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THE TIPPING POINT PART 3

MAKE THE PLANET GREAT AGAIN

By Frenchy Cannoli

In Part I and II of this article, I have covered the medical and agricultural potential of the Cannabis plant and the environmental challenges created by the farming methodologies used to produce these crops.

Let's now approach the most controversial aspect of the plant... Cannabis: the mild cognitive intoxicant.

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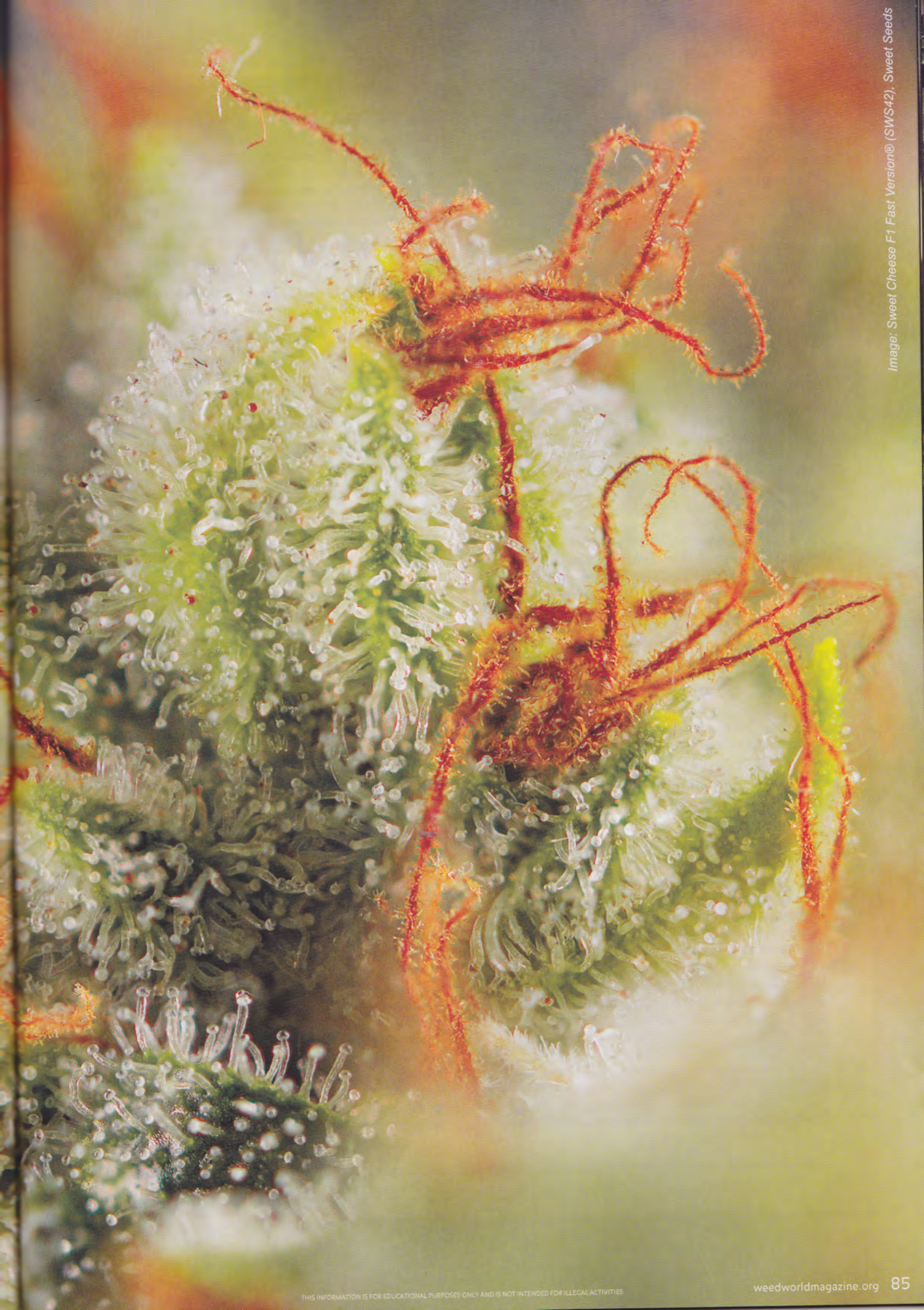

