 'Other', which lists any other businesses or organisations.

The second part of the *International Highlife Guide* consists of an overview of cannabis related companies active in other countries. Separate chapters contain information about Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. The addresses of the different cannabis companies have been alphabetically arranged and listed under the cities and villages of the various countries. New feature is that this time the various countries are labeled with their own color codes.

This full colour guide is certainly indispensable to anyone who wants to stay abreast of cannabis related business opportunities within Europe. Make sure that you get yourself a copy. Ask for it at the place of business where you do your shopping and find your way about in cannabis-loving Europe!

International Highlife Guide, 'Guide to the Cannabis Industry' - Discover Publisher Ltd.

Freely available at the better grow/head/smart- and coffeeshops throughout Europe. Also available at various international hemp trade fairs. For more information call: 0031-(0)73-5498112

R.I.P



Eagle Bill Amato

1943 – 2005

Sadly, Amsterdam has lost yet another of its brightest stars: Eagle Bill, perhaps best known for inhabiting the small corner of the Hash Museum from which clouds of vapour poured forth. If you visited the Museum even once in the past ten years or so, chances are good that this warm and gentle man had introduced you to the medical device that treats patients without damaging them through the negative effects of smoking Cannabis. At age 63 Bill was

diagnosed with terminal cancer and passed peacefully in his sleep shortly thereafter. He had returned to his home state, Georgia, in order to be with his family, and his Amsterdam family is already missing him terribly. Cherokee in "ancestry and spirituality," Eagle Bill had battled several illnesses bravely and still dedicated his remaining energy to helping other medical patients, plus educating recreational users on healthier methods of inhaling and the dangers of disrespecting a drug upon which many people rely for therapeutic benefit. Not often have American expatriots integrated themselves so thoroughly into the Cannabis scene, and with such a positive emphasis and effect. Dissemination of information was Bill's goal, and he achieved it with a much more far-reaching impact than he probably ever realised. In light of his determination to die with grace and dignity, a memorial service was held at the Hash, Marijuana Hemp Museum on the 28th of May 2005. Friends and Cannabis family members gathered at 4:20 to honour, remember, and send Eagle Bill to the sky in a puff of vapour.

Eagle Bill will be missed dearly. Rest In Peace, old friend...





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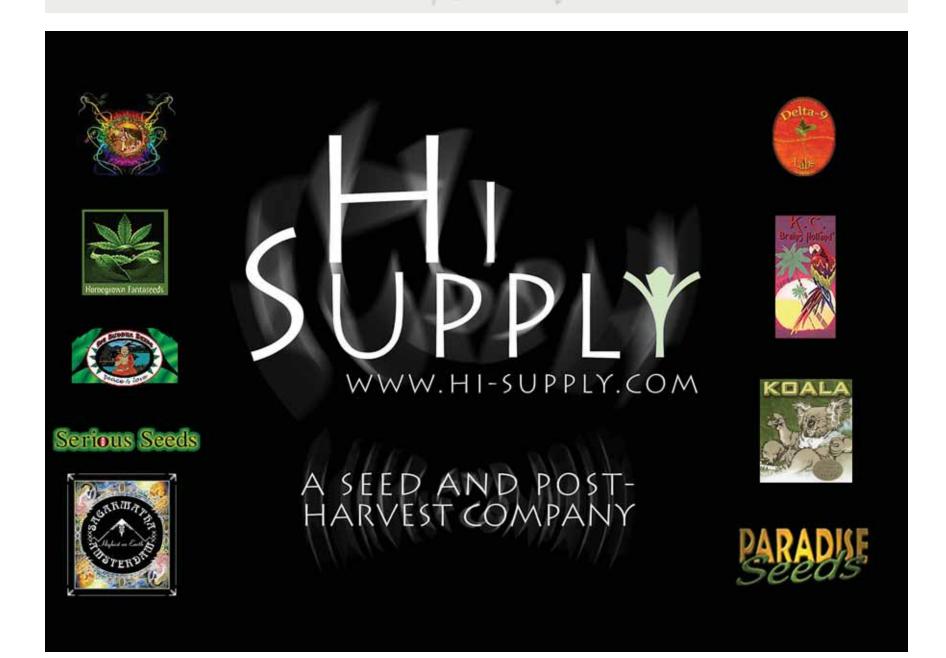
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SHOP REVIEWS

Hunter's Bar and Coffeeshop, Amsterdam

"Making it happen for 20 years!"



Happy Birthday Hunter's! The popular coffeeshop in Amsterdam has reached its 20th anniversary and what better way to celebrate than with a facelift? The traditional emphasis on high quality products and service has been retained and combined with a modern, swanky, hip interior, sparkling new bathroom facilities, and a new desire to keep old traditions alive.

Smokers worldwide may not remember much of their holiday in Amsterdam, and trying to find favourite coffeeshops on a return trip is often impossible. Luckily, short-term memory loss usually allows for a few random details to be retained, such as the "pissing dog" logo from the old Hunter's storefront. "A bit crass perhaps, but highly recognizable," is how one staff member, Abe, describes it. The now-famous incontinent dog has become a widely-known symbol of the Hunter's experience, and is a tribute to the dog owned by the coffeeshop's initial proprietor. Changed over in 1985 from a Mexican restaurant, the shop has expanded from their Bar/Coffeeshop location on the Warmoesstraat to also include The Coin Coffeeshop and Hunter's Vodka Bar, right beside each other and only a few doors down the street.

Each of the shops offers homemade goodies such as toasted sandwiches, brownies (regular and "special"), warm apple pie, and nachos with guacamole and salsa: gotta keep the blood sugar levels up! Plus, smoking is "highly" encouraged in all three. The same welcoming atmosphere, friendly, helpful customer service, and uplifting but relaxed music accompany tourists in each location, and the Bar/Coffeeshop and Vodka Bar host live DJs on Friday and Saturday nights. Tokers can purchase very high quality and competitive strains of weed and difficult to find varieties of hash, all marked with

helpful guidelines and info. Note the initials next to each type of weed: "B.S." denotes Bio Sativas, while "H.I." informs you of the Hydroponic cultivation of your Indica choice, for example. In a city so famous for tolerance towards Cannabis, it's a wonder that many tourists experience coffeeshops that not only refuse to answer questions or mock the askers, but also only offer chemical-filled mass-produced smoke that rarely offers a nice effect. Not so at the Hunter's family!

SSUK was impressed by the wide variety of indoor and even outdoor ganja on offer, plus an extensive list of black and blonde hash, Dutch hash, and pre-rolls in several varieties. The dealers are all smokers or have been at one time, and they plus the bar staff are constantly updated on product information and what to do if someone smokes too much. In a coffeeshop that also happens to house a fantastic drink selection ranging from the pub usuals to top shelf flavoured vodkas and champagne as well, it's important to remember that THC makes other drugs much stronger, including that double shot of whisky in your hand! The staff recognizes their famous and convenient spot on the Warmoesstraat as a great place to have a fun holiday evening, but one that also sometimes hosts a rather unpleasant or intimidating atmosphere. For that reason, as Abe explains, "We have a unique situation here in Holland. People have the ability to come here and enhance their usual tourist activities by smoking some really nice marijuana. We want them to have a good time doing it. The main point is to give people the highest quality you can... and we try to offer a variety of products so that there's something here for everyone."

Smokers of all ages and levels of experience are not only welcome here, but they also are made to feel extremely

comfortable and safe inside and outside the shop. Whether you're seventy and have never inhaled before, or 20 and fancy yourself a "smoking professional," you will find a selection to fit your smoking needs, plus as much relevant information as you require. If the staff notices trouble in the shop or even out on the street, they get involved and try to diffuse the situation in order to preserve the safety aspect as well as the good vibes. In two years of employment, Abe has never seen a fight at Hunter's. He has, however, once had a gentleman leave his own wheelchair behind in the shop. Talk about the therapeutic benefits of

For grass lovers, Abe recommends the Lavender or Sage 'n Sour, or perhaps the Orange Bud for a lighter smoke, but the menu really makes it tough to decide, as the Hunter's staff try to always keep up with the local trends. Other tasty treats include Kali Mist Haze, Cannalope Haze, and Shiva Shanti. For the hashie in your life, pick up some Primera or Sahara, faves among the dealers, but perhaps you might also enjoy the blonde Caramello or Casablanca, and the Hunter's Special does the trick without heavily depleting your beer fund. Black hash is also very popular here, and just as high quality. The Nepalese Black smells like mint chocolate, and looks pretty lethal, but so do the Manali Cream, Royal Temple Ball, and Malana Sweet Cream (for professionals only!) If you reckon you've passed the professional status and deserve your own category, please feel free to experience the Bubble Hash, conveniently sub-labelled "(Murder)," which will definitely slow down your day. Your non-smoking friends might even have to come back for you later! The prices are more than reasonable and refreshing for this extremely central spot, plus Hunter's offers all selections at a one-gram

minimum, and a five-gram bag saves you ten percent, as does purchasing a "sixpack" of joints instead of just one.

Hunter's Bar/Coffeeshop and their Vodka Bar accommodate smokers and drinkers, and although you can't buy weed at the Vodka Bar, you can sample additional specialty vodkas, and they even sell their fancy tasty cocktails by the pitcher. Occasionally a different atmosphere is desired, and The Coin is the place. If you want a quiet smoke, The Coin offers the same smoke menu, but without the alcohol. All three shops offer Internet access at great prices, and the music ranges from drum 'n bass to the Buena Vista Social Club. Special attention is also paid within this group to the changing needs of the auto-production world, so in addition to grinders, skins, lighters, etc., the smoke shops sell Growi and Soma seeds to keep the ganja going. For some of the "highest" quality hash and





weed in Amsterdam, plus great customer service, definitely check out Hunter's Bar and Coffeeshop on the easy-to-find Warmoesstraat. With such an extreme debate ranging worldwide on the benefits and difficulties of the belaboured plant, it's nice to see a group of shops dedicated to preserving a positive smoking experience when so much misinformation is currently being disseminated. Abe also points out that at Hunter's no one wants to further demonise the substance through showing irresponsible drug use, which can scare possible medi-weed recipients back into pharmaceutics. As he further elaborates, "We want people to see that they can come to Amsterdam and have marijuana be an accepted part of their enjoyable experience, without changing society for the worse." That's why they, and we, say: "Support your local dealer!"

Hunter's Bar/Coffeeshop Warmoesstraat 24 Open daily from 8.00AM-1.00AM, 'til 3.00AM Fri./ Sat.

Hunter's Vodka Bar Warmoesstraat 35

Open Thursday and Sunday from 12.00PM- 1.00AM, 'til 3.00AM Fri. / Sat.

The Coin Coffeeshop Warmoesstraat 37 Open daily 7.00AM- 1.00AM



By Weckels, the grow specialist from Atami

Professional grow systems from the horticultural world



The 'giant bucket' allows us the opportunity of growing a single, colossal mother plant, which can then provide our whole grow space with clones.

In this episode of Weckels World of Wonders we will be taking a look at some of the grow systems that have been used for years now by market gardeners, while they have not, or barely, been available in our specific branch of the agricultural business. Those of you who regularly keep an eye on developments within the 'straight' greenhouse and horticulture world, or in any case are just interested in what new grow systems are out there, will often be the first to latch on to the new developments in order to reap their benefits. And you really don't need to grow tomatoes to keep your fingers

There are many growers who get a kick out of raising their total harvest in leaps and bounds, by using technically improved systems. That new grow systems all too frequently do not provide any new surprises and sometimes even produce nothing more than a large sense of disappointment, will not be unknown to most growers. Thanks largely to this phenomenon, the majority of growers in Holland (and elsewhere) are happy to take a 'wait and see' approach. Until good results are reported, what's the point in blowing a huge hole in your pocket on a new growing system? And when we don't get good results with it in the shortest of times we the whole investment was for nothing.

The plants in the highest pipes may not begin to grow with too much enthusiasm

We are also very curious as to whether new developments in the professional greenhouse and horticultural worlds are also very well suited to growing marihuana. In order to give you a picture of the state of affairs, I'll be setting out the pros and cons of a number of systems and new developments that will give you a good idea where you might begin.

Lighting system

Many growers often have problems with too high a temperature in the space where they are growing. This is not so surprising given that nearly every grower endeavours to kit out his growing space with as many lamps as possible in order to secure as large a harvest as possible. And it is no flight of fancy to suggest that some of us end up overdoing it a bit and actually lowering our possible yield.

That the problems of too high a temperature regularly raise their heads even among professional horticulturalists (those growing only legal crops), is something that has given the designers of grow systems something to think about. But despite all the good intentions there are only a very few inventions that have actually made it off the design drawing boards.

One of them is a lamp system that has been designed so that the warm air from it is sucked directly away by a special vacuum pump built into a large tube that fits around the lamps. This method really does work superbly in drastically limiting the heat given off by the lamps, which allows a great many lamps to be hung in relatively small spaces. The reason why this system has not achieved any great success to date in the growing of marihuana is that quantity of light, against all expectations, is so drastically reduced that many growers would rather work with the problems of high temperatures (i.e. without this system). But there are ongoing experiments to improve the system, and there are high hopes that the quantity of light that reaches the plants will eventually be just as high as from a normal lamp.

Double suction installation

For growers who plan to raise their plants in two grow spaces next to each other, I have had some experience with a really good method. The technique involves setting the daylight and dark periods of the two spaces out of synch with each other. If both spaces are more or less of equal size then it is simple trick to pump the warm air from one of them (the one in which the lights are on) into the other space, by using a double-connected vacuum pump installation. Okay, so it is a little bit more expensive, but this makes it easier to keep both spaces at a

reasonably constant temperature, and this is something the plants just love! You do have to make sure that there is more than enough inflow of fresh air from outside so that the plants have a continuous supply of fresh air at their disposal.

Various heights

A completely different growing system altogether is the construction that allows the plants to grow (and bloom) at different to each other. I can hear all the old lags in the house starting to protest immediately that doing so will make the mounting of lamps above them into a complete nightmare! But I promise you that this unusual way of growing is nowhere near as bad as many might expect at first glance. If we, for example, make sure that the pipes (in which the plants stand) are



The pipe system with which the plants can be grown at different heights, perhaps has a rosy future in sight.

erected completely independently. then the lamps mounted at various heights offer the great advantage that the plants are now illuminated from the sides as well as above. In short, the total quantity of light the plant receives can be increased considerably by using this growing method, and thus the eventual harvest can be expected to be larger. We do need to make sure though that the plants in the highest (furthest to the edge) pipes do not begin their growth with too much enthusiasm, or else the plants in the lower hanging pipes run the risk of being overrun, with all the negative consequences that come with it. Should this happen anyway, then you should trim back the plants a little (during the growth phase only), or you can let the whole construction sink a bit, which will move the pipes away from each other. >>



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A Postcard from Spain

Joe Kan

Hola, Amigos.

Well readers, yours truly got the opportunity of a freebie holiday, so here I am in Malaga. It wasn't

supposed to be a holiday, more riding shotgun for an acquaintance who was to come here to do some business (ahem). Of course, everything went totally Pete Tong. But I'll get to that in a minute.

I get a call to meet up with this bloke Mickey that I kind of know through a couple of very good friends. They say he's okay and we arrange the pow-wow.

So the deal is that Mickey is going to come down here and supposedly score all this primo oil off some guys he knows, though of course it turns out that he doesn't actually know them at all, and they're friends of friends. Already I can see there's room for some fucking bother.

The deal for Kaner is this: tag along, check the gear, make sure it's kosher, come back, end of story. No having to stuff the gear up my butt, no swallowing a million johnnies or any of that prison-related nonsense. I'm there in a purely advisory capacity and all expenses paid. Yaba-daba-fucking-doo: who'd knock that back?

Anyhow, here we both are in Malaga, and after checking into our not-too-bad hotel, Mickey makes a few calls and says he's got to go and "do the business". Personally, as we're here for a couple of weeks I don't really see why he needs to go straight away, and I'm not too happy at the prospect of a load of cannabis oil lying around for any longer than it has to be. But I needn't have worried.

I go for a wander and find a bar, as Mickey says he's going to be at least four or five hours. Several hours and a number of cervezas of San Miguel later I head back to the hotel and true to his word, Mickey is there stroking a rucksack and looking really pleased with himself.

Mickey: "Here's the oil, there's a load of it and it's supposed to be totally fucking pimp."

Me: "Whoa, it's supposed to be?"

Mickey: "Yeah, I'd the best time with these dudes but they needed to get ready head back to Morocco and couldn't hang about too long."

Me (with a sinking feeling): "So you took it all without even giving it a taste first?"

Mickey: "Executive decision, man. I had to take it or lose it, so I took it."

You'll see what's coming...

He produces four sealed jars from said rucksack and opens one of them up. Immediately, the smell of dope fills the room. While, it certainly smells okay from where I'm standing, I'm still doubtful. Mickey skins up a number and we move to the veranda for a little toke.

Mickey inhales deeply, exhales. "They were right, that's fucking amazing, man."

I'm getting absolutely nothing off it, but he tells me this is because I've been on the beer and it'll take a while to cut through the effects. About 6 joints later the awful realisation that he has indeed been ripped off sinks in. Mickey isn't happy and, stuffing everything back into the rucksack, rushes out of the room promising retribution of Old Testament proportions, though what he plans to do on his own is anyone's business.

Another 8 hours or so pass and I get a call. It's Mickey and he's been busted for something like intent to supply drugs or something like that. He was on his way back to "sort out" the supplier when he gets lifted. The details are sketchy. The call isn't to get him a lawyer but to promise not to tell anyone about how he got burned.

In the end, it turned out that the oil had so little THC in it that el dibble let him off, but they kicked him out of Spain as an undesirable. Yours truly has a pre-paid hotel room and decides to hang about for a while, having smoothed things with the dibble that I'm innocent of any involvement and should really choose my friends more carefully.

Right on to that.

 $horribly_stoned_boy@hotmail.com$

>> Ideal for mother plants

Yet another growing system involves using an enormous tub or bucket as the base for growing in, but given the need to make sure that continuous supplies of liquid fertiliser are needed, for the majority of growers they appear to be totally un-useable. But for smart growers who want a reasonably safe manner to fill their entire grow space with clones from the same mother plant, these tubs do offer a reliable result. The 'giant bucket' can easily

the most comfortable environment for the young marihuana plants. What is more, such a box is great for using by growers who plan to build their own growing cupboard. It is a simple question of sticking the box in a cupboard, popping a lamp above it, sticking in some ventilation and off you go!

The only drawback of this box is actually the rather shallow depth, thanks to which you can't afford to leave the plants too long in pre-growth, otherwise they will remain rather small

Stick the box in the cupboard, pop a lamp over it, add a vacuum pump - and off you go!

keep an enormous mother plant alive, and in this way you can ensure a supply of uniform new descendants. Certainly with the ever-present danger of a visit from the 'forces of justice', such a large tub offers the advantage that one single plant often carries much less risk (can we safely say 'no risk' yet?) with it than a whole garden full of growing mother plants. Of course, you still need to make sure you keep the mother plant in a different location than where you will be raising her clones, otherwise she will just be taken away with the other plants in the event of a bust

Box

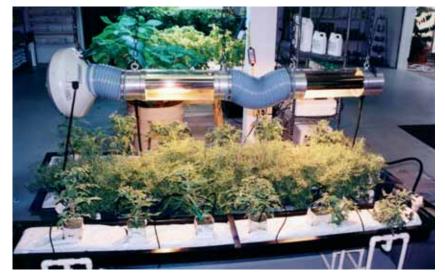
A neat system for growing that suits the hobby grower, is the special box in which the base is equipped with a heating element. It should be quite clear that this system offers to provide in size and the eventual yields will be lower. If you are planning to grow in an attic, including right in the corners (under the heavily slanting roof), then this system is pretty good for growing decent plants in such a restricted space.

As for using them to grow clones in, these boxes are also particularly good. Certainly when we cover the box with a see-through lid, the air moisture content in them rises really nicely, which in turn will prompt the clones to root more quickly and so make them develop a bit quicker.

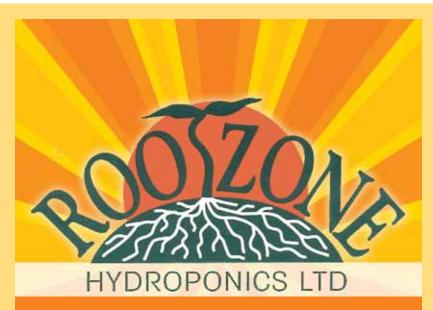
Hopefully we have inspired you a bit in this episode to start moving towards a bright new future. A bit of discovering and knocking stuff together never did anyone any hard, as long as you do not forget the safety of yourself and others in the process! Here's to your success!



The box with a heating element, for in the cupboard or for raising clones, is a handy and user-friendly growing system.



The lamp construction, whereby a suction pump directly removes the hot air is, to date, not yet a real success. The construction still keeps back too much light, but there is every chance that this will be remedied in the future.



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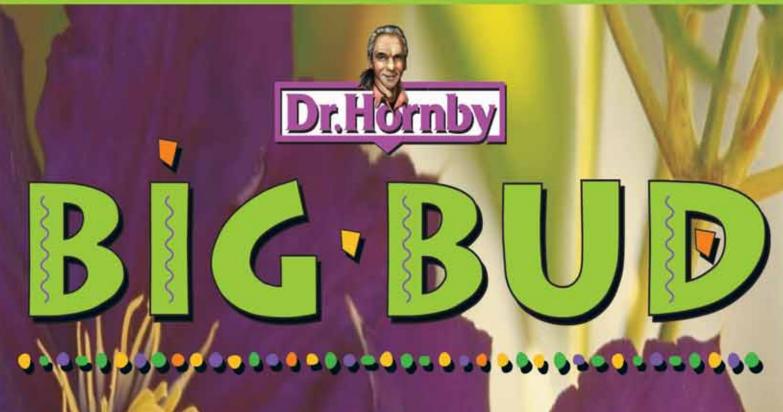
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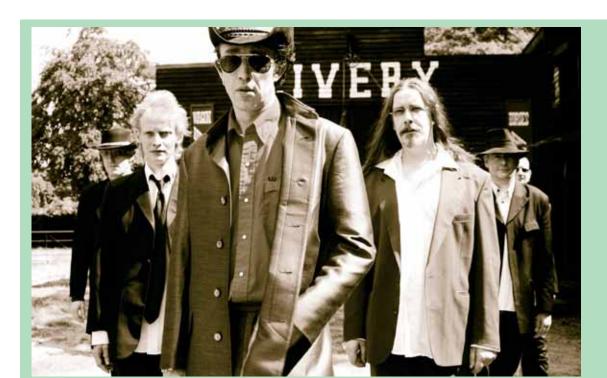
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An interview with the Alabama 3

Love is the law

With a fantastic live show that excites a religious like fervour, South London (dis-) order of celebrants, goddesses, comrades, brothers and sisters - Alabama 3, hit the road again to promote the recently released fourth album, "Outlaw". SSUK spoke to front man extraordinaire, Larry Love, for a little of the gospel.

SSUK: Brixton is the Alabama 3 homeland and for many years has been at the frontline of the cannabis issue, with the stop and search laws and riots of the early eighties to the recent experimental legal changes regarding possession of cannabis. Does the Alabama 3 or you Larry Love have a position on this subject and what are your feelings relating to it?

LL: Whilst I recognise that certain people can have an adverse reaction to cannabis and that no way should these people smoke it because of psychotic episodes, about which there's a big panic going on at the moment in the national press. I think for the majority of people that smoke cannabis, it's generally a peaceful, recreational narcotic. It's a lot better than fuckin' Prozac and Largactyl and Methadone. We've always been involved with the cannabis festival and yeah, it's great. Roll em' up and let's get stoned.

The Alabama 3 have always headlined at the cannabis festival, taking place in the Brixton area over the past few years. How do you feel that it's not going to happen this year?

Well, I'm not surprised really because it probably scared the shit out of the establishment and it's not something that Lambeth Council want to be associated with. It's quite funny that they've got this posh festival going on down there in the park and we've done all the ground work. It's been hijacked by the establishment - sponsored by Bacardi Breezer - it's just a load of corporate wank basically.

Have you been asked to play?

Yeah. We told them to fuck off.

Would you like to see Dutch style coffee shops in the UK?

I think so because the more it's out in the open, and this is the kind of red herring about saying cannabis causes this and causes that, the more it is out in the open, the more facilities will be there for people who do have an adverse reaction to it. Many of these people, in terms of class polarity, are those who are having a tough time living in bed-sits or squats. It might be self-medicating but that's what gets them through the day - help's them make it through the night as John Lennon said. I think it's important to recognise that because it's true.

What's your favourite puff?

A.K.A. 47 and Bubblegum, yeah and White Widow but I've not seen much of that lately.

Do you compose, record or play when you're stoned?

All of the above. It's like the reggae thing, I'm not a rasta or anything but I do believe that there's a major connection between marijuana and musicians. I couldn't sit in the studio listening to music without a joint in my hand. Maybe that's me having a monkey on my back but I like it chirping along to my songs. It's nice having a monkey on your back because they can do vocal harmonies.

You are about to embark on a pretty major UK tour to launch the new album, tell me about this.

It's called "Outlaw" and it's very much enshrined in Bob Dylan's famous quote "to live outside the law you must be honest." One thing I realised when I first had a conversation with Bruce Reynolds at the Clerkenwell literary festival and I was fairly impressed, when he was on the run from the Great Train Robbery he went to all the sacred sites of the bank robbers of the wild west, Jesse James and all that. There's a long tradition of celebrating outlaws in American culture. Bruce Reynolds told me about a song made in 1967 called "Have You Seen Bruce Richards Revnolds?" and we found out on the Internet and did a cover version. Journalists have commented that there's a certain melancholy on the album and I'm not into celebrating gangsters per se but when you bear in mind the way the populations going, in ten years time everyone's going to know somebody in prison or an electronic tag on their ankle or a teenager that's been banned from a shopping centre for wearing a hooded top. I think the state, on the back of this terrorism phobia they've all got, everyone's going to made, in some way or other, outlaws. For us, we can't help our Soprano's connection but I like to think that wer'e aware of the melancholy that goes with crime, it's not all about glamour. Kids are affected for instance and I think the album reflects that vibe. I don't think there's any other band quite like us with our cult outsider staus, we are the hole in the soul gang.

Have things changed much since the band began around ten years ago?

Not really no, the skunks just got a lot better. We're coming up to our tenth anniversary and I'm pretty proud that we've kept things together that long. We haven't had major chart success bit we've built up a cult following enough to sustain us on the road. Last year, the Guardian gave us five stars for a gig and said that we were the best live band in the country. Record sales are not everything, with the state of the industry and people downloading, this is bound to happen. Come on kids - illegal downloading all the way. Fuck the BPI! It's good, on our travels we've found a vast constituency of people who choose to live outside the law but remain honest.

If you had to sum up the essential message of Larry Love, what would this be?

There's no point looking for answers, just ask the most important questions, baby!

What or who has been your greatest influence?

Probably the Mormon religion for giving me something to kick against. I was brought up the son of a preacher man, and secondly, John Coltrane.

You're playing at the Glastonbury festival this year with its massive crowds. How does the Alabama 3 thing go down compared to the more intimate atmosphere of the pubs, squats and parties where you began playing and still obviously enjoy playing at?

As son of a preacher man I've always been used to big congregations, we used to have these conventions in South Wales with thousands of people and I used to do a bit of preaching. It's the way I was brought up so I actually like it. With the Alabama's, what we've got as the constituency of our fans has developed, is a kind of twisted family atmosphere. We have Hells Angels there, lots of ravers, grannies with their sons and girls. Once people break through the smoke screen of us having a laugh pretending we're from Alabama, our songs are generally about something. Coming from a South Wales mining community you have a great concern about protecting the community. I'm not into individualism, I like the crowd, and I like being part of something bigger than my own sordid ego. We can whip 'em up or whip 'em down according to where we are.

What's next for the band? What projects are in the pipeline?

Well, today I've just spoken to Ken Russell who's got a new film coming out and he's looking for four tracks of the new album. I like getting into the film stuff. The Alabamans have always made a bit of a living out of the publishing - we were in "Gone In Sixty Seconds", "A Life Less Ordinary" and "The Sopranos", we seem to fit in well with the televisual vibe. I'll have a top ten hit but I don't know if that's going to happen. Yeah really just keep on keeping on!

Is there anything you would like to say finally to Soft Secrets readers?

Let the E be with you, and I don't mean the love drug I mean Elvis!



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SHOPREVIEW

The Rookies Bar-Coffeeshop, Amsterdam

A Place to Rest Your (Stoned &) Weary Head

That's the invitation offered to smokers of all (legal) ages, backgrounds, and interests at The Rookies Bar - Coffeeshop, Hotel, and Souvenir Shop. As Amsterdam has been inundated by dozens of carbon-copy coffeeshops, it's not often that tourists can check into a hotel smack in the centre of town, buy some ganja downstairs, and enjoy the truly 'smoke-friendly' policy the hotel encourages.



The Rookies Bar - Coffeeshop

Korte Leidsedwaarstraat 145-147 1017 PZ Amsterdam, NL

Coffeeshop Hours:

Sunday-Thursday 10.00AM-12.45AM Friday & Saturday 10.00AM-02.45AM

Hotel Rookies

(formerly Hotel Uptown)

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By Kristie Szalanski, photos by Brian Reardon

A pair of friends from Amsterdam opened The Rookies in 1992. While 'green' smokers are certainly as welcomed here as the 'professionals,' the name of the shop actually refers to the fact that Arnold and Mark were the youngest coffeeshop owners in the area at the time. They also brought to the industry fresher ideas about how coffeeshops should be run and the additional services that would make visitors more comfortable, such as offering a beer to go with your smoke, and are active members of the BCD (Cannabis Retailers Association) and PCN (Platform Cannabis Nederland).

Located just one minute from the famous Leidseplein area, the coffeeshop seats just over 80 in varied combinations, accommodating everyone from Lonely Planet travellers to

If you're looking for somewhere that you can 'party downstairs, sleep upstairs in the centre of Amsterdam,' then The Rookies family awaits you!

middle-aged groups looking for a relaxed holiday. You can sit at the bar, sip fresh orange juice at the small tables on the terrace, or enjoy a few games of pool while listening to smoker-friendly music ranging from Beck to the Supremes. Extras to the usual bar/ drinks menu of non- and alcoholic drinks include an extensive list of spirits at very local prices, as opposed to the double price tourists are sometimes charged in certain areas of town. The staff is polite and always willing to advise consumers about mixing alcohol with THC, which many bar - coffeeshop combos sometimes ignore, in exchange for higher sales volume. The shop also offers free use of their house pipes and bongs!

If you get a bit too, well, relaxed to play pool, you can spend hours staring at the amusing and eclectic memorabilia cluttering the walls, or give up on the day and head upstairs to the cosy two-star hotel. Hotel Uptown, soon to be known as Hotel Rookies, opened next door to the coffeeshop in 1998, when Mark and Arnold decided to expand their empire. Twelve



rooms encompass a combination of three singles, two doubles, four twin rooms, and three luxury twin set-ups with bath. Special accommodations for groups of up to six people can be found a few doors up the street at the Rookies Townhouse, as the hotel rooms are limited to a two-person occupancy. Hotel Uptown/ Rookies is housed in two side-by-side 18th century buildings, which have been completely renovated and are situated right above the coffeeshop, and truly lives up to its smoking policy: you can have a smoking room, or a smoking room! Most hotels offer smoking and nonrooms, but obviously the tokers have to stay somewhere.



