

RECAP + PHOTOS: NY CANNABIS REGULATORS COMPLETE NY CANNABIS FARM TOUR

*Office of Cannabis Management and Cannabis Control Board Toured 3
Farms Across the State*

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NEW YORK — On July 14 & 15, the Office of Cannabis Management and members of New York State’s Cannabis Control Board toured three farms across the state to check on and highlight the progress of New York’s farmers as they cultivate the first crop for the first adult-use sales through the Seeding Opportunity Initiative. The first stop was Thursday, July 14 in Western New York, followed by two stops on July 15, one in the Capitol Region and one in the Lower Hudson Valley.

During the farm tour stops, the family farmers growing New York’s first batch of legal, adult-use cannabis highlighted their sustainable farming techniques, showed off how to clone a cannabis plant, and hosted a live cannabis planting demonstration.

“New York is developing the most equitable and accessible cannabis industry in the nation, and it begins with our farmers who are growing the first crops,” said **Cannabis Control Board Chair Tremaine Wright**. “Earlier this year, through our *Seeding Opportunity Initiative*, we were able to license our farmers enabling them to start planting for this year’s grow season, and I couldn’t be more impressed with the work New York farmers have done in such a short period of time. The plants look good, smell good and our family farmers are clearly growing a high-quality product for New Yorkers.”

“It was surreal to be in greenhouses, hoop houses and in the fields amongst legal cannabis plants. So many of us worked for decades and years to end the overcriminalization of cannabis, and it’s really a dream come true to help these farmers legally grow cannabis for New Yorkers,” said **Chris Alexander, Executive Director of the Office of Cannabis Management**. “These farmers are doing incredible work, and I can’t wait for this sun-grown cannabis to hit the shelves later this year.”

The Office of Cannabis Management is continuing to advance the *Seeding Opportunity Initiative* and the jump start it's providing to the adult-use cannabis market in New York by relying on New York's farmers and small business owners. The tour was an opportunity to see the progress made on the New York-based family farms that are cultivating the first adult-use cannabis crop in New York State.

Through the *Seeding Opportunity Initiative*, the product grown on these farms will stock the shelves of the first adult-use dispensaries set to open later this year. These Conditional Adult-Use Retail Dispensaries will be owned by individuals with a cannabis conviction, or their close family members, who also have experience owning a successful business. This will provide the stability they've already brought to communities to the start of the New York adult-use cannabis market.

"Whether these farms have two workers or 200 workers, it's amazing to see the opportunities cannabis creates for New Yorkers," said **Jessica Garcia, Member of the Cannabis Control Board**. "It was exciting to see how different farms are building to meet the needs of New York's cannabis industry. We are starting off on the right foot with these family farms, and it's only going to get better from here."

"I'm proud of how green New York's cannabis industry is and will continue to be," said **Jen Metzger, Member of the Cannabis Control Board**. "The farms on our tour all employed organic and regenerative farming practices because they are committed to sustainability and understand that what is good for our environment and the planet is also good for business. Sun-grown cannabis is taking off in New York, ensuring healthy soils and economic opportunities for New York farmers for generations to come."

"From Buffalo to Brooklyn, New York is licensing and regulating farms for legal cannabis growing, and these farmers are making sure we have high-quality, safe, well-regulated products for adult use store shelves later this year," said **Adam W. Perry, Cannabis Control Board Member**. "Lake Erie and Lake Ontario have been integral to New York's economic opportunities since before the Erie Canal, and now farms and farmers just minutes from their shores will be powering new economic opportunities for people across the state."

"New York is building something special right now. The Seeding Opportunity Initiative lays the foundation for a cannabis industry for New Yorkers, by New Yorkers; from the family farms growing the first plants to those individuals most harmed under prohibition selling the first products," said **Damian Fagon, Chief Equity Officer for the Office of Cannabis Management**. "Growing cannabis on a farm was the most personally rewarding experience of

my life. Seeing all these incredible farmers so excited to be growing this crop was an important reminder that we need to go above and beyond in extending this opportunity to as many underrepresented groups as possible.”

“We are grateful for the opportunity to grow cannabis for the New York market,” said **Amy Hepworth, owner of Hepworth Farm in Ulster County**. “Us CBD growers were financially devastated when the market fell out and having the opportunity to be first in growing adult-use cannabis in New York will help us recover. Not to mention, OCM’s support for us growing these plants outdoors is an environmental win for the entire planet. Sun-grown cannabis, from family farmers who feed our state, will enable the land-based community an opportunity for economic vitalization. We are the essential workers who bring food to your table and now can now bring cannabis legally into your homes. It’s a dream come true.”

“This cannabis tour demonstrated how family farms cannot just stay afloat, but also produce high-quality products, and it doesn’t have to be a multi-million company.” **Todd Gianlando owner of Three Cord Ranch in Erie County**. “We are a western New York farm, and we want our crops to supply our community of New York. We don’t rely on dozens of light fixtures. The key difference is we rely on sunlight and prioritize sustainability.”

STOPS:

1. **Farm 1, Erie County** (approximately 30 minutes south of Buffalo)
2. **Farm 2, Schoharie County** (approximately 50 minutes west of Albany)
3. **Farm 3, Ulster County** (approximately 15 minutes southwest of Poughkeepsie/1.5 hours North of Manhattan)