Image: Sweet Cheese F1 Fast Version® (SWS42), Sweet Seeds

The reasons behind the controversy is quite simple: Big Pharma and the average Cannabis patient do not have the same definition for the word "medicine". The pharmaceutical companies think Western Medicine, aka Conventional Medicine, is "a system in which medical doctors and other healthcare professionals treat symptoms and diseases using drugs, radiation, or surgery"[1], while Cannabis patients and activists are thinking Traditional Medicine, aka Folk Medicine also known as Alternative Medicine, like traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, Herbal Medicine or Aromatherapy. The former is chemically mass-produced and controlled by a complex network of insurance companies, doctors and pharmaceutical company representatives. The latter can be managed by the patient himself with the guidance of written references passed down by generations of healers.

WHO DECIDES WHETHER A PRODUCT IS A MEDICINE OR NOT?

Since the 16th century and the birth of the distillation of isolates we have been encouraged to believe that chemical compounds are more potent and effective than plants; while isolates are beneficial to the overall health of humanity and save lives, so are many herbal and traditional remedies.

As I mentioned in Part II, Cannabis is recognized as "a plant that is essentially the Ferrari of the plant world when it comes to producing the chemical of interest"[2], the cannabinoids that the pharmaceutical companies have so many difficulties re-creating synthetically are readily available in the plant in a limitless diversity. Furthermore, it appears that the 480 natural chemical compounds unique to the Cannabis plant have more therapeutic effect when consumed as a whole than any single of these compounds by itself. The whole is more than the sum of its parts. It is known as the "entourage effect"[3]. Cannabinoids are highly challenging to mimic or to cultivate as isolates on yeast in the same way that other Western Medicine[4] drugs are produced. If scientists have so much problem with the parts how will they ever master the whole, the "entourage effect" and its therapeutic potential?

The drug companies fear the now inevitable world legalization of the adult use of Cannabis; the Cannabis plant's psychoactive properties have amazing beneficial therapeutic aspects which even the DEA Chief Administrative Law Judge Francis L. Young agreed upon in his ruling on the Marijuana Rescheduling Petition of September 6, 1988, stating that "Marijuana in its natural form is one of the safest therapeutically active substances known to man." The most serious side effects are also medical attributes for a number of conditions: increased appetite, euphoria, relaxation and increased sexual satisfaction to name but a few. Cannabis is the most grown and smuggled drug on the planet today for a good reason - it has health producing benefits to the humans that consume it!

Why would the very organizations that should be dedicated to the health and well-being of humanity be fearful of such an amazing gift from nature? The answer is GREED.

Cannabis is a beneficial intoxicant, an anomaly at that level, and a major competition for drug companies. A study done by the University of Columbia released on the eve of 4/20 this year revealed that medical Cannabis could save taxpayers over a billion dollars on prescription drugs[5] which comprehensively validates the pharmaceutical industry's fear of Cannabis legalization.

Furthermore, a sharp increase in opiate overdoses, narcotic and painkillers addiction has become a national problem in the U.S. Numerous studies indicate that Cannabis can have a positive effect on opiate addiction to help manage withdrawal symptoms and may well be the most effective and therapeutic substitute available for treatment and prevention. Cannabis helps nausea and vomiting, as well as chronic pain management which are the dominant symptoms when detoxing from heroin and opiates. Current research definitely supports the use of Cannabis in addiction therapy[6].

Cannabis has also proven to be beneficial to reduced drinking and alcohol withdrawal symptoms. Dr. Tod H. Mikuriya, the grandfather of the cannabis legalization

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movement in the U.S., who has advocated for a "Harm-Reduction Approach" to alcoholism, and the use of Cannabis as a Substitute for Alcoho[7] did his groundbreaking Cannabis substitution studies in the 1970s! Cannabis is a safer alternative to alcohol and pharmaceutical drugs with little adverse side effects and a much lower risk for addiction[8 9], an unwelcome competition to pharmaceutical drugs to say the least.