Other perks include wireless Internet in all rooms, plus daily breakfast (included) served from 8.00 - 10.00AM. Each guest has private access to a safe, and rooms are equipped standard with a toilet, shower, TV, and phone. Frequent visitors to Amsterdam will attest to the dangers of assuming that all hotels are equipped the same. Accommodation is cleaned daily, which is especially nice for people staying multiple days, and the reception is open daily from 8.00AM – 8.00PM.

For those of you who might be travelling in mixed groups (couples, singles, parents, etc.) the room rates are quite refreshing. Off-peak rates for January and February, or during off-season, run from €60 for a single, €80 for a double or twin set-up, and end at €88 for the luxury twin rooms with bath. You can also contact The Rookies for special rates and offers at this time of year. The rest of the season (March December) offers competitive rates of €75 for the singles, €100 for doubles and twins, and €110 for the luxury twins. All major credit cards are accepted, and reservations can be made via phone or email, which is convenient for visitors from other continents. The Rookies website (www.rookies.nl) offers a sneak peak at their accommodations, bar - coffeeshop, and souvenir shop, plus great links for tourists and ex-pats as well.

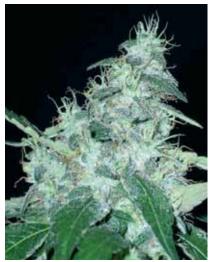
The Souvenir Shop, conveniently located across the street from The Rookies Coffeeshop and Hotel, was added to the family in 2002. Whether you're staying in the Hotel or simply want to take home some Amsterdam memorabilia, The Rookies Souvenir Shop can fit your needs with a wide selection of T-shirts, sweatshirts, polo shirts, hats, and bags. Open daily from 10.00AM – 10.00PM, smokers and tokers can also choose from lots of pipes, bowls, and bongs made from all sorts of materials: glass, stone, vegetable ivory, etc.

Speaking of which- you're coming to Amsterdam to smoke, right? Why not book yourself into a hotel where you can smoke all you like? The Rookies Bar - Coffeeshop offers the usual fare of names you'll recognise on their smoke menu. You can pick up flyers here with drug safety advice, and the products are packaged with appropriate usage/ export warnings. The emphasis in The Rookies family is not necessarily placed upon getting wasted; rather, the owners and staff simply want you to enjoy your usual holiday activities with the added benefit of the moodenhancing properties of THC. Think of it as hanging out in your local pub- and not going to jail for smoking a big fat ioint there!

Spanish grower Manero

By Bart B.

Bonsai-style Sandstorm



I have been very impressed with Sandstorm.

garden, of which the majority were produced by Dutch seed banks. The varieties that made the most impact on me have been Mr Nice and AK-47 from Serious Seeds, which gave great yields with a lot of power. Recently I have discovered Sandstorm by Cannabiogen, and have very much enjoyed this too. I'm keeping two mother plants of this

speak of during my adventures in growing. Each time though, I achieve small improvements that help my next plants grow and blossom a little better. The area of nutrition is one that I have been a bit more experimental. When I started out I used only a few products, but now I used way more as I keep improving the quality of my

After harvesting the drying process goes pretty quickly, because there is a very low moisture level in the air here and it is always pretty warm here in Spain.

because this variety is so exotic. The grow space in which I raise my mother plants consists of five Osram

I grow bonsai-style.

The Spanish grower Manero talks about his early experience with growing cannabis. Despite the fact that he has only been growing for a few years, he appears to have already developed the skills with which to raise a top quality cannabis. Or is it just that the Spanish climate is so marvellous that all plants grow and bloom extremely well there...

My plants stand raise on aluminium pipes.

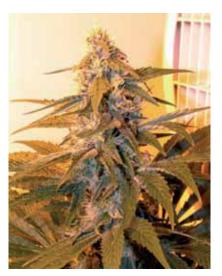
Luminux lamps, and I grow the plants 'bonsai-style'. The mother plants are kept very compact and small, hence the name bonsai-style. Because the water in my district is very high quality, I don't use a pH- or EC-meter. For the time being I am continuing to grow on soil mix. I started out by growing plants from seed in large pots, while

plants. Some of the products I use are Cannazym, Delta9, Topmax and Biobloei -these are all organic, which is



I am very happy with the results.

all I will use. I continue to grow on soil because it is so tolerant of mistakes. The medium is a very forgiving one. With other systems such as hydro it can happen quite quickly that your plants receive lasting damage or even die if you make a mistake. Just by looking at



A lovely bud.



your plants carefully you can learn a lot. Above all, don't go over the top in feeding them, and give a lot of attention to ventilation. This is extremely important, especially if you're growing indoors.

Short drying process

My whole system looks as follows. Clones are taken from the mother plant and these are rooted, which takes about two weeks or so. After that they are put into small pots and given two weeks in the grow room for pre-growth, following which they are eventually re-potted into square, 15 x 15 x 20 centimetre pots. The plants are raised in All-mix, which has sufficient nutrient in it for several weeks, after which it still does not need very much liquid nutrient adding to it.

After harvesting, the drying process goes pretty quickly because there is a very low moisture level in the air here and it is always pretty warm in Spain. That's why it never takes more than about two weeks for all the buds to be well and truly dried out, and ready for further ripening. The dried buds are hermetically sealed in bags. This allows no air to get in at all that would reduce the quality of the buds.

I don't use any smell reduction such as carbon filters, and with strong-smelling varieties you can smell the odour right to the lift door. In spite of this my neighbours have not yet succeeded in recognising the smell, so they don't know what it is I'm growing. Maybe they don't find the smell so unwelcome.

Divided

The opinion of the population is split over cannabis, but hash has always been used by many people in Spain. Obviously that is due to the close proximity of Morocco. The current government has passed some ridiculous laws which mean that we are in a situation where we have to hide our hobby. In this way it is given a criminal tint, when it really needed have one. But the fact remains that more and more people are starting to grow for themselves. You can smell it in the streets.



'Red Sandstorm'.

My pots are stood on aluminium pipes. This serves to improve the air circulation in the grow space and therefore reduce the risk of infection.

Manero: "I began more than two years ago to grow my own cannabis because of the lousy quality of the cannabis that was available on the street. What's more, this cannabis was also pretty expensive. In the very beginning I planted several seeds that started to grow right outside of the window of my house, but to avoid any problems with my neighbours I soon switched over to growing indoors. A grow space was set up that was not as obtrusive as the cannabis plants that were growing in front of my window. The cultivation of cannabis has since become a passion for me that with the passage of time just gets stronger and stronger. The first smoke of a new harvest is one of my particular pleasures.

Dutch seed banks

Up to the present day I have had around raised 15 varieties in my little

I now use smaller pots and raise a larger number of plants. As for their productivity. I really can't complain: every three months I get about 300 grams with a 400 watt light system. The exact eventual yield depends to a large extent on which variety I grow (and the time of year).

Improved air circulation

The plants are given about 20 days' pre-growth under a 18/6 hour regime, then I end up with about 18 grams per plant. My pots are stood on aluminium pipes. This serves to improve the air circulation in the grow space and therefore reduce the risk of infection. Also, the roots growing out of the bottom of the pot have as much fresh air as they need.

I have to say I have not really encountered any real problems to



After the harvest.

"Marijuana: Weed with Roots in Hell"

How *did* the plant with so many medical, industrial, nutritional, religious, and recreational applications become America's Public Enemy No. 1? By Kristie Szalanski



With the English-speaking world's collective consciousness seeming to focus on the latest CNN and BBC headlines, such as the inexhaustible Michael Jackson accusers, the War on Drugs quietly continues to destroy the lives of entire families in the "freest nation in the world." Thanks to the Internet and folks like Michael Moore, anyone interested has been able to easily discover links between Bush and questionable business relationships, be they foreign or domestic. The ties between prohibitive drug laws, high-ranking US officials and businessmen, and the underlying economy of the drug world have a long history in the United States, long before Skull and

Imagine yourself back in the US at the turn of the 19th century. You're a successful and influential businessman, and you've had 800,000 acres of prime Mexican timberland seized by Pancho Villa's army. Tensions are raised towards Mexican-Americans, Latinos, and Spaniards as a result of the Spanish American War of 1898, and the massive loss of raw materials threatens the supply and future of your paper mill empire. You must act. Your name is William Randolph Hearst, and you will be instrumental in the impending prohibition through taxation of Cannabis and hemp in America.

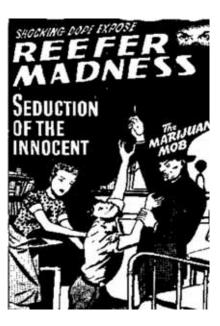
In the early 1910s, Hearst's headlines spouted racism in many forms, and didn't stop at the blatant denouncing of anyone with Latin blood. Readers were consistently "informed" of a multitude of violent crimes resulting from a combination of alleged heavy cocaine use among black youths and their supposed flaunting of white authority. Hearst's devastating loss enraged him and compelled him to shift the public's focus from coke as instigator to "the demon weed," a phrase for which we can thank him. At the time most Americans were aware of the industrial and drug implications (picture smoky Harlem at



the birth of the Jazz Age) and differences regarding Cannabis and hemp (or "Indian hemp"). However, the now ubiquitous "marijuana" or "marihuana" was a little-known slang term used primarily in the Northern Territory of Mexico, until Hearst decided to change that.

In an attempt to protect and further his business ambitions concerning raw materials for wood pulp papermaking, he began raving again, via headlines, about the "assassin of youth" that was plaguing America's streets. Hearst supported this accusation by publicly associating the recreational use of Cannabis (by lawabiding Americans) with his bigoted fantasy that all Mexicans were lazy pot smokers. Oddly enough, that means that the term "Marijuana" is nothing but a colloquialism based upon racist stereotypes. In fact the most proper term to be used is "Cannabis sativa L.," or Cannabis, although we all seem to know how to communicate when it's smoke we're after... any one of the other myriad names for the sacred herb will do. If vou want to check more thoroughly into the origins of this term, simply read the lyrics to the well-known folk song "La Cucaracha" ("The Cockroach") for added insight. Written about Pancho Villa and his army, one stanza contains the line "... No me gusta trabajar/" or "I don't want to work." In another, an army man looks for his "...Marihuana por fumar/." Gotta find it to smoke it. And people in the States were doing just that. This was bad news for Hearst, but things would get worse.

Research was being done in the industrial realm. As much as Americans knew about getting high, they also knew you could do things with ganja besides smoke it. Over a 20-year period, however, it was still surprisingly easy for Hearst to replace a somewhat neutral public attitude towards a *plant* with a suspicious attitude towards *MARIJUANA*, *destroyer of lives!* But what could a newspaper entrepreneur stand to gain by demonising a natural



substance? The more appropriate question is: what could he stand to lose? Everything. The Twenties began a small American Renaissance of innovation on old-fashioned technologies. A machine called a decorticator had enjoyed its debut a few years earlier, and similar to a cotton gin, it reduced hundreds of hours of hard labour processing hemp stalks for fibres down to just a few. A couple of hours, instead of days or weeks per acre later, and the leftover pulp or "hurds" could be used to make paper and building materials that were incredibly durable and environmentally friendly, plus the plant itself was a 100-day crop. If you're wondering about the previous popularity or availability of hemp products and cultivation, keep in mind as just one example that between 1763 and 1767 there was a shortage in the colony of Virginia, and farmers of the time could be jailed for not producing hemp. Today, paper, bricks and fibreboard, and even plastic CD travs are manufactured from waste products (and seeds) of the fibre harvesting, and most people have owned or at least come in contact with clothing or other textiles made from hemp fibres. In Hearst's time, as now, the flourishing hemp industry (or resurgence of it, to be exact) posed a great economic threat to multiple industries, not just paper production.

This meant that the government would be affected, as corporate business directly impacts campaign platforms, legislation, distribution of wealth, etc. More inventions meant more patents, and more jobs for some, but the people whose businesses were threatened by the hemp industry faced competition as well as new regulations on their existing technologies, and those were just a few of their problems. Hemp businesses had downsides as well, one of which was that patents would be extremely competitive, expensive, and also very tricky. Cannabis and hemp grow indigenously around the

whole world, save the Polar regions, and small farmers tended to be intimidated by the mountain of bureaucracy that surrounded anyone who might attempt to make his plants "licensed." Genetics is a tricky business, and the expense of running and legitimising a business might bankrupt you before the products were even made. Of course, these concerns were future worries, to be more problematic in the 1920s and '30s, and the immediate situation for Hearst and his friends was to "make or break" their own futures as businessmen.

Hemp had recently been enjoying a comeback as a result of the WWI effort, although the new income tax and high borrowing rates set back farmers and manufacturers. In 1916 the US government released USDA Bulletin 404, which extolled the virtues of hemp paper over wood pulp paper, as the latter required many chemicals for cultivation and processing while the hemp product was much stronger and environmentally viable. The Bulletin contained information about the production and handling of the hemp hurds, as well as predicting that the upcoming decorticator would make hemp America's largest agricultural industry. In the same year a German immigrant called George Schlichten was enjoying great progress with his 18-year-old invention, the decorticator. It could be employed in a number of different settings, as the machine was capable of removing fibres from almost any plant in record time. He was offered a chance to grow 100 acres of hemp on a farm in California owned by Henry Timken, inventor of the roller bearing and a wealthy industrialist. Timken was impressed by the potential of Schlichten's invention and was eager to provide the inventor an opportunity to field test (sorry, had to!) his machine. Timken was pretty sure at the time that the decorticator would revolutionise the textile, food, and paper industries and improve the quality of life for many in the US, although his personal interests were more business-oriented.

Henry Timken was compelled to meet with E.W. Scripps and Milton McRae, the former a newspaper mogul and the latter toying with the idea of purchasing a paper mill, as he knew that cheap newsprint was a hot commodity at the time and one of the most interesting prospects for the decorticator. Scripps needed to find a cheap source of paper to meet his rapidly increasing subscription and circulation needs, and if McRae was to jump into the paper mill game, he knew he needed to have access to the latest and most affordable technology. At the levels of hemp production being achieved in 1917, Schlichten estimated that about 50,000 tons of paper could be made per year, costing around \$25 per retail ton. That price was at least half the cost of other paper at the time. Schlichten also knew that each acre of hemp produced the same amount of paper as four to five acres of trees over a twenty-year period. Schlichten, McRae, and Scripps met with newspaper manager Ed Chase in August, as harvest time was approaching. The four men engaged in a three-hour meeting that McRae was secretly taping, and the transcript from that meeting is the only hard copy of Schlichten's many years of

research. Despite the thoroughness of that research, and the fact that after only three months the plants had reached 14 feet tall (4.27 metres), the businessmen gave in to financial pressure in the time of heavy taxation. Ed Chase was given a demonstration in which seven tons of hemp hurds was produced in two days, but the three newspapermen all agreed that the production costs simply were not low enough, as most paper mills were already set up for wood pulp production. The next time America was to hear about the decorticator was in the 1930s, when Popular Mechanics and Mechanical Engineering magazines kept the public updated about processes set to revolutionize industries ranging from textiles to plastics, fibre technologies to building materials to you-guessed-it: paper production. According to Jack Herer, the Popular Mechanics article was the first time the term "billion-dollar" was ever applied to a US agricultural crop. Kimberly Clark, St. Regis, and the Hearst Papermaking Division were all wood pulp based companies who stood to be obliterated by such an innovation.

The Great Depression would be brought to an end in a few years by some of these new technologies and industries, but those who'd made fortunes by cutting down trees began to use their political influence to their advantage. This was also around the time that the DuPont Corporation had begun releasing news of their synthetic fibre technology, the fanfare of which drowned out the few voices of concern about the environmental impact of such processes. If those voices grew louder, and the hemp plastics and paper industries kept growing, Hearst and DuPont would certainly lose massive amounts of money, and that's why Andrew Mellon got involved. Mellon was the owner of Mellon Bank Pittsburgh, still in existence today, and was DuPont's chief financial support. Harry J. Anslinger joined the crew in 1931, when Mellon was J. Edgar Hoover's Secretary of the Treasury, and appointed Anslinger head of the brand-spanking new Federal Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (FBNDD). He would stay in that title for the next 31 years, and eventually marry Mellon's niece.

In 1936 a man called Herman Oliphant, who was a general counsel to the Treasury Department, attempted to publicly employ the Federal government's taxing power with relation to firearms in the footsteps of the Harrison Act of 1914, which regulated narcotics. He had the responsibility of drawing up a bill that prohibited conduct instead of raising revenue. The Harrison (narcotics) Act stated that non-medical users were prohibited from legally purchasing or possessing drugs. The National Firearms Act, which was designed to reduce and eventually prohibit the traffic of illegal firearms, would prove to foreshadow the Marijuana Tax Act of 1937, which led to the prohibition of Cannabis through heavy Taxation. The National Firearms Act imposed a \$200 transfer tax on the purchase of firearms, the equivalent of \$5,000 in 1998 figures, and this was minor compared to the expenses imposed upon hemp entrepreneurs or those who intended to choose natural over synthetic raw materials. Hearst, DuPont, and all

their cohorts were nearing their goal of eradicating hemp as competition.

The Firearms Act had been passed in 1934, and the National version was focused on the traffic specifically of machine guns. The legislation passed in March of 1937, and Oliphant, perhaps high on his success, introduced the Treasury Department's marijuana tax bill on 14 April 1937. On the 29th of the same month, DuPont's chief scientist, Wallace Carothers, committed suicide by drinking cyanide, although it's not officially known to be related to the legislative move. The 1937 Senate hearing for Matt Rens of Rens Hemp Company shows evidence of the thinly veiled intentions of the Federal Courts. as Rens suggests that the Act will put small producers, the majority, out of hemp production as a business. He continues by wondering aloud if the bill's purpose is not in fact to raise money, but to instigate the action he just mentioned. A Senator Brown responds that the government is "sticking to the proposition that it is [designed to create revenue.]" Earlier in that year, US Surgeon General Walter Treadway informed the Cannabis Advisory Subcommittee of the League of Nations that Cannabis "may be taken for a relatively long time without social or emotional breakdown. Marihuana is habit-forming... in the same sense as... sugar or coffee." This bit of information compounded all the technological breakthroughs of the past decades, and no doubt instigated the anti-marijuana fervour unleashed by Hearst, DuPont, Anslinger, and the others. The two years of planning and plotting between '35 and '37 resulted in an "occupational excise tax upon dealers, and a transfer tax upon dealings in marijuana." Cannabis was not made illegal outright.

Instead, anyone interested in importing, manufacturing, selling, or in any way distributing the plant was made to register with the Secretary of the Treasury, and of course was also subject to the related occupational tax. Lack of registration meant the difference between paying \$1 per transfer of an ounce legitimately and \$100 per ounce for unregistered distributors. A dollar an ounce (yep) was the usual price for raw Cannabis in 1937, when for example New York State had only one narcotics officer, and the new tax doubled the price of the smoke for the folks. Oliphant had increased his chances of success by neglecting to introduce the bill to the appropriate committees like Food and Drug, Agriculture, and Textiles and instead pushed it straight to the House Ways and Means Committee. Could be because this is the only Committee that can send bills directly to the House floor without them being debated by any other group. Coincidentally, the Ways and Means Chairman, Robert L. Doughton, happened to be a good friend and business ally of DuPont. Doughton's speedy response guaranteed the bill a safe delivery through Congress to the President. Perhaps if other Committees had stepped in, or the American Medical Association, the ease with which the bill passed might have been hindered.

The AMA was afraid to get involved only because of the 20-year pounding given to the good name of Cannabis and

HEMP TIMELINE USA and COLONIES

(and it's all true)

- Fifty men working in Jamestown, VA colony tilling and planting land for crops; hemp, wine, flax, cotton, spices, and medicinal herbs most common products

- Virginia General Assembly encourages hempseed holders to plant upcoming season

- Hemp farming knowledge first brought with the Pilgrims-

1626 - Hemp grown on Manhattan Island

1630 - Grown in Massachusetts

1640 - Connecticut: every family entreated to plant hemp

1665 - Hemp tariff 'dispensed with' according to *The Calendar of State Papers for Colonial Virginia*

1690 - Supply/ demand satisfied; first paper mill built in Pennsylvania by Rittenhouse firm. Publishing industry flourishes with flax and hemp rags as raw materials

1706 - Government act permits use of hemp and flax as legal tender for up to 25% of debts

1723 - South Carolina places a bounty on hemp

1727 - Government act passed setting bounty of 100 lbs. tobacco/ 100 lbs. hemp (100 lbs. = 45.36 k)

1730 - Pennsylvania offers bounties encouraging hemp production, inspired by knowledge brought by Dutch settlers

1733 - Richard Hall given salary to promote cultivation of hemp and flax, results in his writing a book. He buys his seeds in Holland. (Some things never change)

1737 - William Byrd II writes that hemp "thrives very well in this climate..."

1744 - Bounties are set for establishing hemp industry in South Carolina

1767 - Georgia gives free seed and cultivation information to farmers

1768 - Georgia sets bounties on hemp and flax

Pennsylvania (especially Lancaster county) produces 4,091 yards of flax linen and 8,877 yards of 'hemp linen' (1,000 yards = 914.4 metres); in Philadelphia Ben Franklin extols the virtues of hemp cultivation and becomes most active paper merchant in the colony

1775 - Thomas Paine supports theory of independence with argument that "hemp flourishes' here..."

1776 - Declaration of Independence drafted on hemp paper

hemp in Hearst's newspaper headlines. Supposedly, it was with only two days notice before the Senate hearings that the AMA realised the "killer weed from Mexico" was actually Cannabis, which had no record of fatalities and was in fact an accepted medication and therapeutic for the past hundred years or more in the States. Dr. William C. Woodward, who was a physician and an attorney for the AMA, testified that the federal platform amounted to nothing more than tabloid sensationalism, but he and the AMA were denounced, especially after Woodward noted that the bill had been prepared in secret for two years without anyone from the medical community being involved or informed. Anslinger had testified that "Marijuana is the most violence-causing drug in the history of mankind," and it worked. The Marijuana Tax Act of 1937 insured that no respectable American would associate themselves with the plant, whether from an industrial or recreational standpoint. Smoking weed made you a burden to society, and licensing a hemp crop was made almost impossible. To date, Cannabis legislation in America remains a result of the inescapable connection between the government and big business, and the public stigma towards Cannabis and its users still exists in America.

If this seems farfetched, keep in mind that the formula remains the same, although the names of the players and the subject industries change (every four to eight years sound right?). NORML (The National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws) and related groups help to keep US citizens informed as to their State and Federal rights, although it'll be a good long time before the whole country can agree on any one blanket law. In the meantime, Cannabis will continue to be one of the largest (albeit illicit) cash crops in America, and the 31 other countries (including Canada, France, England, Australia, South Africa, etc.) permitted to grow hemp will continue to corner the market on raw materials.

Looks like anything *is* possible in the "land of the free."

The writing of this article would not have been possible without heavy research and notation from Chris Conrad's *Hemp: Lifeline to the Future, The Emperor Wears No Clothes* by Jack Herer, and the Cannabis College Amsterdam.

For more insights visit www.onlinepot.org



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Building Hoods



Get together as much of the wood you will in advance, so that the construction of the hoods runs as smoothly as possible.

In this article we are going to be looking at how to build special hoods around the (female) plants, which will better protect them against stormy and wet Autumn weather. As growers, we obviously would prefer to harvest the

looking at how to build special hoods around the (female) plants, which will better protect them against stormy and wet Autumn weather. As growers, we obviously would prefer to harvest the many lovely flower clusters that the plants produce during the Autumn in as good condition as possible. For this reason, the hoods we are going to build offer a real tangible result. What's more, these hoods make it possible even to grow the long-blooming varieties in our climate. Naturally we also need a little bit of luck with the temperature (it mustn't freeze too hard), with that bit of luck and a strong hood as protection (around and above the plant) we can be harvesting our plants right up to the end of November!

Protecting late bloomers

But for the early-blooming (outdoor) varieties too, these hoods can offer firm advantages, given that the higher temperatures under the hoods is most welcome by the plants. Also, the plants will now take up more feed water. on account of the higher temperature giving more energy and so a more vigorous sap stream through the plant. The hoods also mean that the plant will get very little rainwater falling on them, meaning they will be more able to take up the nutrient- and stimulator-enriched water we give to them. Previously this would have been a problem because the plants in Autumn would expect to spend a lot of time over-supplied with rainwater. Were we to give also them enriched water (water with all kinds of nutrient and stimulator added), we would most likely do more harm than good.

Before we start to actually make the hoods, it is a good idea to begin by getting together all the stuff you will need to build them with in advance. This is a good way of keeping an eye



As well as the electrical staple gun, in this photo we can see all the tools that we need for building the hoods.



We fix the planks with screws to the piles, and in doing so make sure that the construction will be able to withstand even the heaviest of storms.

We should aim to build the hoods between the middle and end of July, since by then the plants will have put their main growth spurt behind them.



on your costs, since we will need quite a bit of wood and some strong poles, and these are not cheap. With a bit of luck you can pick up the wood and/or poles from building sites (always ask first of course) or thrown away in roadside dumpsters. The choice is up to you, but certainly for the outdoor grower on a limited budget the latter does offer a good way of making some hoods for themselves. For those of you who reckon it's all going to be too much work, then the best option is to nip down the local DIY centre, where there's a chance they can get everything they need, and cut-to-length! As well as wood and wooden poles we will also need some agricultural plastic sheeting, screws, nails, bits of material and/or old cloth, and staples. As for tools, we'll need a drill, a hammer, a heavy axe or large sledgehammer, a saw, a shovel, some scissors and a staple gun (preferably electric).

The sharp corners are neatly trimmed off with cloth (as here, an old sock), so that the agricultural plastic is not later torn on them.

Getting to work

When you have managed to get your hands on all the above, then we can get to work. We should aim to build the hoods between the middle and end of July, since by then the plants will have put their main growth spurt behind them. The plants now have more or less reached their eventual dimensions and so the chances of the hoods we make ending up too small is zero. But the plants will still increase in height (especially when the flower heads begin to form) and this is something we will have to take into account. So we build the hoods preferably as large as possible in girth (as well as above) around the plants. so that they do not allow the flower heads to come into contact with the (agricultural)

By Weckels, the grow specialist from Atami

plastic at any stage. If this is allowed to happen then, then there is a good chance the buds will be damaged as the plastic rubs against them.

Mental preparation

So it should be clear already that the very first thing we need to do is measure everything well before we start actually building the hoods. We also need to think about the time of day when we plan to begin building them. For example, should we decide to start putting them together early in the morning (in order to avoid the hot summer afternoon temperatures), then there is a good chance that we will cause some irritation to our neighbours. What's more, many people will become suspicious if we start taking up DIY at the most ridiculous times of the day. So the evenings or even the hours of darkness can be a bit dicey, because there's a good chance you will be mistaken for a burglar, what with all your tools and sneaking around. During the Summer months especially, people leave en masse their accommodation for the warm South, and then the extra police surveillance laid on makes it a precarious adventure for the outdoor grower who's planning to build himself more than five hoods during the hours of darkness. In addition to the police you'll also have to worry about attracting the attention of weed thieves with your special hoods. It is too often the little snot-nosed teens with



These plants are standing behind each other in a nice row. Because they are all of the same height, it is pretty easy to make a single hood constructed over all of them.

no inkling of how to build up the requisite skills with which to grow their own dope who will be most thankful for all the effort. you oh enthusiastic outdoor grower, have put in. They will often case out the place - your garden - thoroughly before coming back several months later to strip the patch clean. Particularly when we're growing the late-blooming varieties under hoods we also have to beware that a location that in full Summer seemed like an ideal one visà-vis privacy, in the Autumn can change its suitability dramatically, as the majority of trees and bushes begin to lose their leaves. Bear in mind too that it may sometimes be better to not build any hoods at all, given that these mysterious-looking constructions risk attracting the attention of the curious. maybe including potential weed thieves, or 'rippers'.



Because here we have pushed the plastic roof up with a pole the rain water can easily run off.

Power of the wind

Assuming you have decided to go ahead, let's turn first to the cutting of the agricultural plastic: I'd advise you wait with this stage and cut it to length once the hood construction is all but complete. You would not be the first handyman to stumble across a substantial tree root or even a pipe or cable (always watch out for these) and be forced to suddenly revise the size of their hood to larger than they had originally in mind. If this happens it's a shame to have to throw away carefully cut plastic that is suddenly too small, which you will because sticking two bits of plastic together rarely works. The wind and the rain will soon be ripping through any chinks that appear, battering your fragile flower heads.

Once we have measured out the correct size and have dug (without encountering any major problems) four deep holes around the plant(s) - leave plenty of room around them; really big hoods will need six holes - we can stick the piles straight

or snapping. That's why I generally use screws (preferably rustproof steel) for fixing the planks to the piles, because these hold the plank more firmly in place. Nails also have the drawback of splitting the plank while they are being hammered in. Once we have firmly attached most of the slats/planks to the piles, we screw a few thinner wooden joists between the planks. These make sure that the pressure exerted on the plastic by the weather is evenly spread across the piles and connecting slats/planks.

Padding the corners

To make sure that the agricultural plastic does not rip on the sharp (and therefore dangerous) corners of the hood construction, we round the corners off with scraps of cloth or old towel or something, which we can secure with small nails to the corners. Rounding off these sharp corners is very important because although the agricultural plastic sits fine as it is being attached even if we don't pad the corners out with cloth, heavy storms can rip the entire sheet to shreds if even a tiny

In addition to the police you'll also have to worry about attracting the attention of weed thieves with your special hoods.

down into them. Then we shovel the holes full again with earth or sand. Once this task is done, use the back of the axe or the large sledgehammer to knock the piles down deeper into the ground. In this way, try and bash the piles another half meter deeper, making them a total of 1.5 metres into the ground. It is absolutely vital that the poles are good and deep (and therefore sturdily fixed) in to the ground, because the hood construction will need to survive pretty heavy pressure. The hoods will need to weather many Autumn storms and yet still under no circumstances fall over and/or learn over into each other. Should either of these happen (because the piles were not sufficiently well anchored in the ground) then the damage to our plants will be immeasurable

Adding strength

Once the piles are firmly in the ground, screw to the tops of the them (from pile to pile) the slats or planks of wood to which the agricultural plastic will be fixed. These slats or planks will also have to withstand quite a bit of pressure without bending tear in the corner appears. These tiny tears can be the starting point of a complete crop wipe-out, given that torn free pieces will flap around like a demented whip among the plants and flower heads, cutting them to shreds. So think ahead, and carefully pad the sharp corners one way or another so that the wind is given no chance to wreak havoc.

