

One of the most interesting additions to Idaho's Bounty's online offerings is Julie Foods' Sweet Hempini butter, made from hemp seeds.



Hemp can not legally be grown in the United States, so it is imported from Canada. Although we encourage our producers to use locally grown products, we sometimes sell non-local healthy foods that can't be grown here, as long as the producer combines them with locally grown products, as Julie does with local flax.

Since hemp is a fairly unknown food, we did a Q&A with Blair Van Pelt (an Idaho's Bounty volunteer studying hemp) to find out more about eating hemp.

Q: First things first! What's the difference between hemp and marijuana?

A: Although hemp and marijuana are from the Cannabis species, hemp contains virtually no THC (the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana). If you smoke hemp you get a headache, not high. Eating hemp will not cause you to test positive on a drug test. Hemp's legal THC level is 0.3%, while marijuana contains between 5 - 20% THC.

Q: Can local farmers grow hemp?

A: Although the residents of Hailey voted to legalize industrial hemp, it is still currently illegal under federal law to grow hemp for food, oil, paper or fabric in the USA, but it is perfectly legal to import, buy and sell hemp in the U.S.

Q: Is eating hemp good for your health?

A: Yes! Hemp plants produce seeds containing 44% oil. This healthy oil has a perfect balance of Omega-3, 6, 9 oils, considered necessary to maintain health. Hemp oil provides a safe alternative to fish, often high in mercury and other toxins.

Hemp's overall protein content of 33% is higher than that found in nuts, other seeds, meats, dairy products and fish or poultry. Hemp also contains a healthy 7% dietary fiber, and is high in the natural antioxidants Vitamin E, Vitamin C and chlorophyll.

Hemp is an excellent source of nutrition – especially for vegetarians, vegans and people on gluten free diets.

Q: What part of the plant can you eat?

A: You can eat hemp seeds – either hulled or in the shell - and cold pressed oil made from the seeds. You can also get protein powder made from the crushed seed shells.

Q: How do you incorporate hemp into your diet?

A: Hemp is a tasty and healthy addition to both sweet and savory dishes.
Seeds: Can be eaten raw or toasted. Add to baked goods, salads, soups, smoothies, cereals, vegetable dishes... the list goes on!
Oil: Should never be cooked, just like flax oil. Use as a salad oil or add to cooked soups and vegetable dishes.
Protein Powder: Add to other foods such as smoothies or yogurt. Use as gluten-free flour in baked goods.

Q: Where can we get hemp food in the valley?

A: You can buy vegan hemp butter online from Julie Foods. It is delicious and goes great with Julie Foods' Wheat and Sugar Free Zucchini Bread. Hemp seeds can also be found in Julie's 'The "I am allergic to everything" cracker' and 'Anahiem and Black Olive Seed Bread.'

If you would like to try them raw, hemp seeds are available in Ketchum at the Natural Niche, Akasha Organics and Glow Live Food, and in Hailey at Big Wood Nutrition as well as at all 3 Atkinson's.



For more information, please contact Blair at bebopblair@yahoo.com, or visit her website with lots of info and links at www.theanswerishemp.com.

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