Cannabis which was once labeled as the "gateway drug" has become the "get away drug" of tomorrow.

The complete legalization of the Cannabis plant will not be welcomed by the pharmaceutical industry until they have full control of the medicinal aspect of the plant by creating synthetic or lab cultivated cannabinoids. Nevertheless, the problem of the adult use of an intoxicating and therapeutic plant will not go away even when (if ever) Big Pharma is finally able to produce all cannabinoids in isolated forms, the Cannabis plant in its natural form will remain the competition that has to be outdone.

The value of a crop is based on the quality of the end-product, the value of Cannabis in Northern America has been defined for half a century by California; the land, the climate, the genetics and the small farmer's knowledge and dedication to quality determine today's market price. Extrapolating from these facts it seems obvious that mass-production and a flood of lower quality products on the market would be counterproductive to maintaining high value.

The value of Cannabis, like all other agricultural products, is dependent on quality and production. Generations of illegal small farmers have created the quality market we have in the U.S. today, a quality and a genetic diversity that is known the world over. It is essential to protect what is the California Cannabis heritage and follow the blueprint on how-to-create-a-multi-billion-dollar-industry-based-on-quality the French wine industry left us in the history books[10].

Big Agro Farms not only cannot produce the quality crafted by small farmers but they cannot even produce quantity without the use of chemicals and pesticides[11] which has become a serious concern to patients and consumers[12] in the U.S.

It is for Cannabis as it is for all other agricultural products that are mass produced it seems - growing a healthy plant naturally is not easy as many would-be cultivators are finding out. To be blunt: naturally growing a plant that stands out for its quality and uniqueness demands commitment, in-depth knowledge and devotion.

A great wine is the final expression of the grapes that were crushed, fermented and aged. A five-star Michelin dinner can only be as good as the products that it is composed of. Greatness is born of quality, and cannot exist without.

As much as the small Californian farmer would be ill-advised to try to compete with mega-farms on the production level, these U.S. mega-farms should be wary of the potential of the world's existing producing countries. As small farmers, we have no choice but to focus on quality to be competitive. In my eyes the large scale American producers are in the same position at the world level, and face an important choice that will shape the future of the Cannabis industry.

Our small Cannabis farmers are the source of greatness and quality and the way we approach the taxation of Cannabis products and how we protect our genetics and nurture our cultivators will be the reflection of our vision, our testament to future generations and the legacy we will be held accountable for.

I should also remind everyone that the legacy that our small farmers embody is very appreciated the world over. To kill the goose that lays the golden egg is not visionary. To starve and chase the goose away would be shortsighted to the point of blindness.

1. *https://www.cancer.gov/publications/dictionaries/cancer-terms?cdrid=454743*
2. *https://www.nytimes.com/2015/09/15/science/newly-risen-from-yeast-thc.html?_r=1*
3. *Taming THC: potential cannabis synergy and phytocannabinoid-terpenoid entourage effects By Ethan B Russo*
4. *http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/medical-marijuana-yeast-1.3527950*
5. *https://www.rt.com/usa/385891-medical-marijuana-program-taxpayers/*
6. *https://www.hellomd.com/health-wellness/is-marijuana-part-solution-to-heroin-and-opiate-addiction*
7. *http://www.mamacoca.org/docs_de_base/Cannabis_medicinal/alcohol_cannabis_harmreduction.pdf*
8. *Can Cannabis be Considered a Substitute Medication for Alcohol? By Meenakshi Sabina Subbaraman https://academic.oup.com/alcalc/article/49/3/292/209965/Can-Cannabis-be-Considered-a-Substitute-Medication*
9. *https://harmreductionjournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/1477-7517-6-35*
10. *Weed World issue #126 and 128*
11. *http://www.naturalhealth365.com/medical-marijuana-pesticide-2148.html; http://www.businessinsider.com/marijuana-bacteria-contamination-health-concerns-2016-12*
12. *http://www.slate.com/articles/business/moneybox/2016/04/there_s_a_clean_natural_weed_movement_but_it_can_t_call_itself_organic_here.html*

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