Since we're talking about agricultural plastic, this is available in various thicknesses and therefore price classes. Using plastic with a decent thickness has the big advantage of being hard to tear, but alas, thick plastic also has the drawback of letting through less sunlight. This is detrimental to the plant, as the thicker the plastic, the less sunlight is going to shine on the leaves and so less energy is made available to the plant. But the thickest plastic does also keep the heat in for a bit longer than if we used thinner plastic. For these reasons, it is an idea to look carefully at the sensitivity of your growing patch to wind. If you live somewhere out in the exposed countryside, then a thick plastic is probably necessary at least you're not

going to lose it all in the first gusts of Autumn. If you live in a densely-populated district or if your growing patch is well surrounded by trees and / or fencing, then it is better to go for the thinnest thickness of plastic.

Stapling the plastic

With the four piles driven firmly into the ground, the wooden planks onto which the plastic will be attached in place, and the sharp corners well padded with old cloth, we can stretch the agricultural plastic over the whole construction.

Next we staple the plastic securely to the slats and the piles. This goes much easier when we use an electric staple gun, given that a hand stapler often has too little power to drive the staples fully into the wood. An electric staple gun that

I advise you to use rustproof steel staples for attaching the agricultural plastic. The heavy rain and wind that will assault your hoods in Autumn will make short work of the cheaper (usually galvanised) staples, so that within a short space of time the agricultural plastic will start springing loose all over the place (the staples soon break as they rust).

Mind the gap

We do not staple the plastic all the way down to the ground; the first meter up from the ground we leave free of plastic so that the wind can still blow under the hoods. This is very important for good air ventilation and circulation, which prevents in turn the air moisture level under the hood getting too high and increasing the risk of mould infection. Finally, not

Bear in mind too that it may sometimes be better to not build any hoods at all, given that these mysterious-looking constructions risk attracting the attention of the curious, maybe including potential weed thieves, or 'rippers'.

has decent power (so it works quickly and easily) is not exactly cheap, thanks partly to which I always hire one instead of buying myself one. You can hire them from a special tool rental shop or from the better DIY shops. Remember that such things usually need a deposit paying and some sort of proof of ID might be requested.

bringing the plastic all the way down to the ground also has the advantage that we can still easily get at the plants and so the flower heads too, in order to keep the flower heads under a watchful eye.

Another trick that we can apply to making sure the plants do not become subjected to too high an air moisture level is to



The garden is soon filled with hoods, which for (outdoor) growers is a sight to behold. Now let's hope for a great harvest!



In this photo we can clearly see the cross-cutting joists. These spread the weight of the resting on the piles and keep the agricultural plastic off the buds.



The climate under the hoods creates a paradise for the blooming plants; the temperature is nice and raised and the flower heads are protected against the wind and the rain.

too, make sure you pad the end of the pole that is coming into contact with the plastic with a thick layer of cloth so that it does not push through the sheet. With the help of the pole stuck into the middle of the plastic sheet, we create a tent effect so that the sloping roof now lets rain water run off it. If we don't do this, then the hoods after a rain fall would be covered in puddles of rain water which when taken together add up to a considerable strain on the roof of the hood construction. This is very dangerous not just for the construction, but for the plants too, as



The flower heads will quickly begin to develop. There are excellent yields to be had under hood constructions, even if they do need a bit of extra effort putting into them.

cut some round holes in the corners of the agricultural plastic. These holes will let condensation that comes from the warm air rising out, rather than forming a layer on the plastic roof and walls and dripping back onto the plants (and thereby drenching the buds with water). These round holes are therefore vitally import for the plants, since without them the hoods would turn their environment into a damp, sweltering mould incubator rather than a protection against the high moisture of the outside air. We cut the holes round deliberately so that the wind gusts cannot tear the plastic; if we cut them square, this would happen much more easily.

Roof like a tent

Once this small task is done, we do the last but by no means least important step. We have to place poles under the agricultural plastic so that the roof is pushed up to a point, tent-fashion. Here

the puddles of rain water will over time become heavier and the plastic will start to stretch and begin to tear or in the worst case bring the whole thing down.

In either case, the result will be destruction of your plants by the huge amount of water suddenly released over them through the roof, or by the collapsing planks, slats and wooden poles. It has happened once to me and I would not wish it upon anyone: a beautiful Top44 plant that just needed two more weeks' flowering to be ready for harvest was crushed in a single blow when the plastic sheet ripped thanks to the amount of water that had collected on top in just one night. The force of the rain water broke off all the branches, leaving all the buds mashed into a thick layer of mud. What had been shaping up to be a great (future) harvest was turned in just one night into the biggest disaster I'd ever had. From such experiences you can only

learn as a grower, but I can say I have not regretted adding a padding to the stick keeping up the roof of my plants hoods

Don't pack your ground

The plants I grew under hoods for the accompanying photos were all grown in the ground. This works absolutely fine, so long as we make sure that the earth around the plants does not get too firmly compacted. Certainly this can happen a lot more quickly than we would wish while we're constructing the hoods. The roots of the plants can easily become suffocated, with your plants dying as a result and your whole grow year being wasted. To avoid this we can carefully turn over the soil a bit (also under the outer edges of the hood) and/or prick holes in the soil (with a bamboo stick, for example), so that the roots can still get enough oxygen. Naturally we do all this with the greatest of care! After the hoods have been built, it will soon begin to dawn on us that the weeds are also finding this ideal climate just as to their liking as our plants. The weed population, that usually consists of nettles and grasses, can often take a large part of the available nutrient in the away from the marihuana plant, while what's more the low-lying weeds can hold a lot of dew and thereby increase the threat of mould to our plants. Thorough weeding and weed removal will prevent a lot of trouble and should be a part of our efforts to pamper our marihuana plants as best we can.

Hood for all seasons

Once we have harvested the plants and have been suitably stunned by the



Here too, the plants are well protected by their hoods. The round holes serve as exits for the condensation, and we leave the bottom-most meter (more or less) open and free of plastic, with an eye to good ventilation and air circulation.

quality of our weed, the hoods can be broken down again. So long as we do this carefully and completely, we might be able to use the materials for next year's crop. The smart (outdoor) growers among us sometimes leave the hoods up so as get a new set of seedlings in under them into pregrowth in the following spring. Then the frequently cold Spring weather can still be taken advantage off as the young seedlings can be raised under the protection of the (existing) hoods. If you think you might want to do this, I would advise you to for the most part replace the soil that you have just raised a harvest in (to prevent poisoning the following generation of plant) with new soil and then mix in the necessary soil mixes. The soil life, including the bacteria, will then have plenty of time to make the nutrients in the soil nice and available when the next generation of marihuana plant is placed in the ground...

Good luck!

Such beautiful and high quality marihuana is (more easily) achievable with hoods. This surely makes building them more than worth the time and effort!









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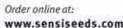
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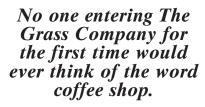
The stately entrance and the take-out counter and head shop

The Grass Company: beyond the coffee shop

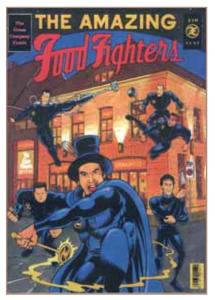
Perfect pampering

There are coffee shops and there are ... Smokers Clubs. The three branches of The Grass Company, Pistache, Ochtendgloren and the flag ship The Grass Company in Tilburg, undoubtedly belong to the latter, exclusive category. The business concept of TGC is unique in the cannabis world. It may be justifiably claimed that in Tilburg, the coffee shop has

Central to the philosophy of TGC is the desire to rid itself of the outdated image of the coffee shop. The idea is to create an atmosphere with an open outlook, where everyone feels at home. And they have succeeded with flying colours. Whether you call it standardisation or upgrading, one thing is sure; no one entering The Grass Company for the first time would ever think of the words coffee shop. Perhaps a grand cafe or a classy English pub or maybe even an exclusive ladies' and gentlemen's club for the upper crust . In fact, it's a little of all of these. With the various levels and the innumerable eye-catching details, the place really is a feast for the eyes. Every detail has been carefully considered and subsequently perfectly implemented. The result is a delicious feeling of luxury, whilst the prices are extremely reasonable. As a result, TGC attracts a public more varied than practically any other coffee shop; from OAPs and 'city gents' through to the roughest street stylers - and everything in between.



\The selection of drinks is enormous and somewhat exclusive. After all, if vou have no licence to serve alcohol. but still wish to surprise your guests, the creative operator with flair comes up with the exciting alcohol-free cocktails, for example, that you can order here. In culinary terms, too, a level has been achieved here, never demonstrated before in any coffee shop, anywhere. Here they do not serve crisps, lukewarm sausage rolls



Carefully considered design: the restaurant menu



Grass Company by night.



or tough toasted sandwiches: instead, they offer a tremendous choice of

top-notch culinary delights. It is not without reason that at a local culinary festival, the TGC won first prize – a performance that speaks volumes in a city renowned for its excellent eating places.

Joint packs

And then, of course, there are the smokers products, sold at a discrete counter by the entrance. This, too, is a household name in the province of Brabant, even if only because of the stylish joint packs that help TGC to underline its identity. A special feature is that the entire range is available here in joint form, and in three different sizes: a one, a three and a six pack. Far and away the most exclusive item is the super-de luxe gift pack with the complete collection. The smokers menu is not excessively padded; however, the selection is carefully assembled, covering the entire range of cannabis products including a top-haze, two types of black hash (including the increasingly rare Nepal) and an ice-olator hash, grown locally.

A visit to this Smokers Club is in fact a must for everyone with a soft spot for coffee shops. And if you happen not to be in the neighbourhood, then try surfing to our website for a lively impression of the TGC feeling - at any time. As you would expect, this is a well-designed, exciting and multifaceted site where there is always something new to see and where you the guest can also leave your own impression; for example in the form of music reviews or as participant in a photo competition. The TGC Trading online shop is also accessible via the homepage. We warmly recommend you visit, for a completely different view of the world of cannabis.



TGC Trading: **Smokers Paradise**

Some three years ago, The Grass Company was delighted to establish a sister company, TGC Trading, an online store and wholesale outlet dealing with everything to make the life of the cannabis user more pleasant. The product range includes smoking accessories and ranges from (hemp) clothes right through to a smart selection of smart

The collection of bongs, (water)pipes, vaporisers and other smoking accoutrements on view in the webshop is overwhelming in its completeness, and differs considerably from what is normally available elsewhere. There are more than 500 items already available on stock, and numbers are increasing daily. The aim is not to become bogged down in the old school products we all know (and love) but to aim to offer the best collection available in the Netherlands and far beyond.

UNDERWORLD Soft Secrets

The dealer Part 14

Andre (not his real name) comes from Amsterdam and has been earning a decen crust for himself since the 1970s as a dealer. Having begun with "protecting people", he slipped pretty quickly into the hash world, initially as a "Jack of all trades", later as an independent dealer. As well as dealing hash he became involved with coke, then eventually switched over exclusively to Nederweed, that he now grows himself. Andre has seen "the trade" from top to bottom, and he talks freely about it all in this issue's episode of Underworld.

By Charlie Stone

SSUK: Andre, how did you find yourself in this business?

Andre: "About 20 years ago I lived in the house of someone who was a dealer himself. The guy was heavily involved in dealing coke and hash, and I saw the stuff just lying around the place. At a certain moment I began to help him shift the stuff around; a kilo to this place, a couple of kilos to that place; it was really pretty easy..."

Did you take the stuff to punters or to other dealers?

To 'house dealers', as they're called. But the bloke I was moving the stuff for was snorting himself stupid, so he was as dopey as a rabbit, and so I started to do more and more for him. He began to expand his operation, and my involvement grew with him automatically. Eventually I was at a level where I thought: this is nice, and I decided to start up for myself. You could just get hold of a 25 kilo box and start off with that.

Only hash, or did you shift weed too?

Only hash. Back then you had Lebanese, black hash, Moroccan; nowadays things are very different.

What was your compensation for shifting the stuff around for the guy?

At the beginning I got 25 euros (18 quid) for delivering a kilo, and I was moving around five or six kilos a day, so that was a pretty good day for a 16-year-old. By the time I was 18, I was looking at a regular salary of about 240 euros (172 quid) a day. I did a number of other odd jobs, for example giving a good slap to anyone who didn't want to pay for the gear they received.

Why did you decide to start working for yourself?

Thanks to his coke habit, the guy left a lot of things lying around unfinished and I just stepped in and did them for him. I had learned so much during my involvement, and made so many contacts, that it was really just a small step. But once I got involved with the coke it did put a damper on things a bit, because I started to party pretty hard. The first couple of years I have to say I was pretty fucked up.

How did you get hold of the coke then?

Every so often the guy found himself with an excess of the stuff, and then he would say to me "why don't you give this a go? There's good money to be made." If you bought 4500 Euros (3215 quid) of hash

you could make two or three hundred, or with a bit of luck 230 euros (164 quid) profit, but if you spent the same amount on coke, you could make a good three or four thousand euros profit. First you get to cut it a bit, then sell it off in small amounts. And if you sold ten times 100 grams in a day, that would be ten times 450 euros (322 quid). To make that kind of money selling hashish you'd need to shift 100 kilos. And since you were already used to taking the risk, the switch over was not so difficult.

In general, what kind of people were you doing business with?

I always hung out with, let's say, people who were not the most popular. I did business with inconspicuous people. Local characters whose names were always appearing in the newspaper, I kept myself well away from that sort. I always did business with people who never appeared in the papers and never would appear in the papers.

What was the connection like back then - when you began for yourself between coke and hash?

50/50. Whether you came to me for 50 kilos of hash or 50 kilos of coke, it made no difference to me. Later, when things went a bit worse for me personally, I also started shifting weed. There followed a period of eight years when everything went great for me. After that strange things started happening: shipments that were intercepted, people who were picked up.

How did you cover yourself for things like taxes and so on?

You just bought a job on paper. In other words you paid your 'employer' a premium, gave him a pay off of, say, five 'meier' (240 Euros/172 quid). An official salary of three 'rooitjes' (1350 Euros/964 quid) did cost quite a bit of money, but then at least you were completely covered as far as the outside world could see. It was important to have a good arrangement with this 'employer', because if there was trouble and the police came to check up on you, then he had to know that – oh dear, this week he's 'sick' or on a week's 'yacation'.

Was the drugs world harder back then compared with today?

In those days it was not so tough, you know? The main problem was being ripped off. The rip-off culture today has become a lot harder. What you hear about these days, with the Yugoslavs and Albanians and what not. Back then it was usually the Italians who tried it on.

Did it ever happen to you?

Sure, a couple of times, but just small stuff. I was once driving with someone to deliver a box of hash, and the man got out of my car with the box to ring the bell of the address in question. I didn't know the bloke so well, so I did have a pistol on me, just for insurance. I was sitting in my car waiting and he disappeared through the door. Then nothing happened. After a while I got a bit alarmed and decided to take a look what was keeping him. In the meantime I had become seriously pissed off and kicked the front door in of the flat he was supposed to be in, gun in my hand. I stepped inside en found myself

incidents someone else ended up dead. Then I started to think: 'what the hell am I doing here?' That's why I employed a gobetween, so that I had my hands free and distanced myself from the coke. He took over my coke business and I concentrated more on the hash. So as for the coke, I more or less took my pension.'

Did you notice anything about the rise of the pills?

Yeah, some English customers who normally only bought hash asked me one day "can you get your hands on 10-20,000 pills as well?" I did do that a couple of times, and the transport was pretty easy.

I already had a few rooms where I grew plants in the beginning of the 1980s. But back then people didn't really want anything to do with it

in a room full of unsuspecting, complete strangers. I ran quickly upstairs, because he had to be somewhere in the place. It turned out that in the attic there was a tiny little set of stairs leading into the house next door. He'd done a runner through there.

What I also had was some customers in England, who had decided to get out of the business and they thought okay, the last time we'll rip him off. So I send them a 100 kilos and they say 'oh, it never arrived', while there's no report from the police they can show you. In this way I was screwed a couple of times.

Was there much difference between dealing in hash or dealing coke?

Look, coke dealing is something completely different to the hash business. In the coke world, sooner or later you are going to have to play a bit rough. For example, if things started to 'disappear then people were simply shot. People would go off on holiday and never come back - that sort of thing. The rip offs were also becoming harder. Someone I know with a coffeeshop one time was thrown into his own bath, while his kid was shoved into the freezer. He was being held under the water over and over. Just for 25,000 euros! I thought if they'll do that for 25 grand, and doing that they find out I'm quite a bit more interesting, what wouldn't they be prepared to do to me? Then you start to think "maybe I'll just leave the coke alone.'

So then did you decide too get out of the coke business?

No, but I did start to set up some legal companies for myself. Clothes shops, bar businesses, that sort of thing. I invested a bit abroad. These were not just fronts but real businesses than ran pretty well. Other than that, I just continued dealing, but I came to consider this as more of a 'hobby'. I kept two or three hassle-free coke customers on and had someone else, someone who did want to play the hot shot, installed as a buffer, who operated between me and the customers.

Why did you need a buffer?

A good friend was picked up, another good friend topped himself, some others were picked up abroad and between these But then they started to order less hash, so I decided to knock it on the head. Mainly because I don't like to have something shoving something else out of the way if I don't have that new thing totally under control. You can't really keep the pills under control, check their quality – it's a whole different game. You wouldn't ask a shoe maker to fix your car. People here reckon they can do anything, they buy pills and say: "check if they're any good." But you will get fucked over if you sell 100.000 dodgy pills. So you've got to watch out, but then I always did keep a close eye on things. It is an uncontrolled market after all.

So you continued just selling hash...

I continued selling hash for another couple of years, yes, until there major changes in the prices came along and it got harder and harder to white wash your cash in a bank, and lots more of that sort of hassle. I thought "what a bummer", and then the next opportunity came along: Nederweed.

Was that something new for you?

I already had a few rooms where I grew plants in the beginning of the 1980s. But back then people didn't really want anything to do with it. Back then I didn't even know you had to trim the buds; I thought that you just used the whole plant, branches and all. It took a good three years before I had the required finesse.

How did you come by the necessary know-how in the end?

I had an American friend who showed me the ropes, someone who had grown weed himself in California. He also sorted me out with my first seeds and lamps.

But in the beginning I didn't have the intention of actually earning money from it, I just thought "Hmm, this could turn out to be something one day." That was what I always had in the back of my head. And then once it came into fashion I thought, 'okay now the time is right'. That's when I dived in.

How did that work out?

It was a real drag, and all in all it was all pretty confused, because over and over again there constant new developments arriving on the scene. I learned how to grow by trial and error. It took me a good

six months before I had my first grow room properly sorted out. I had 1,000 plants growing, so I considered myself rich. But you'd be wrong. It's bloody hard work. You come into collision with nature - and she won't be trifled with. I subsequently came to the conclusion that you're better off with 10 small rooms with 250 plants in each, than one big space with 2500. You earn more in the long run. Similarly regarding the work involved; you need a smaller trimming team and you can send the same one to a new grow space each week until you've harvested all your rooms. A cycle lasts 10 weeks, so you begin in week one by planting your clones in room one, a week later you plant room two, and so on, until you eventually start harvesting them week by week again. And those small batches do produce good

Did you do all that yourself or did you have people do it for you?

I'm a lazy bastard myself, so I always work with people. Also, you couldn't do it all yourself. For example: for a hundred plants you are going to need 500 litres of soil mix. If you want to let them grow a bit then they're going to want a good eight litres each, then you need 800 litres of soil mix. That has all got to be put in pots, you have to do quite a bit of work on the room, you have to install lamps, air filters and so on. You have a hell of a lot of things to sort out. You have to have a knowledge of electrics, of plumbing, of everything and then some. What's more I still had to keep up with running my businesses. Plus try and maintain my private life of course. With just one little weed growing op you can handle it all yourself, but not if you have ten of them.

If a grow room is discovered and busted, does that have consequences for the other operations?

No, I always work with other people who occupy the rooms. And I have reserve rooms that in an emergency I can bring into operation at any time. I have lost a room once thanks to a bust, and for the rest I have always been lucky. The people I do business with do not know each other and also don't know that I do business with other people. The only people who know that are my trimmers. But even they don't know that they are all my rooms, I just send them there to do their job.

I finance the rooms and the set up, and I share the profits with the owners on a 60/40 basis, 40 percent for me, after deducting all costs such as electricity and rent and so forth. The trimming team is paid and that comes out of the costs too, so I eventually end up with 40 percent pure profit left over.

Do you visit the grow rooms yourself very often?

I go to check them out every week. But the sitters take care of all the maintenance, the watering and so on.

Who were your clients at first?

Mainly coffeeshops. Home dealers have never been interesting, and there are hardly any left in the Netherlands.

How low were the prices back then?

If you had good Nederweed then you could get about 1600 euros a kilo . For African or Jamaican weed the prices were

about the same. Since then these have got a bit higher.

Did you sell weed or hash?

In the beginning I used to only mix up the weed between plates of hashish. I mixed it with hash I'd bought that seemed the most suitable. A couple of sheets of black, bish bosh. But the weed had to be old. If

- competition. But every competition is on the other hand also healthy.

But was the end result eventually to your advantage, or did it not make any difference?

No, it was an advantage. Of course, people wonder where all this weed comes from. In the beginning there

I subsequently came to the conclusion that you're better off with 10 small rooms with 250 plants in each, than one big space with 2500. You earn more in the long run

you press Nederweed, at first it's green. That's why on every 100 kilos there was some paraffin and milk powder. We then pressed that between certain plates, such as mirror plates of 200 grams.

Was the case that back then hash was much more popular than weed?

In the beginning, yes it was, when smokers preferred African weed. The Nederweed was the first weed that ever caught on in a big way.

When was it that the first grow shops came into the picture for you?

The first were about 20 years ago. I have never had anything to do with them, as I still get all my gear sent over from America. Because I don't want anyone here to know that I'm actively growing.

What did you think of the rise of the grow shops then?

I have always had mixed feelings about them. At first I just though, bah

were maybe no more than 100 people delivering all the weed, now that must be closer to 30.000 throughout the country. The good thing about that is that you don't stand out so much.

The drawback of the grow shops is that now people are given more bother by the authorities. Electricity usage is very closely monitored, computers can identity precisely where higher than normal levels of current are being drawn from. And what do you get then? That people are going to slip away and move their operations to our European Third World countries. For example, there have recently been shipments of hundreds of kilos at a time coming out of Poland. The weed is grown there with technology, knowledge and clones from the Netherlands. The grow shops are letting the Dutch technology fall out of their hands. It would be smarter to keep the growing know-how a bit more exclusive, and then everyone could earn a bit more.

Hy-Flex

Hy-Supply has managed to come up with a range of flexible hoses (alu, combi and phono) of superb quality and is now bringing them to market at verv attractive prices. The flexible alu-. combi- en phonopipe are strong and yet easy to work with. They are deliverable in lengths of 10 metres and are each packed in a cardboard box. (The phonopipe even comes with an extra plastic sleeve!) And the best thing of all? They are available in all common sizes.



ss r c 1



J&B reflector cleaner

The J&B-reflector cleaner (500 ml) is a real Hy-Supply novelty product, thoroughly tested by Hy-Supply, the tests were a glowing success. It's incredibly easy and efficient to use. How do you use J&B? After the harvest, apply some of the reflector cleaning agent to a sponge or non-woven rag and wipe over the

switched-off reflector hoods. J&B reflector cleaner will not damage the reflecting material - something other fluids do. To finish, just polish the reflector up with a dry cloth and that's that! The cleaned reflection hoods will give you 15 - 20% more light reflection. Just count your profits!



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Info on all these products: Hy-Supply, Tel. +31 (0) 481 452 290, Fax: +31 (0) 481 452 910

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Maroc x afgaan

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- White Widow**
- ** = "White Strains"

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St Albans Hydroponics, St. Albans



Kristian (a former estate agent) and Ian (a carpenter) only set up St Albans Hydroponics a few months ago, but they have already made a splash with the locals. Kristian: "We were looking for a change and we saw there was a niche in the market around here. There aren't many businesses that are expanding these days, but this is one of them." Thanks to some good timing with the new

Yellow Pages edition and lots of referrals from the local head shop, St Albans Hydro has already built a strong local reputation, and being just 30 minutes from central London, they're hopeful their blend of service, stock and excellent location will continue their success. "We're just a mile from St Albans centre on a very discrete estate," says Kristian. "In fact, our building is where they used to test the Bouncing Bomb during WW2, so the whole premises is bomb-proof - and we have a huge cellar!'

The guys have made good use of this unique building, fitting out two full-sized grow rooms downstairs, with more to follow. "It's especially useful for beginners to be able to come and have a look how the whole thing works," says Ian.

Upstairs, there's a large warehouse on one floor, meaning all products displayed are in stock, and a shop on the mezzanine floor. The shop stocks the full range of lights, hydro systems, fans, filters, controls, nutrients, etc. All growing styles are catered for, and customers can get all the leading brands. There's a delivery service to anywhere in the UK and the new website will offer full e-payment.

St. Albans Hydroponics, Unit 5, London Road Ind Park, 222 London Road, St. Albans Al1 2NN Tel: +44 (0) 1727 837 400

www.stalbanshydroponics.co.uk

Open:

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Hydro Hobby, Coventry





Set up in September 2002, Hydro Hobby is something of a family business. The owner, David, was in sales and software previously, and now runs the shop with his brother and one other staff member. Located just outside Coventry in a semi-rural area, the shop is very discretely located with ample car parking. "We're a small shop, but thanks to

our open advice and concentration on the plants, we already have a growing and loyal client base," says David. "The big guys cannot be as passionate as we are, or offer such knowledgeable advice." The stock at Hydro Hobby is basically "everything; all the popular brands". It has been the owner's experience that "the single biggest factor in making a difference to plants is temperature control, so we specialize to some extent in environmental control and ventilation issues." David says Hydro Hobby is a good name locally and he's been pleasantly surprised how many people will drive a serious distance to visit them. Besides the quality of the advice, he puts this down to the fact that they are little bit cheaper. "We have really good back office software to streamline all our accounting, purchasing, etc, which makes us a bit leaner than the competition." Hydro offers national next-day delivery and the website is fully e-commerce friendly.

Hydro Hobby, Unit 1&4 Brook Farm, Stoneleigh Road, Gibett Hill, Coventry $CV4\ 7AB$

Tel: +44 (0) 2476 414 161 / www.hydrohobby.co.uk

Open: 7 days a week, mon-sat. 9.30am - 5.30pm, sundays 10.00am - 4.30pm

How 2 Grow, Chichester

The cannabusiness, like any other, attracts a wide range of people, from wide boys and flyby-nights, to the passionate and idealistic. Just five minutes talking to Wayne, who set up How 2 Grow a year-and-a-half ago with partner Leon, is enough to tell that he's from the latter school. "Our goal from the outset was to be always fully stocked and to offer reliable and honest opinions to our customers of all abilities," says Wayne. "We're definitely in this for the long term." His customers are from all walks of life – the oldest, an 86-year-old who keeps a 20-plant patch growing for helping keep MS symptoms at bay, and the local orchid and nursery businesses are showing increasing interest in the 'straight' applications of hydro. With 1000 square meters of warehouse at their disposal, How 2 Grow has a massive stock and can claim to be a genuinely one-stop shop for all your growing needs. Distracting head supplies are not stocked, nor are seeds - though they can be delivered the next day on request. Wayne reckons he spends a good three hours a day scouring the Net for new products, and gets his gear not just from the tried-and-trusted Dutch suppliers but from

Canada and Australia as well as the fast-developing UK. Located a matter of seconds from the A27, they are easily accessible to the grower populations of Portsmouth and London Discretion is paramount in this charming but rather conservative cathedral city The shop offers free local delivery and for those customers with a bit farther to go, there's a discrete and friendly van hire service on the same business park. Wayne and Leon wish to give a special thanks to their suppliers who "have really done us well this last year," and to the regular customers.

How 2 Grow,

Unit 2 Matform Business Park, Terminus Road, Chichester PO19 2UL Tel.: +44 (0) 1243 527 412 / www.how2grow.co.ul Open: 10.30am - 5.30pm Mon-Fri; 10.30am - 4.00pm Sat. (appointments out of hours are no problem)

Focus, Maastricht (NL)





If you're planning a trip to Maastricht, you can't go there and not visit Focus, because Focus, on the Kleine Gracht in the centre of this charming and ancient southern city, can turn its hand to anything. It's a head shop, it's a grow shop, it's a smart shop, a media lending library, a hotel, a gift shop - and it's even half a zoo. In short, at Focus you'll never be bored! In the three and half years since Focus began, originally just as a video shop, the three owners Hakim, Renee and Zuri have gradually changed it into a multi-functional space. There's nothing you can imagine that is too crazy to be found somewhere in this 125 square meters. As a smart shop they have an extensive collection smart goods for sale. Of course they stock all kinds of eco-drugs, and a broad selection (seven varieties!) of magic mushrooms. They also have the usual and well-known assortment of smart drugs on sale, so there's no reason to leave empty-handed. There is also a good selection of head gear, from grinders, skins

and vaporizers, to attractive bongs and pipes, everything coming in a range of sizes and shapes and all handsomely displayed in the well decked-out display cases. Smoking has never looked so attractive. And talking of smoking, it is also very handy of course that right opposite Focus is the Kosbor coffee shop, so you only have to cross the street for a tasty joint. Doing this is also a complete breeze if you prefer to use one of the rooms at Focus that are available for very cheap nightly rates. They have three to choose from: a comfy

two-person room with a double bed, an attractive double room with two single beds, and a spacious four-persons room with four single beds. If you're staying the night, you also get access to a lovely kitchen and bathroom. Says Hakim: "These rooms are used a lot, and it is always really great fun. The guests get a key to the front door, so they can come in when they like. All rooms have a TV, and since we obviously have a great collection of DVDs on the premises, they also have a DVD player to play anything they like on. So our guests have got everything covered. And, if they fancy a joint or to take some 'shrooms, then of course we are not going to be giving them any hassle about it." Now that is what I call super-de-luxe! Since Focus has so much to offer, it's hard to mention all the facilities in one small article. But we should just mention that Focus has retail facilities that are also interesting to marihuana growers, and that soon - it never lets up - there will be a gift shop range coming too. And as well as all those DVD mentioned (well they did start out as a mediatheek) the place also manages to fit in half a zoo, the result of a hobby of Hakim's that got out of hand. On the premises are piranhas, a boa constrictor, a tarantula and a water-agaam (a sort of iguana). "And pretty soon we're getting a five-metre-long python," laughs Hakim. So finally, on Friday and Saturday evenings, Zuri also takes to the decks and fills the pace with grooves. Like I said earlier, you need a lot more room to write everything that Focus is in to. They're into everything! Fortunately they have those hotel rooms, because you don't easily get bored at Focus.

Focus, Kleine Gracht 12 – 14, Maastricht, the Netherlands

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Exite Kristie Szalanski Photos by Magus Genetics from Magus Genetics



What a beauty she is...

It's not often that a breeder will claim one of his own varieties as too strong for his own personal use. Gerrit Slot of Magus Genetics, creator of Exile, Warlock, Double Dutch, and Biddy Early (to name a few) believes "the high is a personal experience, but to me, [the Exile] is a heavy, sedating one. I like the smell, the aroma, but for me it is too much. Winner of the 2005 Highlife Cup for Bio Indica (1st place), the Exile is a 50% Warlock/ 25% Northern Lights x 25% White Widow cross. The plant shows a similar growth pattern to Warlock but with less elongation and more Indica-looking (wide, big, dark green) characteristics in the foliage. This Indica dominant variety hit the scene in 2000, officially the second release from Magus Genetics, a sort of accidental business that was begun in late 1997.

