

Field report

Hemp farming in Angus and Aberdeenshire

By Kyle Esplin



Healthy, well-fed crops with decent uniformity.

Hemp in Scotland



Hemp in Scotland



Lots of interest from the local wildlife (including crows, hares and deer!)



Seeds developing with harvest around 4 weeks away



A few stand out specimens over 2.5m!



This tall stand out plant appears to have skipped the auto-flowering gene pool. It's still in vegetation with no signs of flowers. While the rest of the field is getting on with producing seeds thanks to the auto-flowering gene, this plant is going to keep growing a bit more before it produces any seeds. Should the season permit, this individual plant would finish around late October. A good example of why auto-flowering varieties are optimised for outdoor production in Scotland.



Typical phenotype, female flower developing seeds.



Unusual phenotype, expressing morphology more typical of 'extreme sativa' long-flowering varieties, but on schedule with the rest of the crop. Long thin flowers of individual seeds, and what appears increased resin production.



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Purple hues showing on some phenotypes (females at top, males at bottom)





Plants showing 2 different phenotypes, with both remaining on the short side due to a patch of compacted soil.



Having a successful deep taproot dive is the difference between a 6 foot plant, or a 6 inch plant.



For seed production, 10cm spacing between plants looks optimal. With over 20cm spacing, this plant in fertile soil is producing lower flowers and a thick stem. Tighter spacing will focus the plants energy into the tops with thinner individual stalks.



Given the space, the plants will 'stretch out'. The lower flowers become more difficult to collect the seed in harvest. Tight spacing focuses energy into the tops and makes for a more uniform harvest.



Early yellowing of leaves, short 1m plants, and lack of lower flowers despite space available shows a lack of nitrogen. This crop wasn't fed, didn't have the same energy to outstretch the weeds and could have a reduced yield comparatively. Despite later than ideal planting (early June) the crop is on course to finish ahead of the fields that received nutrients. Leaves should turn yellow towards harvest, unless the crop is overfed and remains a deep green.



A plant producing both male and female flowers. While all cannabis plants are capable of producing both sexes and will happen occasionally, high rates of dual-sex flowers in an otherwise monoecious crop could indicate stress.



A single seed wrapped in a calyx of resin. These resin coated flowers and leaves are going to be some high-quality nutrition for the soil and wildlife!

Kyle Esplin is co-founder and Director of Holistic Highland Hemp, and currently sits as Chair of the Scottish Hemp Association.

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