Gerrit and Magus first impressed Cannabis connoisseurs with the Warlock, a result of experimentation with mostly Indica seeds (Afghan) crossed with Skunk #1. Anyone who's ever smoked it can tell you of the distinct flavour and strength of Magus strains, and the Warlock was so favourable that Gerrit decided to "spend the years after the release of the first batch/version searching for the most reliable male from line-bred families." Trials done, he then focused



She loves organic settings most of all..

on out crossing to check the results, and one of the outcross experiments led to the Exile

It wasn't his first choice for smoking due to the 'couch lock' it induced, but he recognised the potency when it became a favourite among his friends. The seeds came out to the public in November of 2000, then the old (pre-2000) Chronic (Serious Seeds) was crossed, the Double Dutch was born, and sold as a (nowfamous) variety with high yields. While the Warlock is a true-breeding variety, most Magus strains are F1 or three-ways, which can sneak up on you due to their combined strength. Gerrit explains this intensity, as with Exile and Skunk #1, as a "build up of genetics." "It adds up," he says, "More genes are responsible for the high. But it's also terpenes [what you smell and taste]. If you have a lot of different things mixed into one plant, of course it adds up." Unfortunately, scientists have yet to figure out exactly how the terpenes affect our high. Doesn't matter, though, because folks like Magus keep bringing out lovely strains that smoke and taste fantastic.

It should be mentioned that fans of the Exile tend to keep totally organic gardens. This variety, as with many others, is properly cultivated in an organic setting: allowing the plant's dominant characteristics to flourish with natural nutrients and growth media. Gerrit himself prefers a soil mix with peat moss and perlite, ph 5.8 with an EC 0.8 at first. Taller plants are accommodated by 7.5 litre pots, but the Exile can be kept much shorter for those with limited vertical space. Daytime temperatures average around 25° C with an approximate humidity at 70% during veg and 50% in flower. The Exile has been known to be potash greedy, and responds well to organic flowering stimulants.

Unlike the Warlock, Exile is not as white in the pistils, and it also shows less elongation. Some have achieved main colas of up to two feet, a bit more Sativa in appearance despite the big dark leaves, and with a 'popcorn ball' to 'cotton candy' consistency. Due to the dominance of the lateral branches, Exile responds well to the SCROG (Screen of Green) and Sea of Green techniques, but Gerrit warns to avoid using heavy or inflexible netting materials. "I prefer the method of bending individual branches and/or main stems, mostly in the middle (not on the outside) so the shape would be more like a not-so-deep bowl, instead of a flat tabletop." This works well at the flexible tops, and up to the third week of flowering. After that the stems get too brittle, and there will be no active growth/ stretch anymore, regardless of SCROG vs. SOG. This way you can optimise your light output and trim out the lower, smaller central branches, while more easily adjusting the space between your light and your plants. Little stretching should take place, and a fair amount of foliage will pop out. Warlock growers might want to be patient, as the Exile should take up to a week longer, but not more than nine or ten weeks at the latest.

Towards the end of your 12-hour period, you might notice a creamy, rose hip or elderberry fragrance replacing the acrid pine smell. Gerrit usually trims his plants live in the pot, then cuts at the base and hangs the branches upside down for eight to ten days. This should be in a cool ("...as in not heated, so it's more like living-room temperature"), dry, darker, and clean spot to optimise slow drying and reduce the risk of oxidization and mould. When the product is 'popcorn dry,' as he puts it, the buds are not wet but the branches will not yet snap, either.

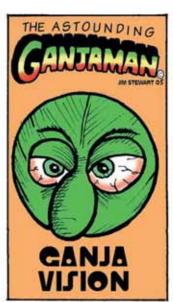
At this stage the flowers are carefully trimmed off the branches and packed tightly (firmly but not pressed) into vacuum-seal bags, but not sealed. You can also use glass canning jars or the ones (for pasta) with a snap-down seal (for approx. 48 hours). Next, dump out the buds and air them for a day or two; they should end up pliable but hold their shape when pressed. It's not a bad idea to check on them frequently from this point. Gerrit recommends taking the buds out a day or two before smoking, as he doesn't like wet weed or that which is "crumble dry." A tiny bit of moisture is preferable for optimum flavour and ease of smoking. In his experience, Cannabis that is well grown, dried, and cured can be kept for at least 6 months, after which point you will notice discolouration and perhaps a slight ammonia smell.

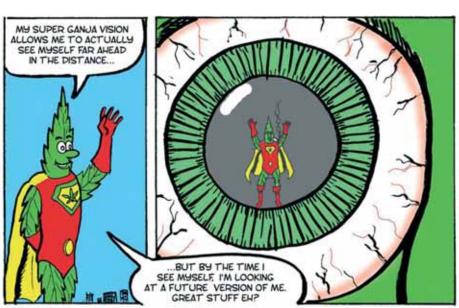
If you visited the Highlife Cup '05 (Holland edition), hopefully you had a chance to smoke a bit of the Exile. Last year the Biddy Early (Early Pearl/ Skunk #1 x Warlock) won a 2nd prize Outdoor and a silver medal at the High Times Cannabis Cup in '03. The Warlock blazed a trail for Magus Genetics in 1997 with a bronze medal, leading Gerrit into further competitions, because as he states, "You've gotta expand in exposure, otherwise, you get snowed under." So what's next? Keep an eye out for the new Motavation (a.k.a. London Memories), a Sensi Star x Warlock cross closely related to the Starwarz, which has kept smokers stalking the Bluebird Coffeeshop for the past few years. Indica seekers will finally be able to get their hands on the beans for this potent creation. Perhaps a Champion Strain in the making?



Slaughtered Exiles hanging out to dry

For product and ordering information, please visit www.magusgenetics.com UK orders can be requested through puresales@puresativa.com General inquiries please direct to pureinfo@puresativa.com.







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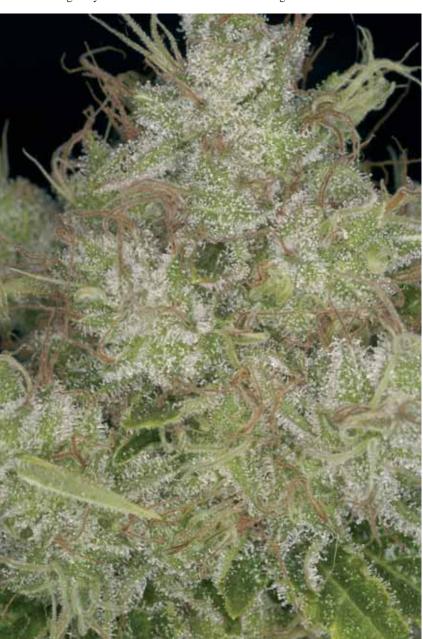
Hydro-Organic

Hydro-organic, rolls off the tongue like a fatty ready for fire. But hydro-organic? Isn't that an oxymoron? How can you merge hydroponic gardening, known for high yields using exacting amounts of chemical fertilizers, with organic fertilizer?

The term hydro-organic combines two words: hydroponic and organic. Hydroponic gardening is growing plants without soil and feeding them with a liquid nutrient solution. An organic substance contains a carbon molecule, or is or was once living. Organic fertilizers are any fertilizer that contains a carbon molecule or a natural substance that has not been altered from its natural state. Hydro-organic gardening is growing plants without soil and feeding them with an organic nutrient solution.

Most hydroponic systems use a growing medium to support the plant and roots. The growing medium is similar to soil except it contains no nutrients that are released biologically or via chemical processes. If you are growing in a sterile soilless mix containing no nutrients and fertilizing with soluble organic fertilizer, you are growing hydro-organically.

Why grow hydro-organic? Fertilizer control and the sweet, sweet taste of organic bud are enough reasons to convince discriminating growers. Since most crops are grown indoors in less than 90 days, there is little time for non-soluble organic nutrients to interact and become available to plants. Indoor growers induce flowering by changing the light from 18-hour days to 12-hour days. Six to ten weeks later juicy female buds are harvested. That's a short time for lots of biological organic activity. During the life cycle of the plant, their nutrient needs change. Seedlings need higher levels of phosphorus and potassium. Vegetative plants use more nitrogen and flowering buds require more phosphorus. Organic fertilizers release nutrients at different rates and it is very difficult to calculate how much is being released. Organic fertilizers also tend to



Growing buds like this resin squirting beauty organically in hydroponics is easiest when using tried and true professional organic fertilizers.



You can fill grow bags with soilless mix and irrigate with an organic nutrient solution and grow sweeter tasting buds.

be very bulky and mix with water poorly. Yet when mixed and applied properly, soluble organic fertilizers are readily available and grow great dope.

To deliver the exact balance of organic nutrient solution to plants automatically, the hydro-organic system is more complex. Unless you choose a readymade soluble organic fertilizer from one of the following companies: Canna, Bio Biz, Atami, etc., you will have to experiment to find the exact combination of nutrients to grow the fattest bud.

Measuring exactly how much soluble organic nutrient is diluted in a reservoir is difficult. Chemical fertilizer manufacturers easily mix exact amounts of each chemical into specific formulas tailored to different stages of growth: seedling, vegetative and flowering. For example, the compound, calcium nitrate, contains both calcium and nitrogen. In pure chemical form, this compound is easy to analyze and know exactly how much nitrogen and calcium per weight and how much to add to a nutrient solution to achieve the desired level. Organic nutrients are much more complex in structure and very difficult to measure exact nutrient content. They are also difficult to retain consistent. For example, the nutrient content of the organic "super bloom", soluble bat guano varies greatly and it contains many different nutrients. The diet and health of the bats, the age of the guano, weather conditions and climate all contribute to the nutrient content.

How do you overcome this minor technical difficulty? Buy a premixed soluble organic fertilizer or buy several organic fertilizers and mix them to make your own blend. Either way, you will have to experiment to get the perfect mix for your system and strain of cannabis. Any grower that has experimented with fertilizer mixes knows that adding too much can either lock nutrients up, making them unavailable or burn plants. The result is the same, slow growth and less smoke.

Like chemical soluble fertilizers, soluble organic fertilizers can be flushed out of the system if overdone. Organic fertilizers can build up to toxic levels just like chemical fertilizers. Signs of toxic fertilizer buildup or over-fertilization include burned leaf tips, curled down



This Canadian grow room uses Supernatural Grow Bags in an organic soil and nutrients. Although not technically hydroponic, it uses an overhead hydroponic irrigation system.

leaves, brittle leaves, and super dark green leaves. If you see any of these signs of over-fertilization, flush soilless hydroponic mix with at least two gallons of plain water for each gallon of nutrient solution. Flushing excess nutrients out of a system is very important to have great-tasting dope. Many North American growers flush their entire crop with plain water for the last two or three weeks of flowering to expel any accumulated fertilizer, which affects taste, from the bud

A good base mix to start seedlings and cuttings is a balanced seaweed mix that contains all macro nutrients (nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus), secondary nutrients (calcium and magnesium) and trace elements. The nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus (NPK) percentages are printed on the front of fertilizer containers. Look for a fertilizer starter mix that contains 1-2 percent N, 2-4 percent P, and 3+ percent K. This mix will supply all the nutrients necessary for the first 3-4 weeks of growth. Many growers add growth enhancers (additives) now such as Rhizotonic or Cannazym biocatalyst. Check with your local grow store for recommendations.

Nitrogen keeps vegetative growth green and is used heavily during vegetative growth. Good sources of nitrogen include worm castings seabird guano, alfalfa meal and fish emulsion.

Flowering fertilizer has higher levels of phosphorus (P) and potassium (K). Bat guano, the organic super bloom, has sufficient levels of nitrogen to keep plants green, but most importantly, high levels of potassium and phosphorus to stimulate flower bud growth.

Making Organic Tea

Mixing organic tea is as easy as pouring poop into a reservoir of water and straining. Organic fertilizer tea mixes contain soluble organic nutrient diluted in water. Fish emulsion is the most readily available commercial organic tea. Liquid seaweed is an essential source of trace elements. Soluble worm castings and manures are high in nitrogen and bat guano is high in phosphorus. These materials and others listed make excellent U-mix organic teas singly or in combinations.

Mix the organic nutrient(s) in water and let them sit from one day to a month. Stir the solution again, and strain out the large particles by pouring the solution through cheesecloth or an old nylon stocking before applying. Adequate straining will keep irrigation nozzles from clogging.

Mix organic nutrients below and try to achieve the following ratios:

1-2 percent Nitrogen2-4 percent Phosphorus3+ percent Potassium

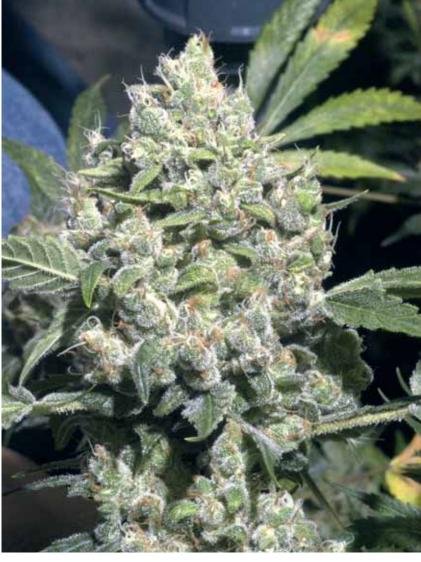
Alfalfa hay contains about 2.5 percent nitrogen, 0.5 percent phosphorus, and 2.0 percent potash. Purchase alfalfa hay from a feed store where it is also available as pellets or meal. Alfalfa pellets and meal are less bulky and convenient to make into a hydroponic tea.

Blood (dried or meal) is collected at slaughterhouses, dried and ground into a powder or meal. It is an excellent source of fast-acting soluble nitrogen (12 to 15 percent by weight), about 1.2 percent phosphorus, and under one percent potash. Apply blood meal to stimulate green leafy growth. Blood meal can burn plant foliage if applied heavily. Dogs and cats love to eat blood meal and keeping it out of their reach will make it last longer. It is an excellent ingredient for a teamix

Chicken manure is a favorite because it is so high in nitrogen. Manure from caged laying hens is generally higher in nitrogen than that from broiler chickens.

Some chicken manure is full of feathers that contain as much as 17% nitrogen which is an added bonus. The average nutrient content of wet chicken manure is: N - 1.5%, P - 1.5%, K - 0.5%. Dry chicken manure: N - 4%, P - 4%, K - 1.5% Both have a full range of trace elements. Beware of using fresh chicken manure as a fertilizer because it can burn the plants. Mix chicken manure in a tea.

Cow manure commonly sold as "steer manure" but may be collected from dairy herds. Modern day "steer manure" that is collected from animals in the tight quarters of feed lots may have a high salt content. Some tests on bagged steer manure showed that it contained from 5 to 9 percent soluble salt content by dry weight. If applied heavily, that's enough salt to stunt or even kill plants. Manure collected from outdoor stock yards where the rain has had a chance to leach it out contains fewer salts and is preferable. The average nutrient content of cow



Beautiful Snow Ball bud is always a hit in organic gardens!

manure ranges from 0.6-0.3-0.3 to 2-1-1 and also includes a full range of trace elements.

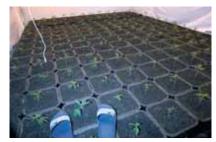
Fish meal, a solid by-product of the fishing industry, is made from dried fish that is ground into a meal. It is rich in nitrogen (about 8 percent) and contains around 7 percent phosphoric acid and many trace elements. It has an unpleasant odor and good ventilation is necessary indoors. Always store in an air tight container so that it will not attract cats, dogs, and flies. Use in a tea mix.



Hydro-organic flood systems require very little maintenance. The nutrient solution floods in from below and is absorbed by roots in 2-3 days.

Fish emulsion, a liquid by-product of the fishing industry, is an inexpensive soluble liquid high in organic nitrogen, trace elements, and some phosphorus and potassium. This natural fertilizer is more difficult to over-apply and is immediately available to plants. Fish emulsion may be diluted with water, made into a tea and used as a foliar spray, but may clog small nozzles if mixed too rich. To prevent clogging, strain after mixing. Even deodorized fish emulsion smells.

Bat Guano consists of the droppings and remains of bats. It is rich in soluble nitrogen, phosphorus, and trace elements. The limited supply of this fertilizer and the expense of collection make it somewhat expensive. Mined in sheltered caves, guano dries with minimal decomposition. Newer deposits contain high levels of nitrogen and are capable of burning if applied too heavily. The more popular older deposits are high in phosphorus and make an excellent fertilizer for flowering plants. Bat guano is usually



This savvy grower filled in the entire growing bed with containers, since there is less maintenance with an organic flood system garden.

powdery and diluted in a tea or used as a foliar spray. Do not breathe the dust when handling; it can cause nausea and irritation.

Sea Bird Guano is high in nitrogen and other nutrients. The Humboldt Current along the coast of Peru and northern Chile keeps rain to a minimum and, therefore, decomposition of the bird guano is minimal. The guano is scraped off the rocks of arid sea islands. The average dose for garden

use is 1 tablespoon per gallon of water. Guano is also collected from many coastlines around the world.

Horse manure is readily available from horse stables and race tracks. Horse manure should be composted for two months or more to kill weed seeds. The nutrient content of horse manure is: N - 0.6%, P - 0.6%, K - 0.4%, and a full range of trace elements. Use in a tea mix.

Rabbit manure is also excellent fertilizer but is difficult to find in large quantities. Use rabbit manure as you would chicken manure.

Seaweed meal or kelp meal is harvested from the ocean or picked up along beaches, cleansed of salty water, dried, and ground into a powdery meal. It contains potassium (potash), numerous trace elements, vitamins, amino acids, and plant hormones. The nutrient content varies according to the type of kelp and its growing conditions.

Seaweed (liquid) contains nitrogen, phosphorus, potash, plant hormones, and all necessary trace elements in a chelated form (water-soluble). Mix in a fertilizer tea. Apply a dilute solution as a foliar spray for a quick cure of nutrient deficiencies. Liquid seaweed is also great for soaking seeds, and for dipping cuttings before planting.

Swine manure has a high nutrient content but is slower acting and wetter than cow and horse manure. The average nutrient content is 0.6-0.6-0.4 with a full range of trace elements.

Wood ashes (hardwood) supply up to 10 percent potash and softwood ashes contain about 5 percent. Potash leaches rapidly, so collect ash soon after burning and store in a dry place.

Worm castings are the digested humus excreted by earthworms and contain varying amounts of N-P-K. They are an excellent source of non-burning, readily available nitrogen. Worm castings also promote fertility and soil structure. Mix in a fertilizer tea blend.

Zoo Doo, a fertilizer made from the composted manure and bedding from grazing animals at city zoos. The best and most abundant zoo manure, found in the elephant cages, is similar to cow manure in nutrient content. If you get fresh manure from a zoo, compost it until it has heated and cooled to keep weed seeds from sprouting and to keep it from burning plants when it is applied.

Jorge Cervantes is the author of the ALL NEW Indoor Marijuana Horticulture: The Indoor Bible, with 200 ALL NEW color photos, Marijuana Indoors: Five Easy Gardens, Marijuana Outdoors: Guerrilla Growing and Jorge's Rx, and is contributor to 12 European magazines in 6 languages. Jorge's books are published in Dutch, English, French, German and Spanish. Visit his website at www.marijuanagrowing.com



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DVD



Operation: Pipeworks

Inside the Counterculture Glass World Kristie Szalanski

The Italians have been doing it for centuries. "Tiffany's" produced functional items that are now considered works of art. We're talking about glass here. Have you ever wandered into a headshop and been transfixed (being stoned helps) by the rows of dazzling glass smoking pieces? Now you can see exactly how all those precious beauties are made. Masters of Glass released a DVD back in 2003 that shows and explains exactly how each chunk of wicked glass is made, and also takes you to two major trade shoes from that year: CTA "HeadShop" Show in Las Vegas and the "Headpiece Pipe Show" in San Francisco, which was the first ever trade show of its kind. Gasp, renowned glassmaker and promoter of the event, was striving for a way to take these impressive creations out of dark headshops and promote them as "art, not crack pipes."

Operation: Pipeworks focuses on every aspect of the glassblowing except Cannabis, making it safe for retailers and folks who wish to use it as in-store edutainment for prospective customers, or even to brush up their staff's glass vocabulary. Learn the definition of terms like "hammers," "spoons" and "Sherlocks" (think real hard); what is a "twisty cane" or a "reversal," and the difference between "fusing," "fuming," and "slumping." This documentary chronicles the process of making functional glass throughout America, items which one artist dreamily refers to as, "something you can look at

for hours." Locations jump through major glassblowing hotspots such as Santa Cruz and Humboldt (CA), Eugene (OR), Las Vegas, and finally back to Haight Ashbury, where viewers get a quick paraphernalia history lesson. Jimmy Siegel is a glass pipe historian whose anecdotes of acid and Jefferson Airplane supplement interviews with and explanations by top artists like MarbleSlinger and Jason Lee. Watch out for the "Dr. Glass Show," probably most amusing after a bong hit (and it had better be a glass one!) This funny, albeit slightly creepy guy clarifies each of the tools commonly used by artisans of the craft, and narrates the process of turning a clear Pyrex tube into a triple-chamber pH(x)bong, or how a massive colour-change bubbler is created, plus much more.

The DVD is set to a contemporary soundtrack and full of beautiful images of glass and fire. The effects are nice and the whole thing is pretty well-edited, save for the need to remote-dive for the "volume down" button when Dr. Glass comes on the screen. Bit of a buzzkill. He is, however, very helpful with teaching us how to shop for glass. From a retail aspect, Operation: Pipeworks is great to sell in your glass gallery not only to pump up your own sales volume, but also as an extra service to your customers. If they know more about the pieces and processes, they will be more likely to come back and buy another and perhaps more extravagant pipe when they realise how much work went into it. Masters of Glass are looking for worldwide distribution, wholesale and otherwise, so don't hesitate to check the website if you own a shop or simply want to purchase your own copy.

Smokers, glassmakers, retailers, and fans of beautiful art should all find something interesting in this DVD. Aside from explaining how it's all made and the differences between each type of piece, there are some serious themes running through it as well. The creators are simply trying to realise their goal of promoting "the democratisation of glass pipe blowing knowledge" for all consumers. The artists involved merely wish to encourage young artists and describe how they themselves got started, found their own vision, and how to become part of a movement as well. Inspiration in this imaginative and colourful realm ranges from stained glass to accidents to boredom, and now you can watch it all happen.

From simple to extravagant, get a burnfree education in glass. A final highlight is the interview with then-mayor of Humboldt County, who laments the DEA action against paraphernalia (Operation Pipedreams/ Headhunter) that was being waged at the time of filming. With drug laws and glass techniques changing so frequently, we could use a follow-up....

Website:

www.operationpipeworks.com & www.mastersofglass.com

Ordering or wholesale info: +1-(650) 892-4475 Approx. run time 70 min./ released 2003 Directed by David Tweed





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Info: Green Diamond, Tel: +31 (0) 36 521 6704, Fax: +31 (0) 36 521 6705 E-mail: info@greendiamond.nl Web: www.greendiamond.nl

International growth with perspective: Future-care

Since the European Union, international trade may have become a lot easier but the communication between the various countries still poses its problems. Language barriers, customs, transport damage or cross-border after sales are just a few of the issues you may encounter in the international business environment. Future-care in Eindhoven knows all the ins and outs of these problems. The company's young and enthusiastic team is 100% committed to building up long-term and profitable relations with its clients. Doing business is not just about making money today, we aim at meeting your business needs of tomorrow as well. Vision and care, that's what we are about: Future care. Essential for a long-term stabile relation that is profitable to both parties. Meet a dynamic wholesaler with an eye for detail.



The start of Future-care in Eindhoven early 2005 did not go unnoticed because Future-care is not only a true wholesaler, the company is also one of the giants of the sector. And you may take this literally, for the immense Future-care headquarter on the Hoppenkuil is nothing less than impressive. With its 2,200 square metres filled with growth products we can handle any order of our clients. To manage this flow of goods, Futurecare disposes of experienced staff with a track record of more than ten years in "green" who has also proven themselves in the area of international cannabusiness. Among them some familiar faces from the former Eindhoven wholesaler De Plantage, for years a major player on the international market.

Our extensive experience offers you a lot of advantages. Arranging for transport documents is daily routine for our staff and there are no more transport delays

Future-care thinks along with its clients.

at borders. International payments are processed smoothly thanks to our UK bank account; this means no more money transfer bottlenecks and orders that are put on hold. But there is one area in which Future-care leaves the competition far behind: in the field of customised transport of orders of any size. We are offering you the fastest delivery against competitive shipping rates. And we will send out your orders in professional packaging to





The sky is the limit...

minimise any transport risks. All these qualities and ambitions have not gone unnoticed; in the six months since Future-care has become operational, customers from all over the globe have found their way to Eindhoven. And not just within Europe, our client base extends as far as Israel, Japan and the United States.

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catalogue' of the growth sector is available. Add to this our efforts to offer the broadest assortment possible and you have all the ingredients for satisfied growth shop owners. Our clients have the advantage that they do not deal with separate wholesalers for each product group. A onestop-shop is ideal for any entrepreneur: and where could you better go than to Future-care? Because Future-care looks at all the details, thinks along with its clients and does not stop at the mere delivery of products so that our customers know their business in their own country inside out. With the right plugs and voltage, to name a simple but vital aspect. By adding the official product info of the manufacturer with each order. By providing the own staff with thorough product training. And last but not least by solid after sales services. It's not so hard to ship a package but – in the words of our customers checking whether the stuff arrived in good order, whether its documentation and use is clear, requires a level of professionalism that is hard to find in our sector. And for the rare cases of transport damage, we have solid guarantees and you can count always on our in-house repair service. Because leaving clients out in the cold is not part of the Future-care philosophy. In short, all the service you need, also after the invoice has been paid. Futurecare looks beyond today and aims for the future. And whoever thinks that Future-Care does not stock certain items... Don't worry: They sell what you don't see!

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Growing for Dummies Part 10

Harvest time!

The end is approaching, and hopefully I have helped contribute to your gardens being filled with many wonderfully green babes. In any case, all of you now have the ability to grow top quality cannabis, even if as a beginner your first time will contain some mistakes which will inevitably impact the size and to some extent the quality of your harvest. If things have gone really tits up along the way, learn from your mistake(s) and try to eliminate them next time. At the end of the day it is usually stupid

Which one you use depends largely on the number of plants you have and the size of them. The most common method and the one that gets my nod is "wet" trimming the buds. We proceed by immediately trimming the plants one by one the moment they finish ripening. We take a ripened plant and cut off the branches one by one and remove the leaves around the buds. This leafage contains a lot of THC and so we keep this to one side so that later we can make water hash or 'skuff' out of it. In

shoot up in size quite a bit in this last week, and ripen more fully.

By trimming the plants wet you can trim much shorter and neater than you can with dried buds, and this will present the buds to their best. The first time does take a bit of getting used to as you figure out the best way to trim them. But after ten minutes or so you will have usually found the technique that is quickest and at the same time neatest. In itself, trimming is not hard,



Orange Bud ready for the chop



This lady is ready, judging from the brown hais

mistakes that are made, so keep getting your hands on as much information as you can; information is power!

If everything has gone pretty smoothly for the last 8-10 weeks of blooming, which most varieties need to properly finish their blossoming, so it's now harvest time. As long as you have not managed to give an overdose of nutrients, then some cracking good buds should be visible on all your plants. Overdoing things can cause damage, and it is better to give too little than too much. The closer and closer you get to the end of the blooming period, the more you can reduce the strength of your feed water, and even stop feeding completely for the last week(s). It can't do any damage to your crop if the plants turn a nice yellow, in fact it is a good sign. The plants are sucking out every last drop of nutrient from their own leaves, which means that there will less nutrient residue left in your buds. The result is a nicer

Trimming "wet"

There are various methods by which you can harvest your beloved plants.

order to improve the eventual quality of your hash, try to avoid mixing in large leaves with little or no THC crystals visible on them with the leaf trim. The large cover leaves can actually be

More than 80% of her hairs is brown, this

lady is more than ready too

but the best technique will give you the loveliest end results. Women's hands are more suitable for trimming since they are slimmer and can work with more refinement.

One advantage of removing the large leaves a little earlier is that the lower-most buds on your plant will be far smaller than the top buds thanks to having been deprived of light. With the sudden increase in available light these can shoot up in size quite a bit in this last week, and ripen more fully.

removed 2-3 days before you start the actual trimming, or even earlier. By doing this you will make the trimming a bit easier and also quicker, since you would only have to remove the big leaves during the trimming anyway. You can decide for yourself if you want to do this or not.

One advantage of removing the large leaves a little earlier, like a week before the harvest, is that the lower-most buds on your plant will be far smaller than the top buds thanks to having been deprived of light. With the sudden increase in available light these can Make sure too that you always have some reserve sheers handy when you start the job for real. There are various types of trimming sheers on the market, and I would say it's best to try out several of them since everyone has their own preferences. Once you have decided which your favourite is then in future trimming sessions you can start straight away with this model. Cheap sheers and scissors that are not sharp enough or are soon knackered are less suitable if you want to get really stuck in. These just cause more trouble than they are worth in the long run - as well as making the trimming longer.

After just a short while trimming you will get a huge quantity of THC sticking all over your sheers. If you don't have some sort of product with you that removes the sticky hairs it can be pretty difficult to get the sheers clean again. A poor set will quickly break if the hinge is impeded by too much THC. So if you're working with cheap sheers, then it is especially important to have a spare to hand so you can switch over as soon as a problem with the first pair rears its head.

Dry trimming

A second method you can use is trimming the plants dry. In this technique, you first let the plants dry out before actually getting down to trimming them. The branches are snipped off and hung or placed in the drying room. Drying the plants out first in this way does take a bit longer than when your buds have been trimmed wet. It's a method used mainly when there is a larger number of plants and a shortage of time. Dried buds are less easy to trim and end up less neat. There is a relatively larger loss of THC since this is more easily shaken off by movement when dry. This is very relative; there is still a huge amount present on both the buds and plant material. The drier this plant material, the easier it shakes free. This method is also mainly used on outdoor-grown cannabis. The enormous outdoor plants are hung upside down in a drying space and then systematically harvested. When growing a large number of smaller plants indoors this method - hanging whole plants upside down - is also used. There is no bad way of trimming, it just depends on the growing system which method suits you more than another.

Trimming space

Try and get a room that is suitably ventilated when you're choosing where to harvest. If your growing space is big enough, you're best off doing it in here while you run the ventilator continuously. If you have to do it in a different room you will find that the plants give off quite a bit of odour, and you might find keeping the door shut and only opening it to go get the next plant for trimming helps. Try to make sure that whatever you do, don't annoy the neighbours. Even though the smell of fresh cannabis smells divine to smokers, many civilians think the strong stench revolting. Using a small vacuum pump fitted with a carbon filter will help keep the smell down during trimming, or else do it in a place where there is no danger of causing a nuisance. Mostly you'll find that you pretty soon don't notice the penetrating cannabis smell yourself because you get used to it. This underestimation of just how big an impact you're making can end in tears.



Some of the Plagron fertilizers I used for this series

Drying room

It is also important to bring the harvest to a good conclusion because after so many months of work it would be a crying shame to watch your buds turn mouldy. The ideal place in which to leave your buds to dry is in a cool and dark room kept somewhere between 15-22 degrees. It is not important to ensure that the room is very warm because the active ingredients need a bit of time to mature properly so that you get a decent effect when you smoke the cannabis. It is better to dry the buds slowly over two weeks then stick them in a warm room to get them into a smokeable condition as soon as possible. This certainly does not improve the quality. Trying to quickly dry out your buds by sticking them in the microwave or in an oven because you happen to be temporarily out of smoke makes no sense at all. Not only will it taste very sharp and bad, you only get a weak high that's not particularly enjoyable. Cannabis needs

When you lay out your buds to dry in their room make sure that they have a good circulation of air under and over them. Laying them down on newspaper or something else that is not aerated is not advisable. There are special drying racks you can buy and I recommend them highly for drying your cannabis on. These are racks with tensioned threads across them thanks to which the buds get plenty of air from underneath. When you just stick your buds on a piece of cardboard then the side of the bud that comes into contact with the cardboard loses its moisture with more difficulty, which increases the chances of it developing mould considerably. You are better off laying harvested buds next to each other rather than piling them on top of each other. If mould does take hold it will spread less easily from bud to bud. A good 75% of the harvested bud is made up of water that has to be removed. When this moisture has trouble being removed is when we get the risk of mould. If you start with 500 grams of wet buds then you will end up about 125 grams of dry smokeables.

The leafage contains a lot of THC and so we keep this to one side so that later we can make water hash or 'skuff' out of it

time to come to its full strength, shall we say. It is not just because it is dry that it is ready for consumption.

Too low a temperature can also mean that the buds spend too long damp, and again this increases your mould risk. There are always mould spores floating in the air, but only when you create the poor conditions they like do they get a foothold on your buds. Insufficient ventilation thanks to putting the harvested buds in too small or to closed off a space, or by leaving them to dry on a hard surface rather than on an aerated surface is one of the most common causes of mould. The fear of mould is pretty unwarranted so long as you bear these factors in mind.

Ripening

There is a big difference between ripening and drying cannabis. After just one week the small buds are usually dry, while the medium to large buds will need two weeks. If you have some really huge buggers in your garden, they could use a few more days than that even. You can always choose whether to dry any enormous buds as a whole or to break them up first, because the structure of huge buds is made up of smaller ones that have grown together. Smaller buds dry out quicker so if time is an important factor you're better off breaking them up.

The trick to telling whether your cannabis is indeed good and dry is to take a large bud and try to break its twig. When the twig snaps easily the bud is good and dry. Don't try and convince yourself they're ready by taking a small bud twig and breaking that. *All* your buds need to be properly dry before you can ripen them. The dried buds will be nicely smokeable after two weeks. They are not yet at their absolute peak, but they will do the business. Finally it is time to test them out, in the knowledge that they will only get better in the future.

Once your buds are well and truly dry we can take care of the storage. In order to keep the quality of your cannabis high you will need to store it in a cool, dark space. So just put it in a light-proof plastic container or glass beaker in a dark place. Light destroys THC. If a few of your buds aren't dry enough and you store them with others, then they will all end up damp again, even the ones that were actually dry.

Now you have to leave the buds where they are for another two weeks to ripen, which will put us a month on from the harvest. Thanks to the ripening process the buds will taste better, and the high will be better. As I said, cannabis needs time. After this month the taste will be fairly well developed, although some varieties do need a little more time than others in order to become a top smoke. Naturally, the buds will be good, but they can still be just a tad better...

So all's well that ends well, now we're left with a large volume of leaf trim over, dripping with THC, with which we have plans to make something wonderful out of. So not only do we have a good supply of smoking material but we can yet make a good water hash or hash oil, try out cannabis recipes when we cook, and more...

But more about that in the next issue, in the very last edition of Growing for Dummies...



Plagron's Green Sensation, Top Activator













Outdoor Soil in the UK

For the outdoor gardener the ecology of soil cannot be overlooked. Soil is everywhere and surrounds us all. Briefly I shall outline the geophysical, climatic and environmental factors that influence soil type within the British Isles.

By LazyStrain



Microclimate has a direct influence over the plant-life that a soil site may potentially support

Geology

The transitory nature of the British Isles means that the visible landscape is ever changing. Dynamical geology concerns the nature of these changes. Structural geology studies the result of these changes upon the Earth's structure. Both disciplines are of paramount importance to the soil scientist, since she/he studies the relationships that occur between the nebula and the atomic. As the symbiotic link between bedrock and vegetation, soil acts as the fabric within which, mineral deposits and living organisms coexist. Geomorphic stratification within the British Isles did not happen overnight. Geological processes were some 25 million years in the making; a gradual process fashioned by the climate to create the rawest features within the visible landscape. To quickly generalize there are three major rock types in the British Isles. These are igneous rock (magma), metamorphic rock (deformation), and sedimentary rock (accumulation). Soil type is directly related to the underlying bedrock of a particular landscape.

Climate

The British climate is extremely temperamental. Where it is raining one day, it will be sunny the next. Average annual rainfall across the British Isles is 41inch, although periods of drought, exceeding 14 days without rainfall, are not uncommon. Areas in the West of the isles are generally wetter than areas

in the East (which are sheltered from the Irish Sea and the Atlantic Ocean). In general winter temperatures are milder in the southwest, whereas summer temperatures are higher in the southeast. The 'North Atlantic Drift' maintains this fluctuation in climate by creating a gulf of warm air in winter. Ground frosts may however occur in southern Britain as late as the end of April, and it isn't unheardof for it to snow in May and June.

Winter frosts play an important role in breaking down organic matter within cultivated soils. Likewise they help to control harmful soil organism and pests, including bacteria. Spring showers species and fungi. All things considered, it is not surprising that the climate plays a major role in determining local soil conditions.

Soil profile and formation

Soil profile depends upon four major factors: parent rock type, climate, vegetation/ fauna, and soil age. When combined these factors constitute a soils overall formation or makeup. Soil formation is governed by a number of extra components including; available minerals, organic matter, living organisms, water and air. Soil structure is further determined by the constitutional components of sand, silt and clay, in varying parts.

The organic matter in soil derives from plant material and animal material (including manure) that is fresh, rotting, or decayed. Humus is also found in organic matter, although it's often difficult to identify.

bring soils to 'full capacity'; when all gravitational water has been removed and water-drainage has stopped. Soils are at this stage holding the maximum amount of water possible. Summer conditions reverse this process by drying soil, cracking its surface, and allowing air to penetrate the soil structure itself. Autumn winds blow leafs and other organic debris back into the soil, therefore adding to the constant cycle of decay and renewal. The mild climate of autumn also gives rise to a host of anaerobic soil activity, including those of primitive alga

Sandy soils contain large mineral particles and do not absorb water. For this reason sandy soils are drought prone, free draining and cold in winter. These soils are easily cultivated, but have a poor structure, poor nutrient holding abilities and are naturally infertile due to an absence of organic matter and available nutrients.

Theoretically, silt is the sediment deposited by rivers and seas. In horticultural terms however, **silty soils** sit partway between sand and clay.

Therefore relative amounts of sand and clay constitute silt soils (which are often described as loam).

Clay soils contain small mineral particles and are water retentive. Clay soils are therefore drought resistant, glue-like in character, and slow to warm in spring. These soils are difficult to cultivate and are easily compacted; yet they have a stable structure when dry. The negatively charged surfaces of clay particles do however hold positively charged plant foods, which are freely available under certain conditions.

Calcareous soils that are based on either chalk or limestone bedrock are alkaline, free draining, and sometimes prone to drought. Due to their distinctive character and natural fertility these soils were cultivated by early agriculturists. Large quantities of organic matter are however required in order to keep these soils in good condition.

Peaty soils are presented in two types, Sphagnum moss peat and sedge peat. These soils are rich in organic matter, low in pH and high in available N (nitrogen). Fenland peat (a sedge peat), once drained and cultivated becomes excellent soil.

Organic matter

The organic matter in soil derives from plant material and animal material (including manure) that is fresh, rotting, or decayed. Humus is also found in organic matter, although its indistinguishable (almost jelly-like) character means that it is often difficult to identify. Organic matter provides soil with a source of nutrients, which are later made available to plants. These nutrients are gradually released when organic matter breaks down. The bacterial activity within soil is dramatically improved with increased levels of organic matter because bacteria live in and eat upon organic debris. Likewise, in frequently cultivated soil, organic matter decomposes quicker due to increased levels of oxygen. This is because oxygen directly aids the aerobic bacteria within soil. In this way there is a close relationship between organic matter and soil life activity itself.

To measure the organic matter level of a soil, a soil sample is first weighed. Then burnt in a muffle furnace. The weight lost equates to the amount of organic matter present. The typical range of organic matter content in soils in the British Isles varies dramatically depending upon landscape. This difference may be between 5% (normal soil) and 40% (peat bog). In general however, soil structure can always be improved via the introduction of increased amounts of organic matter (in the form of compost). As a rough guide the darker the coloration of a soil, the greater its ability to hold plant foods. These darker soils also warm quicker in spring.

Soil acidity and crop tolerance

The tolerance of crops to particular pH's depends upon the soil type and the relative availability of plant foods.

In other words, soil condition is the most important factor in determining a plant's 'ability' to either fail or succeed within any given environ. Successive generations of plants may however adapt to the specific acidity or alkalinity of a particular location. But generally speaking most plants prefer a pH that is relatively neutral. However the availability of ALL major nutrients is increased when an acid soil is limed. This alone, accounts for the biggest benefit derived from liming soil.



An intensive commitment to the earth reaps its own rewards

is well rotted. If possible avoid adding lots of straw alongside the manure, since this often has a negative effect upon the soil structure and takes several years to decompose. Manures should be applied at least six months prior to planting. The only exception to this rule is the use of powdered guano and guano tea. Guano may be applied to soil sites as and when required. The use of rabbit manure (which is available anyplace there are rabbits) can also be extremely beneficial early on during the growing season. Both manure and guano applications, are however, in the long term, short lived. Whilst manure and guano do add some structure and nutrient content to outdoor soils, their major disadvantage is that amendments are only ever temporary, and available nutrients are easily leached.

Green manures, on the other hand, are rich in available nitrates and hold for a long time in soil substrates. Legume crops are often cultivated with the express purpose of being worked back into the soil. This does two things. Firstly, it

Until you've really got your hands dirty, conducted your own soil experiments, smelt your own compost, and generally had fun with muck, you haven't lived.

Plants requiring medium pH (5.5 to 6.5) such as wild carrots, raspberry and rose indicate a preference for having originated in habitats of this particular soil pH. Soils with a lower pH (4.0 to 5.5) may often support *Calcicoles* (lime loving plants) that require a higher pH (6.0-7.5), whereas in contrast, soils with a high pH are never suited to *Calcifuges* (lime hating plants).

The pH preferences of common native species may be used as a rough guide to identifying the pH of a particular soil. Acid loving Calcifuges include; Birch, Bog myrtle, Wild cherry, Heather, Rowan and Scots pine. Alkaline loving Calcicoles, on the other hand, include Alder, Crab apple, Elder, Hawthorn, Whitebeam and Yew. When several of these species are found in one location, there is a strong likelihood that the soil pH is similar to that preferred by these same plants. Thus an area containing Crab apple, Dogwood, Elder and Yew will have a soil pH around 7.5. A quick observation of the local landscape will therefore give you an approximate idea about the surrounding soil pH.

Soil alterations and amendments

Every now and then you will be required to make alterations and amendments to soil sites. Basically, reasonable quantities of organic matter are needed in order to keep most soils well maintained and healthy. Under sandy soil conditions, for example, large amounts of organic matter can help prevent erosion by binding sand particles together. In contrast, under hydromorphic conditions the addition of sand to clay soil will aid drainage and make cultivation easier.

One of the most valuable sources of organic matter available is manure. When adding manure to a soil site it is always advisable to use old manure that

enriches the soil structure. Secondly, once decomposed legume crops encourage symbiotic organisms (*rhizobia*). Wild cultigens that directly fix nitrates back into the soil include nettles (dead/hemp/stinging) and clover. It is also worth noting that non-legumes (those with high amounts of carbon) consume nitrogen in large amounts. As companion plants such species should be avoided!

Soil sterilization or 'pasteurization' is another option, although the use of chemicals such as Basamid and Methyl Bromide, must be seriously balanced against the natural ecology of a given environ (not to mention their effect upon the ozone!). Another method of sterilization involves steam heating soil to 65c, but for obvious reasons this is impractical on a large scale. Interestingly a release of nitrates takes place in the period following sterilization. Beneficial soil organisms are also given the chance to compete with (and take over from) harmful organisms during this time. The disadvantages of soil sterilization are however plain to see. Sterilization results in a maior loss of beneficial bacteria, fungi and insects, all of which contribute to the individual morphology of a particular soil. Root toxins are also released which without aeration is damaging to plant life.

Perhaps the best way to aid both the structure and the nutrient content of a pre-existing soil site is to add compost. Composting is free and nontime consuming (not to mention an environmentally friendly and ecological way of revitalizing old soil). Suitable composts may be purchased from the local garden center, but the dedicated horticulturist prefers to make his or her own. The secret to composting is to 'layer' the ingredients evenly. A little bit of kitchen waste one day, some grass cuttings the next. Then some shedded-paper, some old indoor soil, hedge-clippings, pistachio

shells, some kitchen waste, and so on. In about a year's time the compost will have a rich texture and will be ready for use.

A note on weeds and rhizobia

A weed is a plant that grows in the wrong place or where it is not wanted. Weeds take nutrients from soil in large quantities and may suffocate surrounding plants with their extensive root systems. They compete for light and underground water. Several weed species play alternative host to a plethora of local pests and diseases. The presence of weed seed in soil may also lower the quality of a crop. On the plus side however, many weed species such as singing nettles, gooch grass and clover, encourage beneficial soil bacteria, most notably rhizobia. Rhizobia particularly invade the root nodules of legume plants; directly fixing nitrogen compounds into soils in exchange for plant sugars. These beneficial soil bacteria convert ammonia into nitrate and require the following conditions: air, warmth, organic matter and moisture. Interestingly, many nitrogen-based fertilizers contain ammonia, which is in turn converted into nitrate and made available to plants.

Choosing a site

When choosing a planting site, there are several issues that need to be considered. Firstly, What are the local soil conditions? How easy will the land be to cultivate and manage? Is the site situated in a suitable location? Secondly, What are the local microclimatic conditions? Microclimate has a direct influence over the plant-life that a soil site may potentially support. For this reason it is always advisable to avoid areas that are exposed to prevailing winds, hydromorphic (wet) soils, and areas that are prone to drought. Thirdly, we should consider the local flora that surrounds a site. Is the surrounding vegetation evergreen or deciduous? Are nearby crops annual, if so when are they harvested? Which noticeable features within the landscape are seasonal and which are not? All of these questions must be addressed prior to planting.

Finally, we must reflect upon the impact of our own activity upon the immediate landscape. As conscious ecologists it is

important that people keep peace with nature; which includes minimizing any interference with local flora and fauna. Extensive systems of cultivation often have a negative effect upon the ecology of everything, including soil. For this reason, less is often more in the long term. The smart horticulturalist therefore balances the availability of materials against the pace of nature itself. They do not challenge nature. Rather they challenge their own ability to adapt to the prevailing conditions, and succeed, because nature always wins.

The best way to obtain a detailed analysis report of a particular soil site is to contact an agricultural college or specializing university. If you provide a soil sample, alongside an accurate account of the samples' origin, most soil scientists will happily conduct analysis for free, since this adds depth to their personal study. Remember to be polite (and discerning) if you expect results.

Final thoughts

At first glance the subject of soil science is a dull one. But until you've really got your hands dirty, conducted your own soil experiments, smelt your own compost, and generally had fun with muck, you haven't lived. If you see a child playing with soil, one thing is immediately apparent. The fact that they are happy getting messy. I suppose it is during these early years that some people develop a fascination about soil; the way it breathes, drinks, swells and then contracts. For some people it is the 'magic' of soil-life itself, the cosmology of invertebrate and bacteria that keep everything in flow with nature. For others, it is simply a medium in which plants grow.

Once we begin to understand the complex geophysical relationships that occur between bedrock and soil structure, between soil structure and plant life, we begin to understand the function of soil ecology itself. As horticulturalist, an intensive commitment to the earth reaps its own rewards: broadening our botanical knowledge, crafting our culture, fueling our imagination. In the long term, this adds an immeasurable sense of depth to our outdoor horizons.

Soft Secrets' Sedimentation Test

A simple 'Sedimentation Test' can provide very accurate measurements of soil particle size by calculating the time taken for particles to settle through a given depth of water. Thereafter an 'approximate' measurement of the constitutional components of sand silt and clay present in a specific soil sample may be judged.

To conduct a 'Sedimentation Test', take a jam jar and measure 5cm from the base upward, marking the jar at every 1cm with a pen. Then fill the jar with 5cm of local soil (you may need to sieve the soil a little first). Fill the rest of the jar with water and stand it on the side for 10 minutes. Place a lid on the jar and shake vigorously for 2-3 minutes. Stand again and watch what happens.

Remember sand particles are largest so they will settle first. Silt particles, which are marble shaped, will settle later just above the finest layer of sand. Clay particles will be held in suspension. Organic material floats to the water surface. After 20 minutes or so, you can then measure the relative parts of sand and silt (1cm = 20% approx.) Clay particles and organic matter represent the remaining percentage between them.

This is a low-tech test, but it is surprising how many reputable horticulturists apply this method to their 'high-science'. The major benefit of the 'Sedimentation Test' is that it can provide the outdoor horticulturist (and the backwoods-person) with the opportunity to conduct quick 'field-tests' over many different soil sites.









Welcome to the future of Hydroponics - The EcoSystem

The EcoSystem is a breakthrough in the world of Hydroponics

EcoSystem

Gone are the days of putting "System next to System" in order to achieve large yields of crop. With the EcoSystem you get a unit specifically designed for those with special problems. With an ability to hold 20 x 1m slabs each with a capacity of growing 3 — 4 plants, the EcoSystem offers growers the dream they have long wished for.

The EcoSystem runs on 2 lamps (600w) which hang vertically inside the system.

These lamps are enclosed by a circular glass tube which is then air-cooled by means of a fan

3 Fans are also built into this system to make sure that your climate control is totally manageable and easy to operate, allowing your plants to remain at their optimum temperature.

Initially it is set up a drip feed system and the Eco system does its job more than efficiently, however some growers have been known to make adjustments and have a "run to waste" set up instead of drip feed, so whatever your needs this Ecosystem is ready and able to keep a smiling face on all growers.



Results on the EcoSystem have shown that high yields are effortlessly attainable, thus fast becoming the next big thing for growers throughout the UK.

A compact classic that will be remembered for being ahead of its time.

The EcoSystem is now available in the UK and should be available at your local retailer.

For best results with the EcoSystem it is recommended that you use the Advanced Nutrients rangel







Pink Floyd, Amsterdam





Ok, so SSUK walked in and no Pink Floyd was playing. For about the first five minutes, and then the old familiar strains of "Live at Pompeii" began to pound through the coffeeshop. You've got to imagine that the staff gets

a bit tired of the same music, but they still played it! What a surprise to accidentally wander past what appears to be a tiny, dark coffeeshop, and randomly pop in for a coffee, only to be welcomed with a smile into this three-story tribute to

the classic rock legends. You might think a shop so dedicated to one theme would be focusing all its energy on maintaining that décor, and not much else, but that just isn't true at the Pink Floyd. The staff is very friendly and helpful, and the high concentration of locals is a really good sign for tourists. You'll fit right in with the smokers, Internet fiends, and Umma Gumma hash addicts as you puff away and munch through the menu. Each of the three floors is distinctly different, lending a choice of atmosphere for all who enter. The top floor has café tables, from which it's very easy to eat your English or Continental breakfast (served daily from 9:00 - 12:00), or chill on the leather sofas

conveniently tucked into the windowed corner. This spot is especially nice for middleaged couples trying to find some quiet space to regroup, or those who wish for a bit of privacy. The next floor down has a back room with large padded bench seats, perfect for large groups, and the front is a small mezzanine with several computers where you can surf while you smoke. Downstairs hosts the entryway and both bars (non-alcoholic drinks and the hash bar), where you can peruse the menus, choose a bite to eat, and pick up a magazine to read while you wait. Check out their food and drinks menu online! Feel free to have a chat at the bar, or tuck yourself into yet another back room, where many additional seats and tables can be found. Relax with one of a few local pups that may nose around you for a cuddle, a sign that the owners are pretty relaxed and welcoming. For hash lovers, be sure to smoke some of the shop's namesake, and grass smokers can choose from a modest but all biological selection, including Highlife Cup winners like Mother's Finest. The Sensi Star made this SSUK reporter lose half a day or so. Strong, clean smoke for good prices, an extensive food menu, the usual drinks (plus some exotic juices), and a wide variety of seating in a welcoming place are more than enough reason to check out the Pink Floyd coffeeshop, in business now for 20 years! Oh, and by the way, which one's Pink?

Pink Floyd Coffeeshop (Umma Gumma), Haarlemmerstraat 44, Amsterdam **Open Daily from 9:00 – 20:00**

www.pinkflovd.nl

rowmaster Hydroponics, Ross-on-Wye



Former builder Lee and partner Brian, who used to be a chef, opened Growmaster a year and a half ago as there was nothing like it in their area and they were "sick of traveling 120 miles to fetch a bottle of nutrient," says Lee. "We just thought: why not?" The 50-meter shop bang in the centre of the charming border town of Ross-on-Wye has already captured a wide customer base from across Wales and West England, offering products such as Ionic, Vitalink and the new Amsterdam Indoor range.

There's a grow tent erected for inspection and tomatoes growing in the shop window part of the Ross-in-Bloom festival (this year's theme: 'Grow Your Own' - really). "We've got good relations with the locals; we're certainly not unwelcome in the town," says Lee. 'And it's surprising who we get in here – a lot of over-50s. Some of them are growing tomatoes, but some of them definitely are not! Sure, we get a few wideboys like everybody else, but we make it clear we don't want their custom." He says good customer service has been the key to their success. This includes free local delivery, and the Growmasters are happy to help with setting up grow systems - "when we've got the time."

Growmaster Hydroponics. 2 Cantilup Road, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7AN Tel: +44 (0) 1989 762 839 Open: 10.00am - 5.00pm Mon - Sat

Hydro Supplys & Grow & Bloom, Hull

Kevin started up Hydro Supplys five years ago, mainly he says because him and his mates were "sick of getting ripped off, and always having to nip out of town to pick up supplies." The shop is discretely located on the ring road near the docks in the East of the city

"We have a good relationship with the local community," says Kevin. "As long as we keep selling pet supplies too!" Business was doing well enough to open a sister shop, Grow & Bloom, in the West of the city six months ago, which is slightly larger and has hydro and lighting set-ups on site.

Both shops have more of less the same stock (except for the pet supplies at Hydro), being the usual big name brands such as: Canna, BioBizz and their main seller, Advance. They are also the exclusive stockists of the Cannatronic range of lights for their area. Customers come from all over West and North Yorkshire thanks to positive word of mouth and regular bargains. "I've been here for five years now, and people know they

can trust me," says Kevin. "Just a few years ago, Britain used to be associated with crap weed," says Kevin. "Nowadays, you see stuff th at would not be out of place in an Amsterdam coffee shop." Another Dutch trait he would like to see copied is the tolerance to smoking. "I'd love to have a coffeeshop here in Hull one day...

Hydro Supplys, 434 Marfleet Lane, Hull. Tel: +44 (0) 1482 783985

Open: 10.00am - 5.30pm Mon - Fri, 11.00am-5.00pm Sat.

Grow & Bloom, 329 Beverley Road, Hull.

Tel: +44 (0) 1482-343085 Open: 10.00am - 5.30pm, Mon - Sat.

www.hydrosupplys.com

Hydroponica, Wakefield





It was the lack of a decent grow shop in their area that prompted Jim and Stuart to set up Hydroponica around a year ago. "There was nowhere you could get a good standard of trustable service and where they didn't try and sell you what was convenient to them and not what you needed," says Stuart.

He says their aim with Hydroponica is to provide a professional environment ("not some laddish hobby") where the customer can "trust what we say, based on real experience"

Located just by the famous Wakefield Trinity rugby ground, half a mile out of the town centre, there is discrete parking round the back of the shop, which has a rear exit too.

With 2000 square feet of retail space and the same amount of storage, the impressive Hydroponica is already drawing loyal support from around West and South Yorkshire with its excellent and comprehensive range of hydroponic gear.

There are a couple of grow displays set up to demonstrate how pretty much everything works. The shop sells exclusively hydroponic gear. "We didn't want to diversify and dilute what we offer," says Stuart.

This thoroughness is extended to the website, a very secure, confidential, credit cardenabled site offering every tube, box, bottle and valve a committed water-grower could

A current focus of the shop are the new grow modules that are coming onto the market, like those from Arena Plantage, says Stuart. "It's the way people are going, commercially."

Hydroponica, 130 Doncaster Road, Wakefield WF1 5JF +44 (0) 1924 362 888 www.hydroponica.biz

Open: 10.00am - 6.00pm Mon - Fri; 10.00am – 5.00pm Sat; 11.00am - 3.30pm Sun.

MULTIFLOW THE EVOLUTION OF HYDROPONICS

Urban Garden has been at the forefront of hydroponics research and development since we opened our doors back in 1999, always looking for new and exciting developments in the hydro world. All the systems we sell have been tried and tested by us for years and we've always found bad points with the systems. NFT is a very good system but has down points such as small reservoirs cramped plants and not very versatile. Pot systems are great but feeding pots always required a lot of time and effort. Blend the two systems together and you have the AMAZING Multi-Flow. Urban Garden is Multiflow's only distributor in Barnsley And now Sheffield, and we feel we have the best pot system on the market. It is so simple and versatile that no other system comes close. Everybody who takes the system comes back to the shop telling us how amazed they are and how good there plants look. The system works using two float valves set at a minimum maximum level. These valves turn the pump off when the pots are full of water and after a set time, drain off all the water back to the tank. There is minimal ph/cf fluctuation. When the pots fill with water, all the bad air is forced out and when the water drains away, new air is forced into substrate allowing the roots to breathe. Root disease is a thing of the past with this system. The system can be used with any substrate of your choice with any nutrient and runs almost silent. We give a 100% guarantee on the system as we do with our entire product line. We have fully working displays of this system and all other systems in both our shops. For advice and costing please feel free to contact us. Check out or web site for prices www.urban-garden.co.uk. Urban Garden have a price match policy to ensure we will not be beaten on price. Good luck and Happy Growing







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Grow disaster becomes top harvest By Bart B.

NLX on coco

Better and better; it just keeps getting a whole lot better each time, and that's as it should be. Whether it is down to experience, luck or just plain coincidence, who knows. Do what you like to do and do it well, then you will get good results. What had threatened to be a screwed up grow turned out with the passage of time to be a top harvest. This time it was the supersonic NLX (Northern Lights Cross) that turned out to be a real winner under the lights. This is a story about what an amateur can achieve if he comes through a heat wave having started with too long a pre-growth.



NLX, just before she goes into bloom.

The story begins in the Spring of 2003. The temperature had become nice and warm. Now and then it was actually very hot. After a poor start early in the year the spring sun was beginning to get to work and the temperature barely fell below 20 degrees. This was then an outstandingly good period in which to stick some more clones inside, because you don't even need to keep them warm.

Many might have problems with the heat, but as long as you provide sufficient ventilation this should not necessarily lead to a failed crop. Hang a few fewer lamps, use a heavier-duty ventilator, or hang water-cooled or air-cooled lamps - these are simple solutions for bringing the temperature in your space down a

and ventilator working flat out. But that is a situation that cannot be compared with the bigger growers who have 10, 20 or more lamps hung in their spaces. To these people I have only one word to say: airco. This because time and again I hear from growers that if it's cold you can warm things up but there's nothing you can do against the heat. But with a small (or large) investment in an airco installation, even with the most roasting hot of Summers you can safely continue to grow in a nice fresh indoor space. This is obviously not something for everybody, but it is an investment that quickly repays itself in bud yield. The technology what's more never stands still. Also available in the growing scene at the moment is a piece of equipment on sale that can

With a small (or large) investment in an airco installation even during a scorching hot summer you can grow in nice fresh circumstances indoors.

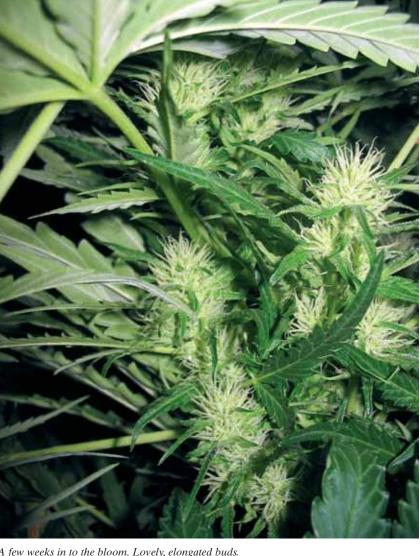
few degrees. I personally set my lamps to burn at night, like most people probably, as so long as no heat wave comes along to nudge your night time temperatures above 30 degrees, everything runs pretty smoothly. The ventilation does need to be on continuously though, which will make sure the cool evening air is drawn fully through the grow space.

By the way, I have replaced my old 400 watt lamp with two 600 watt lamps, a question of looking ahead rather than looking back. And the temperature is kept nicely under control, even in a reasonably small grow space. It stays under the 30 degree ceiling and there is sufficient ventilation thanks to a vacuum pump

cool off the inside temperature of the your space before you enter. At the same time, the same piece of kit can keep the air warm in winter, so that your growing space can be continuously kept at an ideal temperature.

Reliable clones

I went in search of decent, reliable clones, and boy did I find them. This time around I got hold of some NLX. Just how good they really were only became fully apparent in retrospect. Evidently I have to-date had good luck on the clone market. But many growers have less luck. The quality is not always satisfactory, certainly in the spring and



A few weeks in to the bloom. Lovely, elongated buds.

summer months, when it is advisable to take especially good care. Watch out particularly for clones infested with spint or other pests.

I planted 17 NLX clones in four-litre pots filled with coco substrate. I have already mentioned how happy I was with them. For a healthy, vigorous start I added root stimulator and enzymes to the feed water. The pre-growth was started under a 400watt lamp that was switched over to a 600-watter after a few days. Once they had burst into bloom, I added another 600-watt lamp to the set up. Apparently the heat suited them well, despite the fact that everyone complains about the heat given off by a 600-watt lamp. It was not actually that different, but this does come down to the same point I made earlier: ensure good ventilation. Had mine not been powerful enough, then I could still have bought a stronger one. That is why vou will frequently hear how important it is to buy a unit with a more powerful suction than you actually need (at the moment). Suppose that you start your first grow with a few plants during the Winter months, and you calculate the capacity of your grow space and the ventilation you will need for it. If you buy your ventilation perfectly tailored to this then you will certainly be fine during the crisp Autumn and Winter months. But what happens when the temperature begins to rise in the Spring and Summer? Then it will become apparent to many that they have bought too feeble a ventilation capacity, and after a few months they will either have to buy another one or stop with growing altogether. One other advantage of buying a larger capacity than you need at the moment is that the ventilation will be fine

just turning over at half speed, which will considerably reduce the noise created. The alternative is to have a smaller ventilation capacity and have it run flat out, and that will make much more of a racket. Are you also going to have to spend on hefty noise insulation as a result?

Pre-growth: indoors or outdoors?

Normally I would let the clones go through their pre-growth outside, but because the sun was not yet up to scratch I had no choice but to do this indoors. Nonetheless, I remain a firm supporter of letting everything simply complete its pre-growth outside. But anyway, this time I let the clones have a week and a half of growth. This was a little too long, it later turned out, because the NLX is a very powerful plant and a great grower. That extra half week of growth came about thanks to a problem when a timer burnt out, thanks to which they continued to grow. Fortunately I discovered the problem quite quickly and was able to sort it out.

This incident prompted me to ponder how important it is to always check your lamps regularly and make sure they really are turning on and off at the right time. In the growth period this can not do too much damage, but what if I had been at the flowering stage? Just imagine, you don't keep a good watch out and after a week you see your plants going back into growth instead of continuing to develop their blooms. This is not a nice thing to witness. So make sure your equipment is in a reasonable state, and don't spare the pennies when vou're buying your timers. Using cheap gear will sooner or later lead to problems.



The same buds sometime later. Things are looking better.

The NLX-babes had reached a good 15 to 20 centimetres. The smallest were those growing in soil. I always put a few plants in soil, for one reason just to see the difference when grown in coco. The clones in coco sprang up quite clearly faster. The clones in soil needed a few days more. But no sweat; despite the extra days they took, these clones too achieved a good growth,

Rockets in coco

Bloom was stimulated, and the plants began to develop at a rapid pace. They literally shot up like green rockets; the launch of the space shuttle had nothing on these babies. NLX can without any trouble easily reach three metres in height. It really is a fantastic grower. Unfortunately, I did not know that in advance, otherwise I would certainly have given them less pre-growth. I would also have been better off topping them. But instead I had to

They put out very little leafage. This is a characteristic that makes this lady a pleasure to trim. She's a sweet-smeller, with elongated, vast Sativa-buds.

They were hand-watered daily with Canna Coco, which can be used during the growth as well as during the bloom. I also gave them a regular dose of Supervit, and once the bloom period had begun I also applied B'Cuzz bloom stimulator on a daily basis. In addition I gave them each week or two weeks a good dose of enzymes to keep the root life optimal, and thereby keep the whole plant growing optimally. The plants slurped up a good 500 ml of feed water each per day. What was a nice advantage with using coco was that it is impossible to give them too much water. Thanks to this attribute it is also a great medium for beginners to let their seeds germinate on. Coco has the advantage of holding plenty of moisture in, but at the same time it remains good

Another advantage of a larger capacity is that you can then run this at half speed, which will make the ventilation noise considerably less.

keep raising the lamps and raising them again, until after about two weeks I could not raise them any further. And the growth, sadly, was still not finished. I had not topped them, I guess because I kept thinking 'well they surely can't get much bigger'. Once they had reached a height of 1.30 metres, I finally realised that I did in fact need to top them. But they eventually reached a height of 1.60 metres.

The NLX is a slim lady with very short side branches. She is, judging by the leaves, mostly Sativa, which explains the extreme growth. With which Sativa is the NL crossed with? Some people reckon it's with a Haze or Superskunk, which would explain the strong growth. In any case the NLX grows a dominant cola bud, by which I mean that she expends most of her energy in making one enormously long head bud if you do not top her. Topping at a height of just 30 to 60 centimetres is not unusual. The growth pattern is comparable to an old-fashioned hat stand, with many small, short side branches on it and a single large bump on top. That is how my own NLX looked, 1.40 to 1.60 metre high with side branches of about 15 centimetres.

and dry. Strange, but true - even if you have just given the coco litres of water, it still feels bone dry. This is one of the great strengths of using coco. Do this with soil and I can assure you that over the next few days you will not need (or be able to) give any more feed water. By contrast, with coco you will the very next day have once again a nice dry pot in front of you. So then you'll be able to give another strong feed. With soil you would have to wait another day before it was dry enough for you to be able to give more water. With coco you can feed the very next day, which means you can more easily rectify any deficiencies on coco, plus you can also give much more nutrient up to twice as much as on soil. This is my experience, at least. Each grow I have undertaken with coco and soil-based plants has given me the same results.

Four weeks' bloom

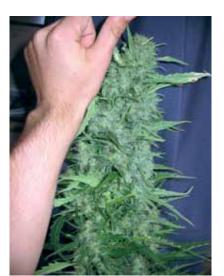
The NLX had now been blossoming for about four weeks. I have to say that by this stage there were still only very small buds beginning to form on the plants. As things were looking now, I was facing really awful harvest. The buds on my NLX were also coming way too close to the lamps, which were giving off an immense amount of heat. I'm used to growing K2, which in week four already has such huge buds on them they look as if they are practically ready for harvest. In the case of these NLX, this was quite clearly not the case, and that takes a bit of getting used to. I even stopped giving the plants Supervit and B'Cuzz bloom stimulator

The coco I used I have had now for more than a year, during which time I have used it three times. There are always nutrient residues left in it, and maybe the coco is all the better for this rather than worse. Who knows? If you ever decide to start a grow on coco yourself it is advisable to start good and early with feeding. In its raw state coco contains no nutrient at all, which is why you need to begin

This prompted me to ponder how important it is to always check your lamps regularly and make sure they really are turning on and off at the right time.

in the sixth week of bloom, as I did not want to waste any more of these products, which cost money after all, on plants did not look as if they were going to produce any reasonable yield of buds – at least, so I thought.

Not very long after this, the NLX astounded me by producing the biggest buds I have ever (personally) seen, let alone grown! Really, I had not even dreamed such buds would appear. What had seemed to be heading for a disastrous grow in fact turned into a top harvest. I give all the credit to NLX, a really top plant. This was the first time that I have grown a variety that developed such a super crown bud. So the growth spurt begins from week six to eight. Then the buds develop and increase in size so quickly that before you even know it, you're wrestling with enormous buds under your lamps. NLX really lets her best side be seen only in the last two weeks.



What a cracker.



adding nutrients immediately if you want to get off to a good start with your growth. So don't dilly-dally, as you can when growing on soil, for a week or so in order to begin giving nutrients. Adding enzymes and root stimulator will also help you get off to a good start in the first few days. And once the clones have really begun to take hold and are showing signs of good growth, then immediately start giving fertiliser to your plants. You can start doing this pretty much from the fourth day or even sooner. When reusing coco, and so are using the same coco for the second time, then you should flush the whole lot well through with enzymes, and then you're fine to add the second load of clones to it. The coco now contains a great deal of nutrients, which will give you a good growth start, and you will be able to wait a little longer before adding your first fertiliser.

Furthermore, I'd like to remark that so far I have never managed to overfertilise coco. This can partly be explained by the drain off that occurs when you add too much feed water. Any excess simply washes away, taking all damaging salts and whatnot. Coco also has a buffering capability by being able to store considerable amounts of nutrient and then release it when it is needed. Altogether, coco seems to be a particularly user-friendly medium. You really have to try your hardest to screw up using it. I even don't bother to use a pH meter or EC meter when growing on coco. It works really well without them, and if something works well, why mess with it?

Super harvest

We are now at the end of the eighth, beginning of the ninth week of blooming. The NLX is ripe and ready for harvesting. The most important moment is upon us. I find it hard to believe that if I now look in my little plantation I'm looking at the same one as four weeks ago, when little buds no bigger than a finger were sitting on the plants. Things can change rapidly, the tide can soon turn, this time in my favour. Each time it gets better and better, I have to say. Every new grow undertaken increases your knowledge. Before you know it you're raising the biggest buds, buds you've only seen in your dreams. And let's not forget: they are your buds! Everyone knows that the sweetest buds are those you've raised yourself. Hahaha, indeed! You'll be walking around with a smile on



NLX has enormous crown buds.



Handy, eh?, these drying racks... Just stack them as high as you want.

your face that would put The Joker from Batman to shame (whose smile evidently comes from a fall into a vat of buds, and if you don't believe me rehire the movie).

The next few days were really nice and busy. Trimming, trimming and yet more trimming. After I had removed the plants from their grow space I was

yet again struck by their sheer size. They looked totally different out in broad daylight, don't you think? There were more buds on a single plant than I had expected, and all of them - from small to large - were well covered with crystals. After just trimming one plant I had so much resin on my fingers that I could already roll a ball of hash from it. After a bit of time there was so much on my fingers, layer upon layer, that thanks to the sweat on my fingertips it was falling off in lumps. Lovely, fresh hash with a few weed trimmings and the little hearts of the buds mixed in! The NLX really is a snow white. Having seen this variety I now get the full meaning of the saying: 'The plant looks as if a snow storm has blown over it, it's so full of crystals' (something you'll read a lot in seed catalogues).

They literally shot up like green rockets; the launch of the space shuttle had nothing on these babies.

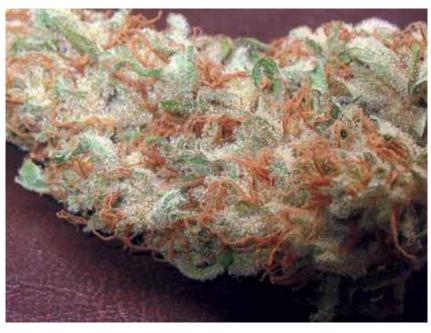
The yield per plant was between 25 to 40 gram, with the majority of the plants somewhere around the 30 gram mark. One significant exception was an 80-gram beauty. All in all, I was very happy with the NLX, and the plants

were a pleasure to trim. I paid a trip to Aliën grow shop in IJzendijke for a few white screens on which the buds could dry, and I found them outstanding! You can stick a whole lot of buds on them and you can stack as many screens on top of each other as you want. After a two week drying period I could finally measure the dry weight: a harvest of 530 grams per 600 watts. Not bad, and totally unexpected. The leaf material

The NLX lets her best side show in the last two weeks.

was as usual kept behind safely and dried out. I plan to make a good water hash out of this, but I'll tell you more about that next time around.

Stay tuned!



A dried NLX bud, ready to be crumbled and consumed. Now there's tasty.

GAME REVIEWS

By Kristie Szalanski

TripThe Funky New GAME for Smokers!



Imagine yourself backpacking through India. Smoke a bit of hash, enjoy the sights, and relax. You could also be sitting on the beach and playing a new card game from Matt & Ash, called Trip, which was

actually conceptualised during visits to India. A cult favourite among travellers, the card game is a loosely organized deck of interesting directions. The categories for cards are: Get High, Ride the Vibes, Eat the Stash, Comedown, and Flashback. You can pretty much imagine the sort of theme of the game, although the emphasis is on smoking, and wonder if it's a bit easier to play after dropping some acid. The Goa trance scene could perhaps support a relaxed afternoon spending hours learning this game, and it's easy to assume that once learned it goes quickly. However, the system of stealing points and halting people's turns can easily be ignored (after all, you are allowed to make your own rules, and this is suggested) in favour of skinning up. Two to six players are dealt cards, and then expected to decipher the instructions on each card in order to act on them. Red cards earn you points, and "Bad Trip" cards can take these away, green cards let you steal cards from other players, and things like "Mystic Insight" allow you to take someone's hand and return it minus the ones you want. Really, the concept makes sense; it's just a matter of spending some time with friends and plenty of weed, and preparing to laugh at yourselves. Time better spent than avoiding the sunshine! Two friends who like to travel developed the game between 2001 and 2005, and they received a great response with like-minded individuals. Handmade in India, the packs come in unique bags with an instruction sheet and die. Packs can be ordered individually (on eBay!), purchased at Conscious Dreams (Kokopelli), Warmoesstraat Amsterdam, or bought in bulk for retail sale.

Website: www.trippygames.com E-mail: info@trippygames.com





Stoner Fluxx

A Game About Weed, Freedom, and the Pursuit of Happiness

You like to play games? While you're wasting time indoors getting paler and developing your Barry White voice, why

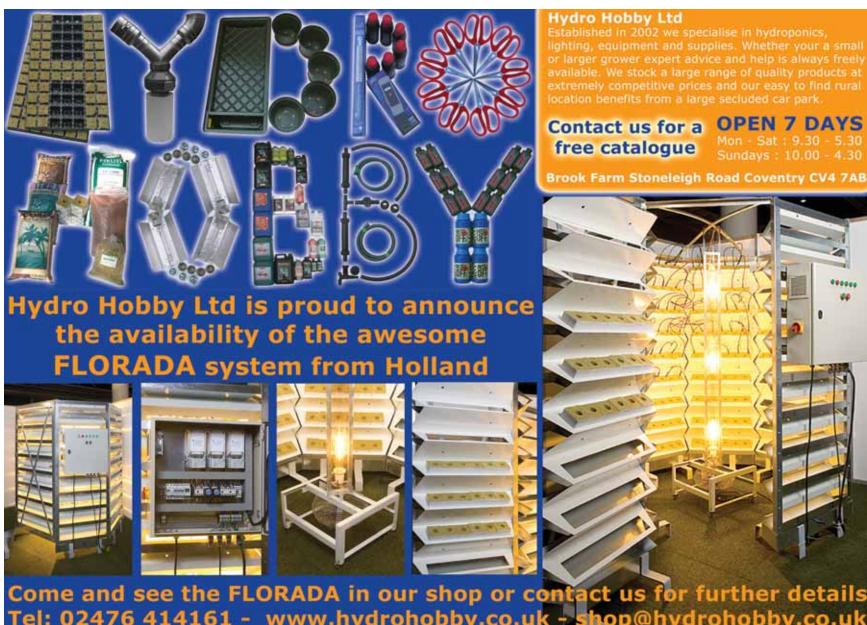
not spend some of your stoned sessions playing a card game? If you're on holiday in Amsterdam you can't play normal card games in many coffeeshops due to the link with gambling, so you can whip out a pack of *Stoner Fluxx* cards instead. Chill out in the Vondel Park or along a sunny canal, and smoke yourselves into a frenzy. Think drinking games with instructions, and ganja instead of alcohol. The deck card game was released in 2003 by Looney Labs, a husband and wife team in America who are responsible for loads of addictive games: *Aquarius, Chrononauts, Icehouse, Cosmic Coasters and Nanofictionary, plus many others*.

Andrew Looney, the founder of the company, is a bit of a mad scientist who prefers to create captivating games for a living. He previously used his big brain to work developing software for NASA, and now confuses, frustrates, and entertains people of all ages with his popular games. Stoner Fluxx is a themed release based on one of their most talked about games, the 3.0 version of Fluxx. The crux of Fluxx revolves around a principle of constantly changing rules, an idea still central in the green version. Two to six players can deal themselves in at any time, beginning with three cards. Each pack has 84+ cards, and once you're let in on the craze you'll understand that random cards and rules can pop up anywhere on the planet!) The main categories are Actions, Goals, New Rules, and Keepers. Actions relate to the turn at hand and range from "Toke!" where the game is paused so everyone can smoke one, to "What were we doing again?" where you reshuffle ALL the cards, including everyone's hand, and re-deal. A particularly annoying card is "Busted!" which leads to the "confiscation" of everyone's ganja-related cards. Goals refer to accumulating Keepers (there's a 'weed' card, a bong, pipe, munchies, etc., but also sneaky hemp facts on the cards representing paper and the flag) and when someone completes a Goal, they win instantly. Cards like this mean the game can last anywhere from two minutes to as long as you can sit up, and because of all the New Rule cards (each player draws four on a turn, smoke on each turn, make someone skip their turn to roll you a joint, etc.) the dimensions are always changing. While the idea is to have fun and hang out with friends, the game's creator is an "outspoken activist for the legalisation of marijuana," and this is evident from even the packaging of the game. Drug war facts and prohibition details are prominent features, and the opening card urges children to outdo Andrew's record of waiting until the age of 30 to try Cannabis for the first time. By the way, the Action cards relating to consumption are all printed with an amusing warning: "Doing what this card says is illegal. Set it aside until after marijuana prohibition ends." The Looneys even donate one dollar per pack sold to a variety of activist groups, including NORML, the Marijuana Policy Project, Media Awareness Project, and Drug Policy Alliance.

You might think that playing a card game with lots of words printed on them would be difficult when stoned, but the setup is extremely to understand. Remember, the game was made for stoners! Cannabis might not be addictive, but Stoner Fluxx certainly is. Shuffle the deck, pack the bong, and contribute to some worthy causes while giggling your face off.

Website: www.looneylabs.com More info? Call +1 (301) 441-1019





How to use the Bubbleator

1) Place your Bubbleator on a raised platform and the bucket on the floor. Put the screen bag in the bucket, in the three bag set this is the 70mc bag. If you have multiple crystal collection bags, place them in order from finest to most porous. The order if you were using all available bags would be 38mc, 70mc and finally 90mc.

2) Half fill the Bubbleator with cold water. Then add the ice, if you have large chunks of ice, be sure to break them up in ice-cube size pieces or smaller. You can now set the Bubbleator to run for 2 minutes to mix the ice and water. Check the temperature has reached approximately 4°C, if it is higher add more ice and mix again.







3) Fill the pyramid bag with up to 500 grams of frozen leaf material and place it in the Bubbleator. Then close the Bubbleator's lid and set the timer to between 3-8 minutes. It will now start to agitate the leaves.







4) When the timer has reached 0, you can open the Bubleator's lid and squeeze all the water out of the leaf material in the pyramid bag. Then put the smallest screen bag around the hose, while holding the hose up. Hang the hose in the bucket and let the Bubbleator drain.





Semove the screen bag from the hose and place the hose back onto the Bubbleator. Remove the first bag (if you are using multiple bags) from the bucket, dunk it in the water 2 or 3 times, so all the crystals gather in the middle. Squeeze all the water out with your hand first, then with a piece of kitchen paper.







Put the crystals in the kitchen sieve and push them through (e.g. with a spoon) onto a piece of paper. This is necessary to dry the crystals loosely and avoid molding. This takes about 48 hours, after which your crystals are ready for use or pressing. You can repeat steps 5 and 6 for the other screen bags, if you used them. You should rinse all of the screen bags with cold water immediately after use. Any dried up crystals can be removed every 2 months using alcohol (96%).









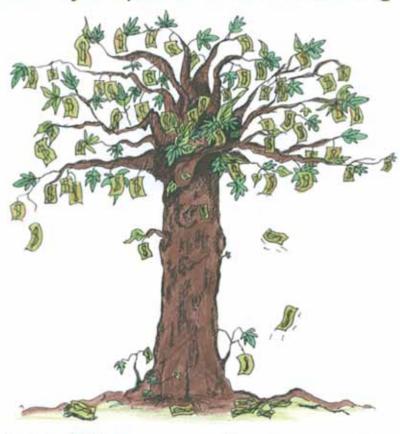
Requirements

- Dried, frozen leaf material
- 1 bucket (+/- 30cm diameter)
- Kitchen paper (absorbing)
- 2 kilo ice cubes, enough to keep the temperature down to 4°C (41°F) (+/- 2 to 4 kilo)
- Thermometer (Included)
- Kitchen sieve (Included)
- Pyramid bag 220mc (Included)
- Drainhose bag 220mc (Included)
- Crystal catching bag 70mc (Included)
 (Optional 90mc and 38mc bags for extra qualities are available)

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Neolithic Gorillas By LazyStrain

The origins of cannabis cultivation are steeped into the cultural traditions of many ancient agrarian communities, not least amid the Neolithic peoples of the Hindu

It is usually agreed that, the genus cannabis descends from the hilly regions of Northern India, the exact location of which differs depending upon individual religious and ideological perceptions. It is widely known that water and animals carry the seeds of sporadic annuals like cannabis into new locations. This is, after all, fundamental to our understanding of botany. For the anthropologist however, these matters are supplementary to the fact that cannabis was transported alongside migrations of human diaspora. From the foothills of the Himalaya, the exact pattern of cannabis evolution is unknown. What is known, is that Neolithic farmers took to the cultivation of cannabis, as readily as they took to everything else.

Cannabis is often described as a 'weed'. A weed is a plant that grows in the places that other plants disdain. "As outlaws and outcasts they have a power not to be looked upon lightly...Under drought and neglect they thrive. When man ignores them they rise to the height of their powers". Annual weeds such as cannabis thrive in cultivated fields that bear annual crops like emmer, einkorn and wheat. Once integrated into local eco-systems cannabis quickly takes root to propagate, and establish for itself, new cultigens in the form of seed. Therefore since cannabis is programmed to survive against all uncertainty, it is not surprising that these particular plants readily colonised the landscapes of early Neolithic farmers.

Archaeologists suggest that 'early agriculturists' exploited only the richest and most productive land available. A straightforward approach is that Neolithic communities adopted new food procurement strategies due to an expanse in population. At about the same time in pre-history (c.20,000 - 10,000 BC) it is quite possible that Neolithic farmers began to cultivate cannabis alongside cereal crops and legumes (peas & beans). The question as to why hunter-gather communities switched towards systems of agriculture, in most cases provides more questions than credible answers; (perhaps people were just far too stoned)?

None the less, at some point during the hazy smoke-rings of time, someone threw some seeds into some soil and cannabis was domesticated. At this critical stage in the evolution of cannabis, particular characteristics were selected and isolated by the very same Neolithic farmers. Since domestication allows a finer degree of selective control, either knowingly or unknowingly, Neolithic gorilla growers were perhaps the very first sinsemilla farmers. That is domestication, it would seem, had become the most efficient and effective way of producing annual harvests. These Neolithic gorilla growers favoured the hydromorphic soil conditions of river edges and estuaries, thus land most suited to 'sativa' species of cannabis. Upland pastorialists (shepherds), upon the other hand, harvested wild strains of 'indica' from the steep regions of the

Ok, so you're no-doubt thinking this is a 'chicken and egg' story. You know, which came first? 'indica' or 'sativa'? Most Botanists would claim that species of 'indica' were first domesticated, and that 'sativa' strains were cultivated thereafter. The Anthropologist, on the other hand, may state that strains of 'indica' were wild for some time, whilst 'sativa' strains were first domesticated by early agriculturists in the purist sense. Again this depends upon the individual methods of agriculture applied. Perhaps upland pastorialists removed male plants during pubescence so as to be sure of a female harvest. Then again, perhaps lowland agriculturists favoured taller male plants, so as to craft cordage and rope from their stems. For the majority, many of these questions remain unanswered.

Upon the overall scale of things, I suppose it matters little as to which was domesticated first. I mean we must remember that the words, 'indica' and 'sativa', are in fact generic terms applied to the genus 'Cannabis' some 20,000 years after its domestication. Either way it is fun to think that our Neolithic ancestors valued the properties of cannabis so highly that they incorporated its cultivation into their daily routine. During this period in pre-history the only goddess was Mother Nature herself. The seasons decided the bounty of harvests. The Sun, the Rains, and the Winds were people's allies as much as their tempest. Cultivators dwelled alongside pastorialists and everyone prospered.

So it occurred that by slight of hand or by way of reckoning, cannabis cultivation became as much as skilled trade (in the purely botanical sense) as it did a recreational pastime. The lineage of cannabis progressed from seed to hand and from hand to seed, and the rest shall we say is history. As agrarian peoples, the cultivation of cannabis is, in many ways, entwined into our very own ancestral heritage. As such, is it not perhaps people's birthright to cultivate?

Highlife Fair Barcelona, second edition

When: 14, 15 & 16 October 2005 Where: La Farga, Barcelona



After the magnificent success of the first international Highlife Fair in Barcelona last year (with 15,000 visitors, by far the best attended cannabis fair in the world!), a follow-up could obviously not be left too long before being organised. The second edition of the Highlife BCN fair will be held between the 14th and 16th of October inclusive, in La Farga in Barcelona, with a total floor area of 8000 m2.

Many international companies will be presenting themselves there for the first time to a Spanish and French public. As well as the business fair there will be a lot of space reserved for seminars, political discussions and entertainment. That's because as well as being a trade fair the Highlife Fair Barcelona is above a real lifestyle fair, that aims to fully engage a cannabis-friendly public.

The Highlife Fair has been an institution in the Netherlands for more than a decade. Springing originally from the bi-monthly, glossy cannabis magazine Highlife, the Fair was an answer to the ever-growing demand from both the public and the cannabis-related business world. At the time, nowhere else in the world could grow shops, coffeeshops, head shops and other supplier

businesses present themselves to the public at large. And nowhere else could the public acquaint themselves so thoroughly with the wide range of services and products emerging on to the ever-more sophisticated cannabis market.

The first Highlife Fair was held in 1994 in the Ahoy complex in Rotterdam, where well-known bands like Cypress Hill ensured the event was a real sensation, with excellent live performances. At the first fair, music formed the core of the event and the fair itself was more of an after-thought. In successive years this changed more and more; the music faded into the background while the fair itself became bigger and more international in character. At the last Dutch fair held, at the end of January 2005, the success of this formula (international) members of the public made their way to the Highlife Fair, where they were welcomed by more than 100 stand holders from various

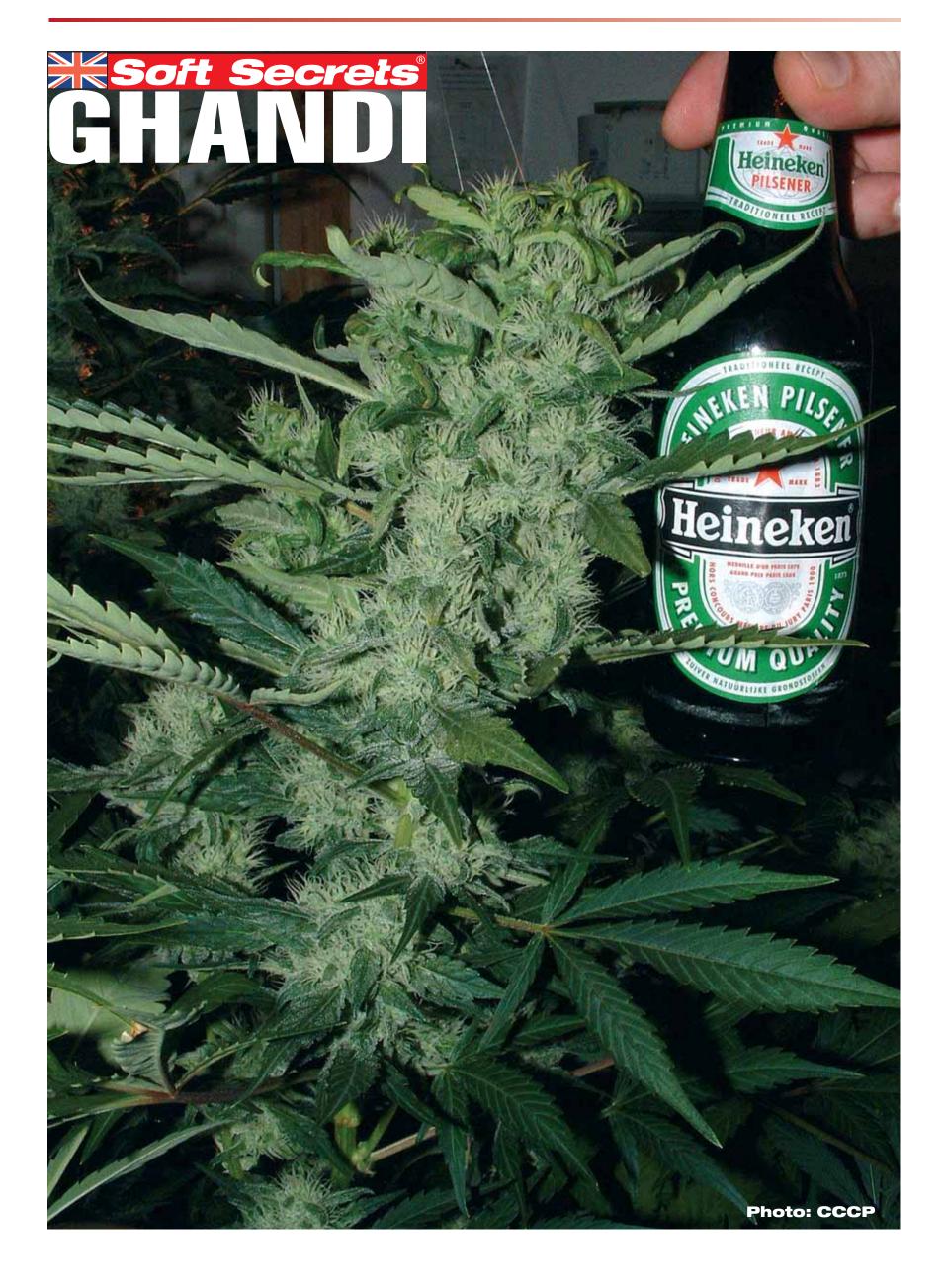
One of the added values of the Highlife Fair Barcelona is for many visitors the legendary Highlife Cup, the presentation of the awards for the best weed and hash submitted by Spanish grow shops and seed companies. The Highlife Cup has in the course of its life become an internationally recognized honour, serving as a benchmark of professionalism, with a breadth of participation that stands head and shoulders above the only rival to speak of, the much smaller and primarily oriented towards the American market High Times Cup.

We hope to be able to welcome you too in Barcelona, on the 14th, 15th en 16th October 2005!

For info call Discover Publisher Tel: +31 (0) 73-549 8112 or **Soft Secrets Spain (Ibisland Invest S.L.) Tel:** +34 (0) 93 861 6280 oftsecrets.nl or www.highlife.nl







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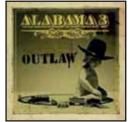
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MUSIC

Alabama 3



Where the fuck is Johnny Cash! He's on the "Last Train To Mashville", and through the ether the

vague shadows of South London's finest come to walk the line. At last, situationist charlatans, fops, dilettantes, recidivists – and the last joke in the acid country cracker reengage with their latent genius.

"Outlaw", the bands fourth LP., hits harder than Numbers the fourth Testament, a joyous amalgam of country, blues, gospel and the lost analogues of Johnny D.; they have reclaimed the covenant. Acidicly yours, an album that hangs better than Mussolini, tighten than piano wire- please, please, let yourself be garrotted.

Dwight Trible and the Life Force Trio

'Love Is The Answer' (Ninja Tune)



This recently harvested crop of tunes from Dwight Trible, visionary in concept, is fresh and innovative as well as rich

in respect for its musical influences. Sun-Ra style jazz, Last Poet's hip-hop, the funk of Parliament and a taste of Chicago garage-house can all be heard in this lovingly created album.

An esteemed elder statesman of the L.A. music scene, Trible has worked with greats such as Bobby Hutcherson, Charles Lloyd and Harry Belafonte. He is the vocalist with the Pharaoh Sanders Quartet and is also the vocal director for the Horace Tapscott Pan African Peoples Arkestra, a Los Angeles institution with a history stretching back forty years and an active engagement in the city's Black community since the Watts Uprising.

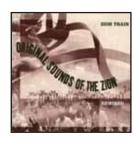
Completely free form throughout, the album moves from the 80's synth funk sound of 'Equipose' and the laid back disco vibe of the title track-'Love Is The Answer', with its looping guitars, mellow percussion and soulful vocals, through to the pure avant-garde scratch and rap strangeness of 'Waves of Infinite Harmony' onto the radical rhythms and rap poetry of 'I Was Born On Planet Rock' and 'Antiquity', finally resting with the beautiful 'Constellations' and spiritual guidance of 'Celestial Blues'.

Equally brilliant vocals, instrumentation, percussion and arrangements pervade this lyrically and musically elevating, highly enjoyable and conscience uplifting work.

By Kaz Peet A STONED SELECTION

Zion Train

'Original Sounds Of The Zion-Remixed (Universal Egg)



This recent release from the stables of the mighty Zion Train consists of fifteen remixes of tracks first released in 2002 on the

album "Original Sounds Of The Zion". Engaged since then in building a new studio and other musical projects, the tunes were passed around musical friends and peers around the planet resulting in this collection of re-workings from bands and artists including Twilight Circus, Rob Smith, Unity Sound, Vibronics and Balafonic.

In 'Love Revolutionary" - Love Grocer, a seventies style King Tubby dub underlies an almost spaghetti western film score trumpet line to great effect in this instrumental version. By contrast Pier Paolo Polcari delivers a very funky and steppin' right up high version with its toast lines and psychedelic wahwah guitar. Two other versions of this classic appear on the album, one from Dub Creator, the other from LBJ vs. Bommitomni with its techno bass and sounds.

A touch of Bhangra moves down the dub sidewalk in Transglobal Underground's version of 'Zion High''.

The striking, soulful impact of Molara's voice is at full power in "Beautiful Children", with a splendid version from Speedwell closing the album.

Various

'Trans Slovenia Express Vol. 2'
(Mute)



A very late follow up to the critically acclaimed Trans Slovenia Express Volume One, released in 1994, Volume

2 again is another selection of Kraftwerk covers, by bands and artists from Slovenia.

More of a showcase for the talent of the region rather than a further attempt at a Kraftwerk recontextualisation, the album opens with Laibach's moody chiller: Bruderschaft, not a cover, but rather, a caprice on their own song: Brother of Mine, a glistening exercise quintessential Kraftwerkian modality – quite beautiful,

quite Kraftwerk. The Stroj's: 'Metal on Metal' gets closer to it's subject matter than the original did, with some real robust steel-thumping, whilst stadium rock act Siddhartha take on The Robots with the warm fat din of metallic guitars. Although there are no tracks here that mirror the clear vibrant genius of the Kraftwerk catalogue this album, like its predecessor did, reveals its artists worthy standard bearers, and the once thought exclusive material, durable, and a highly verdant plain for further exploration.

Dr. Who at The Radiophonic Workshop. Vol. 1 and 2



A fascinating insight into the pioneering electronica of The BBC Radiophonic Workshop throughout the sixties and seventies.

These two albums contain all four Doctor Who themes, TARDIS take-offs and landings, plus much of the sublime atmospheric electro-wobble associated with Daleks, Cybermen, and Space-Pirates of yore. In combination, essential for Doctor Who fans and vintage techno lovers alike.

The Herbaliser 'Take London' (Ninja Tune)



Marching onwards and upwards in true soldier style, The Herbaliser return with the release of this storming sonic assault – "Take London". A

synthesis of laid back hip-hop beats, funky grooves, moody jazz-scapes along with a big production sound – the unique seal of this outfit, reaches new depths in this album.

Always placing great emphasis on lyrical and vocal content, here three guest vocalists are featured – the one and only Roots Manuva. Nottingham's Cappo and long time collaborator Jean Grae who excels in the sultrily profound and moving "Close Your Eyes".

Various

'Under The Influence - Carl Barat (DMC Recordings)

This is the latest in that fine series of eclectic selections made by a broad ranging spectrum of bands and artists.



Here we have a bunch of favourite and influential tunes hand picked by Carl Barat of The Libertines.

Covering a time span of over forty years, the album includes The Mamas And The Papas, Small Faces, Bob Dylan (with a particularly good track – 'Hurricane'), New York Dolls, Clash, The Stranglers and The Streets.

Peter Tosh And Friends

'Black Dignity' (Trojan)



Coming as one of the latest releases in the re-issuing of JA. Reggae music, this collection of songs from Peter Tosh is taken from

recordings made in the early seventies, some on Joe Gibbs label and some on Lee Perry's. After being a founding member and the eldest of The Wailers, his contribution was becoming undermined following the media sensationalisation of Marley.

Known as 'The Steppin' Razor' and coupling an uncompromising militancy with his deep, prophetic biblical voice, Tosh always engenders a powerful impact. Here we are treated with such classics as 'Four Hundred Years', "Downpressor", both recorded with The Wailers and "(Earth's) Rightful Ruler' recorded with

U-Roy.

Other new editions on this label are "Pressure Drop" the definitive collection of Toots And The Maytals and "Guns Don't Argue" an anthology of Dennis Alcapone.

This music can NEVER be beaten!

Will Saul

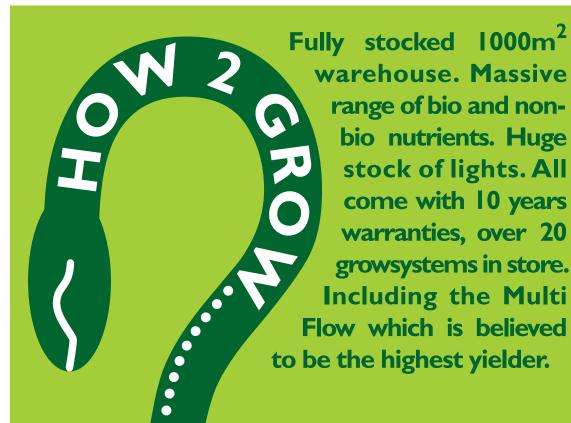
'Space Between' (Simple Records)



This serendipitous release from Will Saul, his debut solo album, definitely stands in the more experimental

end of the dance music field. Genreless rather than crossing, he creates something entirely wholesome, cavernous and organic – fertile and lush psychedelic pastures in which to lose one-self.

Co-produced by Fink (Ninja Tune) and Tam Cooper (Precision Cuts), Saul alchemises his base materials of dub, electro, techno, downtempo and broken beats into a glistening golden, head sensation. Brimming with soul, subterranean bass, evocative sounds and graceful melodies, "Space Between" is perfect for chilling in or dancing it out.



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The Impossible Dream

At the end of April, an outfit called The Scottish Tobacco Control Alliance held a meeting in Edinburgh. There are, of course, Tobacco Control Alliances for the rest of the UK, but it's only really the Scottish one I can talk about.

Their fundamental aim is to totally eradicate tobacco use from the face of the country, if not the face of the planet. This is a big aim, but one can't help but feel it's also a bit of a pipe (ha!) dream. I know a couple of the movers and shakers in the STCA, which is why I'm privy to what goes on at their meetings.

Anyhow, the STCA have a vision of a tobacco-free Scotland, and as part of their ongoing crusade have decided to focus on cannabis users. It's pretty much an accepted fact that probably 99% of all users are dope smokers, by which we mean that they mix their cannabis with tobacco and smoke it in a joint.

Much as our friends in The Netherlands intended (and to some extent have succeeded) in creating a distinction between cannabis and the other drugs, and thus separating the toking population from users of "harder" and/or more dangerous drugs, the STCA have decided that they want to separate cannabis from

tobacco. Essentially, let users carry on doing their thing, but take tobacco out of the equation. And they believe that they'll actually be able to do it.

My two STCA insiders and I agree that, from a harm reduction angle, this is an excellent idea in principle – and let's be very clear: there's no way anyone could fault such an aim – but in actuality there is absolutely no way that this is ever, *ever*, going to happen.

The basic principles of Harm Reduction are moreor-less as follows: we accept that (some) individuals are going to use drugs, and therefore the "experts" (whatever *that* means) have a moral obligation to educate potential and current drug users in the correct ways to use their drug or drugs of choice more safely; or less harmfully, if the two aren't the same thing.

This means that whether or not the expert in question considers use of a particular drug, or a particular drug using practise to be right or wrong becomes totally irrelevant, as the wellbeing of the user takes precedence. In the harm reduction game, one's personal baggage really has to be left at the front door.

The STCA members mean well and have the most laudable of intentions, but the problem is that very few of them have smoked a cigarette, let alone a joint, and so they really don't know what it is they're

setting themselves up against. Their personal antipathy towards tobacco is blinding them to the fact that, for millions of tokers, the tobacco kick is an intrinsic part of the overall experience of getting stoned. Even individuals who don't regard themselves as tobacco smokers and who would never dream of smoking a cigarette for its own sake understand this.

From what I've been told, the STCA have not, at time of writing, actually thought about what may be presented as viable alternatives to the good old baccy and blow joint. Maybe at some point they'll take the time to ask some tokers. We suspect we know what the counter arguments will be: eating it is too unreliable and takes too long to kick in; smoking straight grass is expensive and wasteful; herbal mixtures are generally not very pleasant, and vaporizers and what have you aren't exactly what one might call portable.

And of course, as most members of the STCA are not themselves tokers, they can *never* understand the social aspects and the sheer pleasure of sharing a joint with friends and acquaintances. If only for this reason alone, theirs is an impossible dream.

Dr. John Dee

Any comments on this column, feel free to contact me at: dimethyltryptamine777@hotmail.com

COMPANY NEWS

New GroWell shop in London



GroWell Hydroponics, the UK's biggest hydroponics retailer has recently opened its second showroom in Fulham, London. Having been at the forefront of the UK hydroponics market from the very beginning, GroWell have finally given in to customer demand for a London outlet. The new store opened its doors to the public on the 31st of March and at over 3000 square feet has already set a new standard for London grow shops. London growers will be impressed by the wide range of products

that will be on offer through the new GroWell shop as it will stock all of the products in the GroWell mail order catalogue. The new shop is located at 1 Royal Parade, 247 Dawes Road, Fulham, London, SW6 7RE. It is within easy reach of the M25 and M4 and is just down the road from the Chelsea Football Club stadium, Stamford Bridge. Initially the new shop is open 5 days a week – Wed-Sat 10am-5pm, Sun 10am-4pm – but should be open 7 days a week from September.





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only be done is there is sufficient air ventilation. The Hy-Jumbo Net is well ventilated from below as well as above thanks to its high air permeability. The metal edges make the Hy Jumbo Net into a functional, solid unit. And when you don't need your Hy-Jumbo for a while? No problem - just fold it up and all that will be left will be a compact and easy to store package.

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There are many varieties and sizes of heating mats, something that can often be a bit confusing for growers. Furthermore, most of them are terribly expensive and not waterproof. That's why Hy-Supply has introduced the

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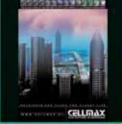
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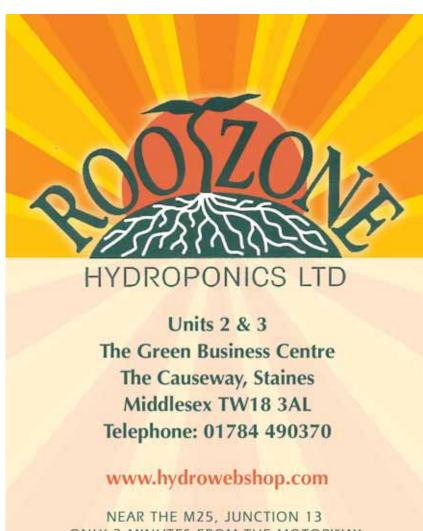
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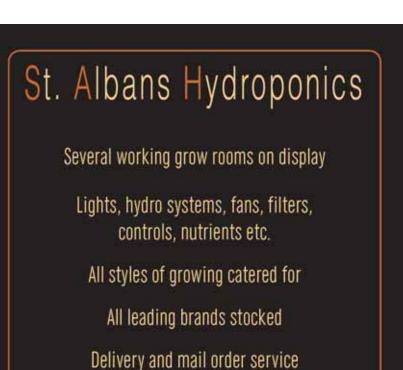
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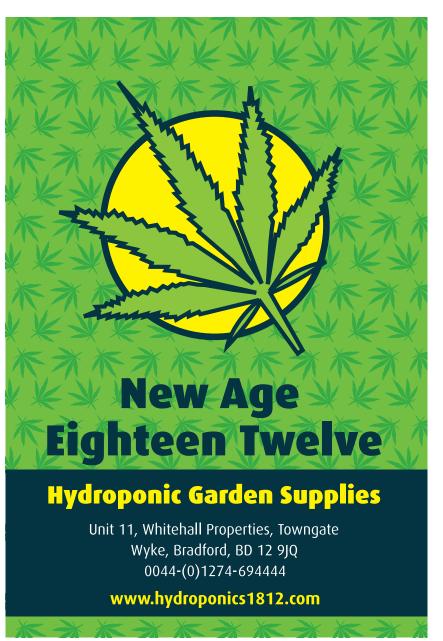
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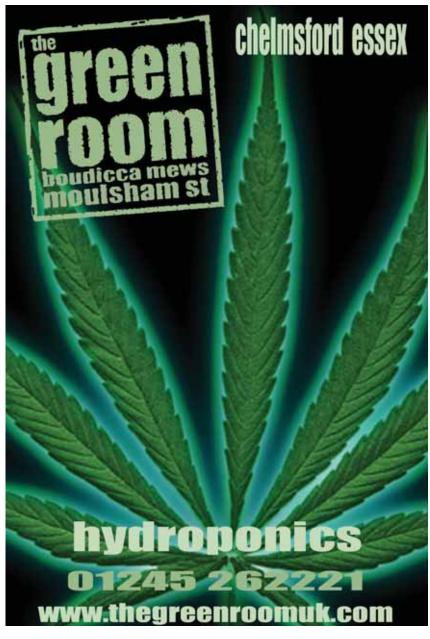
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Illegal drugs? That's my police supergrass

BY GRANT WOODWARD

A DRUG user created his own cannabis factory using gear bought from the police.

Mark Batty set up a cannabis-growing operation at his home with equipment that had been snapped up at a public auction held by the West Yorkshire force.

The 32-year-old's home in Westminster Croft, Rodley, Leeds, was raided in February this year by officers who found 85 cannabis plants along with hydroponic equipment that was being used to grow the drug in his loft and a downstairs front room.

Batty's solicitor, Anthony Sugare, told Leeds Magistrates Court yesterday that the episode was an embarrassment for the force.

He said: "In this day and age, when the police take a good deal of time and trouble to publicise their success in capturing drug dealers and those who use drugs, it may well be

Cannabis grower bought his equipment at force auction



GOOD CONDITION, ONE PREVIOUS OWNER: The equipment in Mark Batty's cannabis-growing factory was bought from West Yorkshire Police

that this is an example of something where it can well be said that they have egg on their face.

"The equipment came as a result of an auction sale con-

ducted by the police... even to the point that it still has on it the labels 'West Yorkshire Police Force' ""

Mr Sugare added: "That does

n't in any way remove the responsibility from the defendant for producing this cannabis but it does seem a rather strange set of circumstances as to how the defendant was able to come by this equipment.

"If the police hadn't put this up for auction, the defendant wouldn't have had the means to produce the cannabis that he did."

The court heard that Batty, now living in Belle Isle, Leeds, was arrested following the raid and taken to Pudsey police station for questioning.

He admitted growing the cannabis but maintained it was for his own personal use as the drug helped alleviate the pain

caused him by a medical complaint.

Mr Sugare said his client suffered from stomach problems which might or might not be caused by Crohn's disease.

He said Batty had a hospital appointment booked for this Friday to try to get to the root of the problem. Mr Sugare told the court: "He

Mr Sugare told the court: "He doesn't hide from the fact that he is a regular cannabis taker because he feels it alleviates his medical condition."

Batty, who is unemployed and receives incapacity benefit, was originally charged with producing cannabis and production with intent to supply. The supply charge was later dropped.

Lights

The court heard he had been convicted of drug-related offending in the past.

Batty was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and ordered to pay £40 prosecution costs. An order was made for the forfeiture and destruction of the drug-making equipment found at his house.

A spokeswoman for West Yorkshire Police said today: "Items such as lights are commonly available household items. Anyone who chooses to use them for illegal purposes will suffer the consequences, as this case demonstrates."

grant.woodward@ypn.co.uk

Press & Journal (Aberdeen) Saturday 5, March 2005

More jail for drug smuggler

AN ABERDEEN drugs smuggler who went on the run for more than 12 years after escaping from prison in a laundry van has been told he will have to serve a further five-and-a-half years behind bars.

Gerald McDonald was jailed for seven years in May 1992 for his part in an operation to smuggle £750,000 worth of cannabis into Scotland.

But just four months into his sentence the then 46-year-old escaped from HMP Elmley in Kent by hiding himself in the back of a laundry van.

Prosecutor Ian Howard told Bradford Crown Court yesterday how McDonald, formerly of Woodend Crescent, Aberdeen, used false identities to evade police and even managed to obtain passports to travel abroad while he was on the run. But in January this year a tip-off from Kent police led to officers in West Yorkshire stopping a Land Rover Discovery in Todmorden.

McDonald, now 58, initially gave a false name, but after his real identity was confirmed police then searched a house in Rochdale Road, Todmorden.

McDonald's sister-in-law confirmed that he had been living there and police officers recovered various false documents together with £31,000 in cash, an adapted replica Smith and Weston revolver and nearly 50 bullets.

During his police interview McDonald confessed to using the false identities and said that after spending some time in London he had then gone abroad until about 2000.

Yesterday McDonald pleaded guilty to offences of escape, possessing a prohibited firearm and ammunition and possessing a quantity of cannabis for his own use.

Judge Geoffrey Kamil was told that because the handgun was a prohibited weapon the minimum sentence was five years in prison.

But Judge Kamil said it had been McDonald's choice to go on the run and to obtain the gun.

He sentenced McDonald to six months behind bars for the escape offence and a further five years for the possession of the revolver. He ordered concurrent sentences of two years and six months respectively for the ammunition and cannabis matters.

He stressed that the five-anda-half-year term would follow on from the existing sentence.

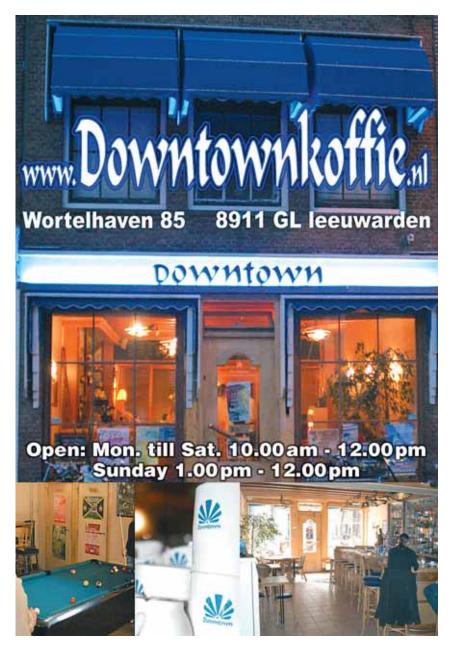


Gerald McDonald . . . used false identities









Bristol Evening Post Wednesday 9, March 2005

Group of youths accused of beating up father and son

Drugs crop discovery led to attack - court

by Anita Howells

epnews@bepp.co.uk

THE discovery of a secret cannabis crop led to an attack on a teenager and his dad, a court heard.

Jack Eyles, aged 16 years, and his dad, Jeffrey, allegedly rushed into woods behind their home when they heard noises because they feared their patch of marijuana plants had been discovered.

been discovered.

Jeffrey Eyles was said to have been armed with a pickaxe handle when he confronted a group of teenagers on September 23, 2003.

However, he was then allegedly attacked by Billy Green, of Kings Weston Avenue, Lawrence Weston, Lee Sage, of Kings Weston Page.

Lee Sage, of Kings Weston Road, Lawrence Weston; and Nathan Cottrell, whose address was not given in court.

The jury heard Jeffrey Eyles was knocked to the ground by a dog lead, hit with a piece of wood and struck with a billiard ball inside a sock by the defendants, all now aged 19.
As Jack Eyles tried to protect his

father the sock and ball were allegedly swung at his head, fracturing his skull, and he collapsed unconscious. However, when officers later searched the Eyles' home they discovered what was suspected to be drugs paraphernalia, including plastic bags with a cannabis leaf logo printed on them and a pair of electronic scales.

Giving evidence at Bristol Crown Court Jack Eyles said he and his father had investigated the noise

because they feared their garage

because they feared their garage would be broken into.

Michael Cullum, defending Green, said to him: "You say you heard someone in the wooded area at the back of the house in the afternoon. What was wrong with people being in public woods?"

Jack Eyles replied: "Nothing. I went to see if they were close to the

went to see if they were close to the garage. They were making a lot of noise, swearing and shouting."

Mr Cullum said to the witness: "You were worried about the

cannabis plants weren't you?" The teenager replied: "No." Mr Cullum continued: "You can't call the police to deal with people about to take cannabis growing in public woods so you ring your dad whose plantation it is.

"He was so excited about the prospect of people being in the woods he came home from his job?"

Jack Eyles answered: "Yes,

because he was worried about his

Mr Cullum said: "Off you and he went. He took a significant weapon, a 4ft long pickaxe handle. The witness said: "Yes.

Mr Cullum continued: "These people ran away when they heard you coming and you chased them."

The barrister claimed Jeffrey Eyles had caught Cottrell's brother, Daniel, who has since died, and knocked him to the ground. He said that the defendants came

back to help Daniel Cottrell.

Jack denied the allegation and said he and his father had simply gone into the woods to see if they recognised who was making the

Mr Cullum said to him: "Lee Sage and Nathan Cottrell came running and said to leave Nathan's brother alone. It happened very quickly. When your dad didn't leave off Daniel his brother swung a dog lead at him and Lee Sage swiped at him on the jaw with a sock with something heavy in it."
The witness replied: "Dad was on

the floor straight away, as soon as he was hit with the dog chain. They were all beating him. They were

stood over him." Mr Cullum claimed that a group of seven grown men, who had been contacted by Jeffrey Eyles, had then come crashing through the undergrowth armed with weapons. Mr Eyles said it had been just

him and his dad before he wa bashed over the head. Sage, Green and Cottrell deny one

joint charge of causing grievous bodily harm with intent. Cottrell and Sage also deny one charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

Sage denies a second charge of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and Cottrell denies one charge of having an offensive weapon.

Green has admitted one charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and Sage has admitted one charge of having an offensive weapon. The case continues

Press & Journal (Highlands & Islands) Tuesday 1, March 2005

Gran awaits drugs verdict

by Sue Restan

A HIGHLAND grandmother, who claims she needs to use cannabis resin to relieve pain, will have to wait until March 29 to discover her penalty for possessing the drug.

Victoria Hodgson, 51, of Clachtoll, Lochinver, suffers from thoracic scoliosis, a form of curvature of the spine, and claims nothing else can ease the pain caused by her chronic back condition.

Hodgson pleaded not guilty at an earlier hearing to possessing cannabis resin at three locations in Lochinver, Sutherland, on June 24, 2002, on the grounds of necessity.

She also denied committing a breach of the peace on the same date when she was arrested at the Wayfarer Bar, in Lochinver, after a tip-off to police.

But Sheriff David Sutherland, sitting at Dornoch Sheriff Court, did not accept that she needed to use cannabis for medicinal purposes, and convicted her in December last year of possessing the drug and the breach of the peace. He deferred sentence until yesterday for the preparation of a social inquiry report, but the matter had to be further deferred when Hodgson was unable to attend court due to ill health.

Liverpool Daily Post Wednesday 2, March 2005

ocaine and crack offences at record high

THE cocaine and crack culture in England and Wales has reached record levels, government figures showed yesterday

The number of people found guilty of or cautioned for offences involving the two Class A drugs topped new

Nearly 7.000 people were dealt with for cocaine offences in 2003, up from less than 5,800 the previous year.

And crack offences reached 2,260 - up from 1,800 compared with just 530 in 1997.

Home Office figures also showed 82,000 people were found guilty of or cautioned for cannabis offences in 2003, the highest number for five

years. From 2001, when former home secretary David Blunkett announced his intention to downgrade cannabis from Class B to Class C. to 2003, the number dealt with for dealing or possessing dope rose by more than 15 600 from 66,400.

Heroin offences fell slightly in the year to 10,520 and Ecstasy-type drug offences rell from 6,050 to 5,530.

The total number of drug offences increased 5% to 133,970, with Class A offences rising 6% to 35,610 and Class B up by 5% to 94,520.

Of those, 110,640 people were found guilty or cautioned, nine out of 10 for possession and the rest for dealing.

Of those dealt with for cocaine possession, 32% were cautioned, 31% were fined and 10% were jailed.

Amongst crack offenders, 35% were fined, 20% were jailed and 25% given a community order. For cannabis, 49% were cautioned, 25% were fined and 2% jailed.

Home Office minister Caroline Flint said: "The figures in the report are nearly two years old.

'According to the most recent published figures in the British Crime Survey, drug misuse is broadly stable and any increases in arrests and seizures are likely to be a result of more effective police activity." Shadow home

secretary David Davis said: "No wonder the Government have delayed the publication of these statistics.

"This report reinforces the fact that Labour continues to utterly fail in the war on drugs.

■ AFGHANISTAN is in danger of becoming a "narcotic state" after producing its largest annual crop of heroin since the overthrow of Taliban rule, the UN's drugs watchdog warned yesterday.

The country, which is responsible for nearly all the heroin on Britain's streets, grew an estimated 4,200 tons of the drug in 2004, up 800 tons on the previous year.

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Yorkshire Post (West /Leeds) Tuesday 22, February 2005

Drug-arrest trucker's relief as French let him return home

Joanne Ginley

HAULIER Paul Watson was back in Leeds yesterday after being bailed back to the UK by French authorities while they decide his fate after a ton of <u>cannabis</u> was found in a load he was delivering.

In December, the French courts allowed Mr Watson to return to the UK for two weeks – the first time he had been back home in 15 months. The authorities have now decided he can be bailed back to the UK permanently.

He has not been charged with any crime, but was held on remand at a prison in Arras, near Lille in northern France, for nine months, after a ton of cannabis was discovered.

Last June he was granted bail on condition he remained in France.

Yesterday Mr Watson, 40, who has always protested his innocence said: "It's very good news. You cannot keep the smile off my face.

"It just came out of the blue. I was very surprised and very overwhelmed.

"I think it's a very positive thing for my case.

"I have just got to sit it out now until the investigation comes to an end, and see what they are going to do."

Mr Watson says the French authorities have until September to decide whether to charge him and set a date for a trial. Equally, they could decide to take the case no further.

He thanked his fiancée Sarah Wilson and family and friends for all their support.

For the last 17 months, Miss Wilson has driven to and from northern France to visit Mr Watson, first in jail and then at his bail address.

The couple estimate they have spent £40,000 on legal bills, travel and other costs, but now Mr Watson is back in the UK, he is hoping to get a job to help reduce his debts.

He said he hoped to marry Miss Wilson next year.

Mr Watson's nightmare began in September 2003, when he flew from his home in Morley, near Leeds, to Spain to pick up a tractor unit and drive it back to Britain to use in his haulage business.

It is alleged he was asked to attach a 40ft trailer to the unit and deliver it on his route.

He says hauliers often help fellow truckers, and he agreed when the load appeared to have proper documents.

He believed he was carrying pottery. But at Arras, France, he was stopped by customs officers who discovered the

drugs. He says he was in total shock.

Last night, Miss Wilson said she was delighted that Mr Watson could now live back in the UK.

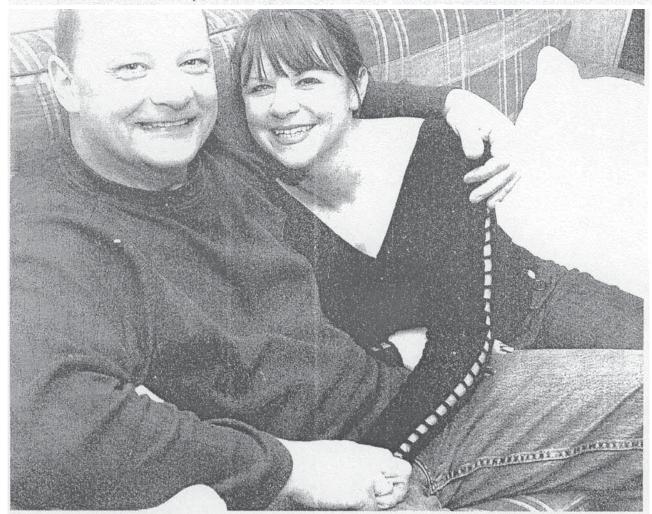
"We are thrilled. It's very strange because it has all happened so suddenly, but it's brilliant news."

Mr Watson has to report to French authorities in Dover every month, or risk being arrested.

He has always said he is determined to prove his innocence.

He said: "It has been a very hard 18 months. I have been through a hell of a lot and the financial burden has been horrific, and the support from friends and family has been fantastic."

Mr Watson said he was now looking forward to getting on with his life.



lack home: Haulier Paul Watson and his fiancée, Sarah Wilson, at their home in Alwoodley, Leeds.

Leicester Mercury (City edition) Monday 21, February 2005

Drug-charge man is facing jail term

A 19-YEAR-OLD who admitted possessing and supplying drugs has been warned he could face prison.

Andrew Doughty pleaded guilty at Leicester Crown Court to possessing 10 ecstasy tablets with intent to supply on August 28 last year.

He also pleaded guilty to possessing 14 grams of <u>cannabis</u> on July 25, with intent to supply and to supplying cannabis between July 10 and 24

Doughty, of Radcoat Lawns, Eyres Monsell, was warned about the consequences of his actions when he appeared before Judge Peter Morrell, on Friday.

Sentencing was set for March 11 or an unspecified earlier date, and he was released on bail on condition he co-operates with the preparation of a pre-sentence report.

Judge Morrell said there could be no promises that he would not be sent to prison.



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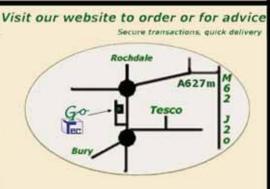
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Evening Advertiser (Swindon) Wednesday 9, March 2005

Arrested woman speaks out



PM INNOCENT Linda Harvey is fighting to clear her name Picture: CLARE HOMER Ref: 76377-43

by Dave Andrew

dandrew@newswilts.co.uk

A TOOTHILL family spent almost 24 hours in police custody although a police raid on their home only uncovered two pepper sprays and a small quantity of marijuana.

Linda Harvey, aged 44, and her family became caught up in an armed police raid on their neighbours' home.

In Saturday's Evening Advertiser we showed photographs of Mrs Harvey and one of her sons being arrested.

Although their faces were pixillated the family believe their names have been blackened by the arrests.

Mrs Harvey said: "I'm disgusted about what happened. I was in the supermarket today and people think I'm a drug dealer now. I'm 100 per cent against drugs.

"I had a phone call from a neighbour saying their house was about to be raided and asking if I could check if their child was in the house.

Mrs Harvey believes the police thought she had taken drugs from her neighbour's house.

She said: "The police came to my house and found two pepper sprays and a tiny amount of grass, which I didn't know was in the house.

"I didn't know pepper sprays were illegal. I helped a neigh-

bour and it landed me in a prison cell for 22 hours.

When they came into my home I felt like I was being raped. There wasn't one pair of knickers left untouched. My daughter's prom dress has dog prints all over it.

"I felt like somebody had invaded me, my family and my home. At Westlea I was locked up and fingerprinted. I was shocked this could happen.

One minute everything was normal and the next minute the street was full of guns.

Alvina Kumar, spokeswoman for Swindon Police. said: "I can confirm that four people were arrested at one of the addresses in Edington Close, Toothill, following the execution of a search warrant on the afternoon of March 4.

There is no further Police action in respect of two of the four arrested, a man and a woman. Enquiries are pending regarding the other two persons, however, these do not relate to the possession of firearms or Class A drugs.

Two were arrested at an address in Edington Close.'

 A MAN accused of owning a loaded gun and drug dealing has been remanded in custody until Monday, March 14.

Thomas Kennedy, 30, of Edington Close, Toothill, was arrested during a police raid on March 4.

He appeared at Swindon



RAIDED Linda (right) is led away following a police operation

Magistrates' Court on Monday charged with possession of a firearm and ammunition without a certificate and possession with intent to supply heroin and cannabis.

Police say they found the semi-automatic handgun in the fireplace of Kennedy's home.

It is also alleged that £350 of cannabis and £60 worth of heroin as well as £3,000 in cash was found at his home.

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Star (Sheffield) Thursday 10, March 2005

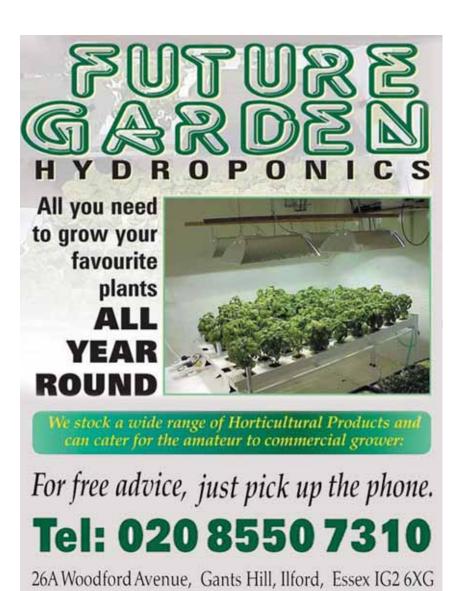
115 cannabis plants seized

A MAN aged 61 has been arrested after police seized 115 cannabis plants in a drugs raid.

Police uncovered cannabis plants at an address in Harworth last Saturday during a drugs raid.

The team of officers from Retford and Harworth executed a drugs warrant at a property on Festival Avenue and recovered the plants.

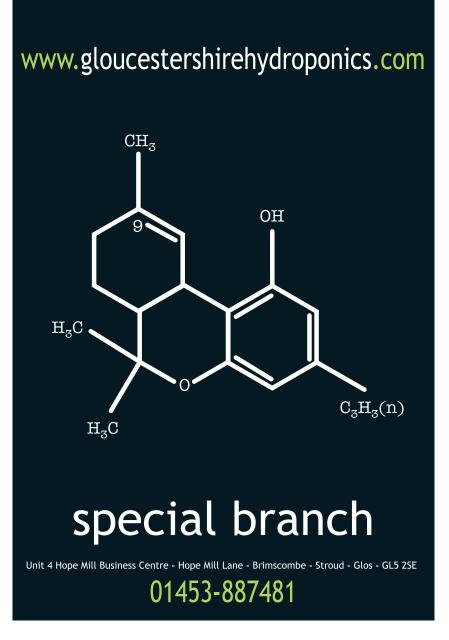
One man was arrested and has been released on police bail pending further inquiries.



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Hull Daily Mail Saturday 19, February 2005

Six-week operation shed light on dealer

police operation
Michael Bannister was
spotted paying regular
visits to a safe house in
Newtown Court, Hull.

He made two trips to Holland and twice met a known drug smuggler at Ferrybridge service station. He worked at
Simpson's Sea Fish in
Kingston Industrial
Estate, where he was a
health and safety
officer, but was seen
driving his company
Nissan Primera to
places such as
Ferrybridge and
Thorne, to fix up deals.

Police finally pounced minutes after 4.5kg of amphetamines changed hands at St Andrew's Quay.

Afterwards, police searched the Newtown Court flat and found more amphetamine, worth £2,470, hidden in a fridge.

There was also cocaine worth about £2,300 stashed in a holdall beneath the floorboards.

Bannister served a sentence for drug smuggling in 1996 after customs officers busted a multi-million pound cannabis operation.

Observer Sunday 13, March 2005

UN condemns UK cannabis laws

by Jason Burke

Chief Reporter

THE government's relaxation of the law on cannabis use was attacked by the United Nations last night.

Koli Kouame, secretary of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), the UN agency dedicated to monitoring legal regimes of member states, said the downgrading of cannabis from Class B to C could send the wrong signal and damage the global fight against drug abuse.

'Whenever a government gives a sign which can be interpreted as indicating that a lower danger is associated with the use of a drug, that can cause problems,' said Kouame. 'It is too early to judge the impact [of the

downgrading], but often the signal sent is as important as the act itself.'

His comments came days after Jack Straw, the Foreign Secretary, hinted that the reclassification of cannabis, under which users are only

200 million using narcotics News, pages 21

given a warning unless there are 'aggravating factors', might have to be reconsidered.

Straw broke ranks last week by dropping a heavy hint that there should be a review of the downgrading of the drug. It was done for good reasons, but we may need to review it in the light of experience,' he said.

His words fuelled speculation that the government is still divided over the much-criticised decision. However, the Home Office denied there were any moves to reverse the change, which went through in January last year. But concern has grown after findings suggested smoking it frequently can cause serious mental health problems.

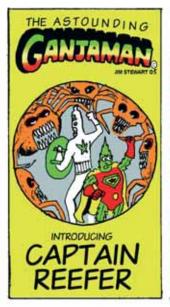
Cannabis is the third most popular drug after alcohol and tobacco in the UK, where 40 per cent of 15-year-olds are believed to have used it. Possession can lead to two years in jail, with a maximum of 14 years for dealing.

Danny Kushlick, of Transform, a drugs policy campaign group, said that,

though flawed, the reclassification recognised that cannabis was less harmful than street cocaine or heroin and that the INCB was living in the past: 'We are talking about a legal framework that dates back to the 1950s. There is a culture clash with the reality of the 21st century.'

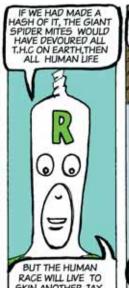
The UK also came in for criticism from INCB president Hamid Ghodse, who warned in the agency's annual report that the UK had the largest rate of heroin seizures and the third-highest number of addicts in Europe in 2004.

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Bristol Evening Post (Final) Thursday 10, March 2005

Drug crop was grown secret'

A TEENAGER saw cannabis plants "as tall as trees" near the Bristol home of a father and son he is accused of attacking, a court heard.

Lee Sage, aged 19, claimed the plants were 7ft tall and were being secretly grown by his alleged victim, Jeffrey Eyles.

The defendant, from Kings

Weston Road, Lawrence Weston, said the giant plants were under

said the giant plants were under camouflage nets near the Eyles family's garden but were protected by their pet dog.

Mr Eyles' son, Jack, had promised to supply him with 22 cannabis plants but the day before the alleged assault, he discovered they had gone, the court heard.

The following day, Sage said he had gone with co-defendants Billy Green and Nathan Cottrell, both aged 19, to search for the Eyles' cannabis.

They were looking in woods

They were looking in woods behind the house in Valerian

Close, Shirehampton, when someone shouted "run". Jack Eyles said they then fled, but returned when they discovered that Cottrell's brother, Daniel, who has since died, had been floored by Jeffrey Eyles. Sage said: "Nathan screamed 'my brother', he said it a few

times.
"I stopped and turned around and could see Jeffrey Eyles.
"He had bright orange trousers on and Dan was on the floor. The man with the orange trousers was by Anita Howells

epnews@bepp.co.uk

stood over him. I saw him hit him with a pickaxe handle.

Asked by his defence barrister, Ignatius Hughes, if Jack Eyles was carrying anything, the defendant replied: "Yes, a machete, It was like a bush hacker."

He continued: "Dan was just

He continued: "Dan was just lying there. Nathan hit Jeffrey Eyles with a dog lead.
"I hit him with a snooker ball in a sock, if that's what it was.
"I hit him on the jaw because he swung at me with the handle.

"If he had hit me I don't think I would have got up.

"I didn't even want to be in that situation. It just happened. I just wanted me and my friends to get out of there as soon as possible."

Sage, Green and Cottrell deny one joint charge of causing grievous bodily harm with intent. Cottrell and Sage also deny one charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

Sage denies a second charge of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and Cottrell denies one charge of having an offensive weapon.

Green has admitted one charge of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and Sage has admitted one charge of having an offensive weapon

The case continues.

Sunday Times Sunday 27, February 2005

Britain goes top of heroin leag

Abul Taher

BRITAIN has become the heroin capital of Europe with the largest number of seizures and one of the highest levels of abuse, says a United Nations report published this week.

The UK accounts for most of

the heroin seizures in Europe and, after Luxembourg and Portugal, has the most heroin users.

Almost all the heroin seized and consumed in the UK comes from Afghanistan, says the report by the International Narcotics Control Board, a body founded by the UN.

Britain also has the highest level of amphetamine abuse anywhere in Europe and is the third largest consumer of ecstasy (MDMA), after Ireland and the Czech Republic.

The study shows that cocaine abuse is on the increase in Britain, although it is stabilising in the rest of western Europe.

It says that in the UK at least 10% of those between 15 and 34 have tried the class A drug. The UK has also become one of the gateways through which about 200 tons of cocaine enter Europe each year.

Cocaine accounted for up to 20% of all drug seizures in Britain in 2002. In 2000 up to four tons of cocaine were seized.

The report says that cannabis abuse has been on the increase over the past 10 years, in line with the rest of Europe and links the rise in its use with the increasing public debate over the amount of harm that the drug causes.

The global study notes that Morocco is the largest producer of cannabis, accounting for 60% of seizures across the world.

The report finds that illicit

internet pharmacies are becoming an important conduit for smugglers. It says that several billion transactions are made over the internet each year, though some of the drugs that are sold are fake and others are even more dangerous than the actual substances ostensibly for

A spokeswoman from Drugscope, one of Britain's largest

6 We also have the highest amphetamine abuse and are the third largest consumer of ecstasy ?

anti-drugs charities, said the study confirmed that Britain has an appalling drug abuse record in Europe.

"The UK traditionally has higher levels of drug use than European countries. other Although the figures are alarming, we have to recognise that drug abuse has stabilised here in the past few years," she said.

Home Office figures show that heroin seizures have been on the increase in the past 10 years reaching a peak in 2001, with 18,260 seizures in the UK.

The total weight of heroin seized in 2001 was 3.9 tons and in 2002 2.9 tons.

The report says that the United States is the single largest market despite the huge efforts by law enforcement agencies. The study expresses grave concerns about the largescale trafficking and manufacture of drugs in the whole North American region.

Irish Independent (Dublin) dnesday 9, March 2005

Fr Cleary's son to pay case expenses

Tim Healy

THE son of the late Fr Michael Cleary may get the benefit of the Probation Act if he pays €220 witness expenses in relation to public order and cannabis possession charges against him, the Dublin District Court

heard yesterday.
Ross Hamilton (27), with an address at Mount Harold's Terrace, Harold's Cross, Dublin, pleaded guilty last October to seven charges relating to three separate incidents between December 2003 and September 2004.

He was back before the District Court yesterday when a pre-sentence probation report was presented to Judge Gerard Haughton. After reading the report, Judge Haughton noted that during the case, a total of €220 witness expenses had been incurred as part of the preparation of the case against him on one set of charges.

"If he is prepared to pay those expenses, I am prepared to take a relatively lenient view," the judge said.

Mr Hamilton's solicitor said he was on social welfare and was willing to pay the expenses if given some time. Judge Haughton remanded him on continuing bail to June 28 for payment of expenses.

Weekly News (England) Saturday 12, March 2005

DRUG GANG LOST THEIR MARBLES -AND £34 MILLION

A DRUG gang planned to import cannabis with a street value of at least £156 million after setting up a bogus company claiming to import slabs of marble for fireplaces from Portugal.

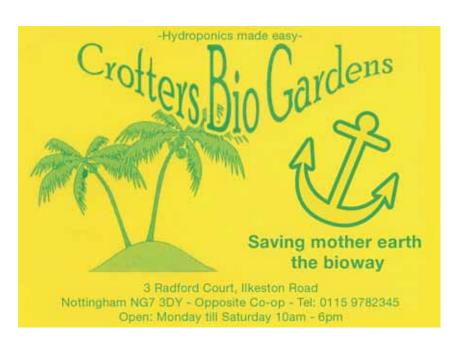
The smugglers hollowed out the slabs

and filled them with cannabis before shipping them to Liverpool docks.
However, customs officers

smashed their racket when they found 600 crates of marble containing drugs worth £34 million.

The gang had already sent 13 other loads since March, 2002, and a judge said the plot involved smuggling tens of tonnes of cannabis, before jailing three men for a total of 12 years. The alleged senior figure in the

plot had earlier committed suicide in prison, two days after his arrest.













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The Bubbleator comes standard with everything you need. If you are interested in catching and separating the various crystal sizes we also supply a wide range of separate collection bags. For those of you who already own an Ice-O-Lator or another water and ice bag extraction system, a barebones Bubbleator expansion kit is available, which is fully compatible with any bubble extraction bag system.

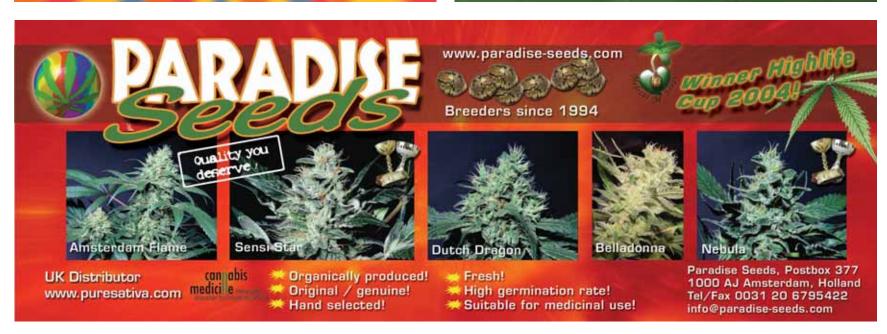
Save yourself trouble next time you want some Bubble and get yourself a Bubbleator!



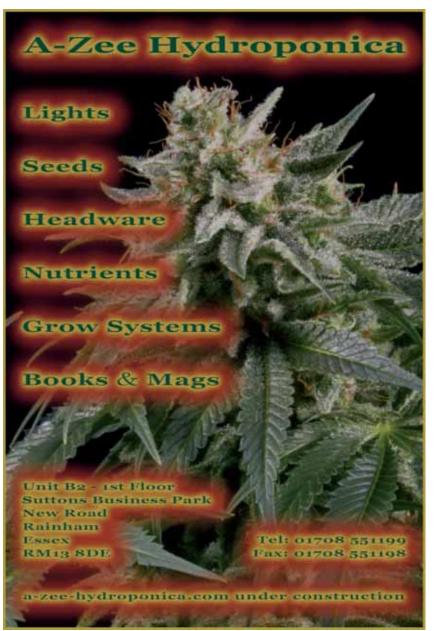
Bubbleator Indoor 70mc Bubbleator Outdoor 45mc Both systems include 220µ pyramid-si Extra bags 38/45/70/90/120mc

Expansion kit











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Grimsby Telegraph Monday 28, February 2005

MAN IN SECOND COURT APPEARANCE

Driver gets 16-month roads ban

By MARK NAYLOR

Court Reporter

ANOTHER Grimsby motorist caught drink-driving during the police's Christmas campaign has been banned from the roads.

Paul Sweatman (29), of Rosalind Avenue, was fined £140, disqualified from driving for 16 months and ordered to pay £43 costs.

He appeared before Grimsby magistrates and admitted a charge of drink-driving on December 23.

Sweatman was driving a VW Polo in Cross Street. Grimsby, the court heard.

A blood test revealed he had 127mg of alcohol in

es all

Sweatman drove while over the legal limit.

100ml of blood. The legal limit is 80mg.

It was the second time in recent weeks that Sweatman had been sentenced at the court

As reported in the Grimsby Telegraph, he pre-

viously admitted possessing cocaine on November 18 and cultivating <u>cannabis</u> plants on November 19.

The court heard previously that doormen at the Ice Barque in Riverhead, Grimsby, found him with cocaine while he was skulking inside a toilet cubicle.

Two other men were found in the cubicle after staff investigated.

Sweatman was searched and seven plastic bags, each containing a white powder -cocaine - were discovered. Nothing was found on the other men.

Cannabis plants and a large amount of drugs equipment were later found at his then home in Cromwell Road, the court was told.

More than 50 cannabis plants, in various stages of maturity, were discovered.

A cannabis growing guide, fertilisers, composts, timers, thermometers and irrigation pipes were found

Sweatman was given a 120-hour community punishment order that day and was ordered to pay £50 costs Shropshire Star (Mid Wales) Friday 18, February 2005

Cannabis for pain acquittal contested

Prosecuting authorities maintained an uncompromising stance in the face of a claim that people who supply or use cannabis to relieve severe chronic pain should not be treated as criminals.

Counsel for Attorney General Lord Goldsmith reminded the Court of Appeal yesterday that, despite its downgrading to a Class C drug, cannabis was still illegal.

Its supply was "wholly unlawful" except for special purposes such as research, said Jonathan Rees.
"On any view, it simply

"On any view, it simply cannot be right for this court to countenance someone who is medically unqualified supplying drugs, which have dangers attached, to other people without regulation," he said.

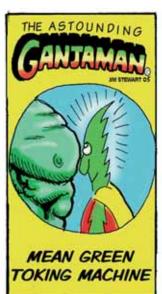
As a matter of public law and order, "we don't want everyone setting up their own little home pharmacy".

Mr Rees was arguing against the acquittal of Jeffrey Ditchfield on a charge of possessing cannabis with intent to supply.

Mr Ditchfield, of north Wales, was cleared on the basis that he had a defence of "necessity" or "duress of circumstance" when he gave cannabis to chronic pain sufferers.

Flashback to Sweatman's previous court appearance.











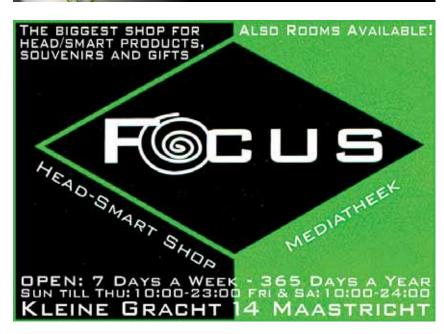




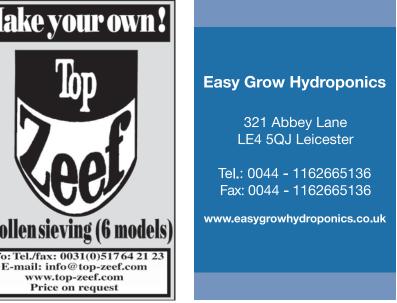




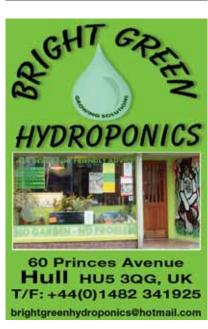
J ANGEL 😝













Evening Express (Aberdeen) Tuesday 22, February 2005

Phone tap was legal, drug dealer case told

Family were threatened with death

A PHONE tap which provided evidence at the trial of a drug dealer accused of making death threats to a businessman was legal, appeal judges have been told.

Alexander Henderson, 42 - known as "The Boss" was jailed for seven years after being found guilty of extortion.

Henderson is now challenging that conviction, along with henchman Douglas "Pinhead" Marnoch, 33.

Terrified businessman Bernard Pell, 54, told an earlier trial how he handed over £35,000 after he and his wife, Barbara, were told their family would be wiped out if he didn't come up with the money.

His student son, Anton then 23 - had run up huge debts after becoming involved in peddling cannabis for Henderson.

Before the cash was handed over he had been beaten with a baseball bat and slashed.

Henderson, formerly of Great Northern Road, Aberdeen, and Marnoch, formerly of The Drive, Edzell, had denied the extortion charge.

They have now gone to

the Court of Criminal Appeal in Edinburgh, claiming the jury should not have heard evidence obtained by police listening in to phone calls to the Pells' home in the South of England.

Their lawyers say the phone tap had to follow the rules laid down in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act and there was no proof at the trial that this had been properly done.

Yesterday advocate depute Dorothy Bain said there had been a proper authorisation but, by mistake, the written document had been omitted.

She insisted that detectives had acted properly and there had been no attack on the authenticity of the phone tap tapes.

The appeal judges will

give their ruling at a later date.

At the end of the trial, judge Lord McEwan jailed Henderson - who was also found guilty of being concerned in the supply of cannabis resin - for seven years and drug addict Marnoch for five years.

Lord McEwan banned the reporting of any detail about where the Pells were living after the businessman said he was living in fear. The ordeal had ruined his family and forced him to seek cash advances from his employers.

Both Henderson and Marnoch have been allowed to remain on bail pending the outcome of their appeal.

Shields Gazette (Late/Final) Thursday 24, February 2005

REGION Tonight

NORTH SHIELDS: A man has admitted smuggling cannabis resin with a street value of £40,000 into the north east through North Shields ferry terminal.

Martyn Moll, 42, of Bexley Heath, Kent, was arrested on September 27 as he was returning from Amsterdam with the drugs hidden in the wheel arch of a car.

He admitted a charge of being knowingly concerned in the importation of a controlled drug at Newcastle Crown Court yesterday where he was due to stand trial.

Sentencing was adjourned until the week of March 29.



APPEAL: Alexander Henderson, 42, was jailed for seven years.

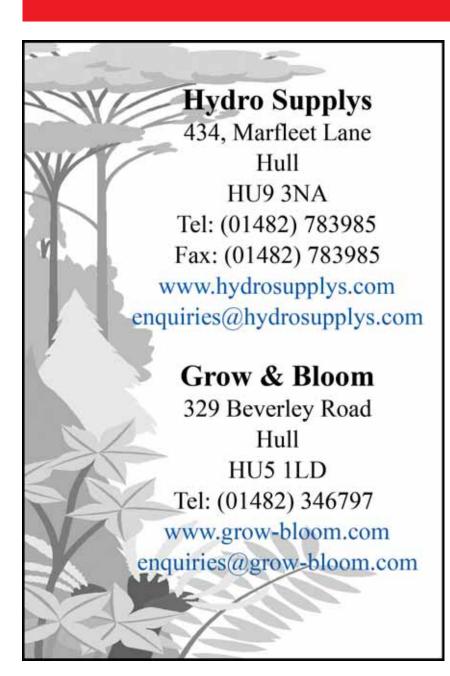


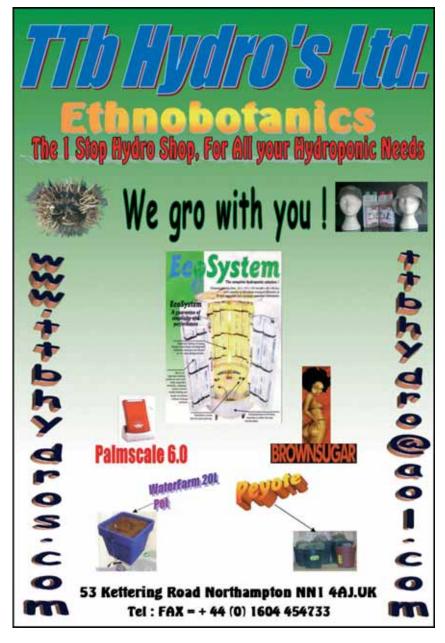
ADDICT: Douglas Marnoch, 33, was sentenced to five years.

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Police net seven indrugs swoop

Crackdown pledged to rid estates of crime and drugs

By Claire Lewis

DRUG dealers in Sheffield were today warned to expect police raids on their homes as part of a new crackdown in the city.

Officers yesterday swooped on three properties in the north of the city searching for suspects believed to be involved in the supply of drugs.

One raid at a house in Parson Cross led to the arrests of seven people, aged from 17 to 55, on suspicion of possession of cannabis with intent to supply.

Police seized £1,300 worth of the drug and equipment associated with dealing, including scales.

Around 20 officers - some carrying with battering rams - simply let themselves into the house when they discovered the front door had been left open.

Since the raids began on Monday a number of firearms have also been seized.

Insp Stuart Walne, who led

the raids, today warned that dealers at all levels should be worried.

"The stark message we want to get across is that whatever level people are dealing at we will not hesitate in pursuing them. They should expect a knock at their door because we are out and about determined to disrupt the supply of drugs," he said.

The raids are being carried out as part of Operation Follower 2, aimed primarily at reducing burglaries in the area.

Police hope by reducing the availability of drugs they will reduce the number of crimes people need to commit fund their habits.

"We all know that drugs and crime are inter-related, so our thinking is that reducing the amount of drugs in circulation will reduce the number of people who take them and therefore reduce the number of crimes they commit to pay for them," added Insp Walne.

He said more raids are

planned over the next two weeks.

"It does not matter if you have somebody dealing with cannabis living on your street or dealing with Class A drugs such as heroin, people do not want to live with that going on and they should not have to put up with it," Insp Walne said. "Obviously those at the

"Obviously those at the top of the drugs supply chains are major targets, but we place just as much importance on catching the ordinary street dealers.

"Some of these dealers think they are one step ahead of us by having cameras fitted at their homes to keep an eye out for people calling, which is something we have experienced while we have been executing these search warrants, but they won't be able to keep us out once we receive enough information about them.

"People with pride in their communities - particularly those undergoing redevelopment programmes and improvements - are saying enough is enough and are trying to rid their areas of drugs by talking to the police.

police.

"This is something we want to encourage even more of because local people are the eyes and ears of communities.

"People have nothing to fear in talking to us, they can do so anonymously if they prefer, but basically we want as much information as possible on people suspected of being involved with drugs so we can act on it and make a difference to the communities."

Residents were later visited by officers who explained about the operation.

Anyone with any information on drug dealing problems should call the Shirecliffe policing team on 0114 296 4854, Broomhill on 296 4897, Hillsborough on 296 4834, Deepcar/Ecclesfield on 296 4680 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555111.



Crackdown: Officers prepare to enter a house during the raid in Parson Cross



Evening News (Norwich) Friday 18, February 2005

Gran to attend cannabis meeting

Grandma Pat, the outspoken pensioner who openly bakes cannabis, will attend a procannabis political party's annual conference in Norwich this weekend.

Patricia Tabram, of Humshaugh in Northumberland, will speak at the gathering.

The 65-year-old widow is famed for being the first British pensioner to admit possessing the drug and distributing it

among her 16-strong pensioners' group. She claimed it relieved her pain from arthritis and even set up a cannabis cookery club.

National co-ordinator Alun Buffry said he was delighted she was attending. Arryone interested in the cannabis debate is being urged to attend the annual Legalise Cannabis Alliance on Saturday in the lecture theatre in the Elizabeth

Northern Echo (Darlington / South Durham) Saturday 5, March 2005

<u>Cannabis</u> gran Patricia to stand for Parliament

A CANNABIS-COOKING grandmother is hoping to become an MP for a party campaigning to legalise the drug.

Patricia Tabram, 66, made headlines when £800 of cannabis and 31 cannabis plants were seized from her home after smells wafting from her kitchen attracted police.

Mrs Tabram will challenge Labour MP and House of Commons leader Peter Hain for his seat as a candidate for the Legalise Cannabis Alliance.

She said: "I was at the Legalise Cannabis Alliance conference last week in Norwich



Court date: Patricia Tabram, want to re who hopes to become an MP liament."

and they have asked me to be their candidate."

Mrs Tabram, who lives near Hexham. Northumberland, admitted possessing cannabis in January, and become famous for championing the drug for its medicinal benefits. She could be jailed when she is sentenced at Newcastle Crown Court next week.

She originally used cannabis as a natural remedy for tinnitus, mild depression and aches and pains caused by a car accident.

Rather than smoke it, she found she preferred it in soup, cakes and biscuits.

cakes and biscuits.

She said: "Whatever happens in court next week, I will not be giving cannabis up. The police will just have to keep coming round and taking my food away."

A Legalise Cannabis Alliance spokesman said: "We are supporting her as a candidate because we think it is important that people realise that cannabis is not all about the negative."

A spokesman for Mr Hain's office in the Welsh constituency of Neath, said: "People have the right to stand in a democratic election and I am sure that the good people of Neath, as always, will take into consideration who they want to represent them in Parliment."

the organisation, which has its headquarters in Norwich, said: "We would like to see lots of students there. It will be a day of confirming candidates across

Fry Buildings at the University

Don Barnard, spokesman for

of East Anglia at noon.

students there. It will be a day of confirming candidates across the country and we will discuss our election strategy. There will also be a chance to ask candidates questions."

Colofon

Soft Secrets is published by Discover Publisher BV

P.O.Box 362, 5460 AJ, Veghel, Netherlands

Telephone: +31-73-5498112 Fax: +31-73-5479732 E-mail: maryjane@highlife.nl

Publisher: Boy Ramsahai

Editor: Clifford Cremer

Contributors: Jorge Cervantes, Jules Marshall, Kristie Szalanski, Aja, Kaz Peet, Bart B., Joe Kane, LazyStrain, Chris Marchand, Dr. John Dee, Weckels, Pete Loveday, Charlie Stone, et al.

Translations: Jules Marshall

Comics: Jim Stewart

Editorial adress: Soft Secrets, P.O. Box 17250, 1001 JG, Amsterdam, Holland E-mail: SSUK@softsecrets.nl

Layout & print: R&B Communicatie, Schijndel, Holland

Advertisements: Bart Trommelen (Tel. 0031-6-51805017)

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A word from the publisher:

The UK government has embarked on a process of relative liberalisation towards the use of cannabis, and cannabis activists are engaged in broadening this engagement. Several local councils and police chiefs now actively support a Dutch-style coffeeshop system as a way of separating soft and hard drugs, as it has proven to do in Holland. Whether they are finding their way to new coffeeshops or growing for their personal supply, cannabis users are a menace to no one, and are causing no discernable social problem. Some politicians and commentators are calling for the outright legalisation of marihuana. Let's wait and see how the debate develops during a period of relative peace between all sides of the argument. In the meantime, the publisher hopes Soft Secrets will show the public a positive side to the normalisation of cannabis use, and is anxious to offer a forum to both pro- and anti-legalisation advocates. This assumes that the publisher does not necessarily agree with everything that appears in articles and advertisements. The publisher therefore distances himself explicitly from published statements or images that might give the impression that an endorsement is being made for the use or production of cannabis.

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