

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2019

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SENATE BILL 315

Agriculture/Environment/Natural Resources Committee Substitute Adopted 6/6/19  
Judiciary Committee Substitute Adopted 6/11/19  
Finance Committee Substitute Adopted 6/12/19  
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House Committee Substitute #2 Favorable 7/17/19

Short Title: North Carolina Farm Act of 2019.

(Public)

Sponsors:

Referred to:

March 21, 2019

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO MAKE VARIOUS CHANGES TO THE AGRICULTURAL LAWS OF THE STATE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**IMPLEMENT A STATE HEMP PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 10113 OF THE FEDERAL AGRICULTURE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2018, TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE NORTH CAROLINA HEMP COMMISSION UNTIL JULY 1, 2021**

**SECTION 1.** Article 50E of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes reads as rewritten:

"Article 50E.

"Industrial Hemp-North Carolina Hemp Commission.

**§ 106-568.50. Legislative findings and purpose.**

~~The General Assembly finds and declares that it is in the best interest of the citizens of North Carolina to promote and encourage the development of an industrial hemp industry in the State in order to expand employment, promote economic activity, and provide opportunities to small farmers for an environmentally sustainable and profitable use of crop lands that might otherwise be lost to agricultural production. The purposes of this Article are to establish an agricultural pilot program for the cultivation of industrial hemp in the State, to provide for reporting on the program by growers and processors for agricultural or other research, and to pursue any federal permits or waivers necessary to allow industrial hemp to be grown in the State.~~

The General Assembly finds and declares that hemp is a viable agriculture commodity in this State and that it is in the best interest of the citizens of North Carolina to:

- (1) Promote the cultivation and processing of hemp and open new commercial markets for farmers and businesses through the sale of hemp products.
- (2) Promote the expansion of the State's hemp industry to the maximum extent permitted by law, allowing farmers and businesses to cultivate, handle, and process hemp and sell hemp products for commercial purposes.
- (3) Encourage and empower research into hemp growth and hemp products at State institutions of higher education and in the private sector.
- (4) Move the State and its citizens to the forefront of the hemp industry.



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1 **"§ 106-568.51. Definitions.**

2 The following definitions apply in this Article:

- 3 (1) Repealed by Session Laws 2018-113, s. 4, effective June 27, 2018.
- 4 (1a) Cannabidiol or CBD. – The nonpsychoactive cannabinoid compound derived  
5 from the hemp variety of the plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.) that is essentially free  
6 of plant material and does not exceed the federally defined THC level for  
7 hemp.
- 8 (1b) Cannabinoid. – Means any of the terpenophenolic compounds found within  
9 the plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.) that are functionally or structurally similar,  
10 biologically active, and are classified in subgroups such as Cannabigerols  
11 (CBG), Cannabichromenes (CBC), Cannabidiols (CBD),  
12 tetrahydrocannabinols (THC), Cannabinol (CBN), Cannabicyclol (CBDL),  
13 and all other chemical cannabinoid constituents derived from hemp.
- 14 (1c) Commercial sale. – The sale of products in the stream of commerce, at retail,  
15 wholesale, and online.
- 16 (2) ~~Commercial use. – The use of industrial hemp as a raw ingredient in the~~  
17 ~~production of hemp products.~~
- 18 (3) ~~Commission. – The North Carolina Industrial-Hemp Commission created by~~  
19 ~~this Article.~~
- 20 (3a) Cultivating. – Planting, watering, growing, or harvesting a plant or crop.  
21 "Cultivating" also includes possessing or storing hemp plants for any period  
22 of time on the premises where the hemp was cultivated and transporting hemp  
23 to the first point of sale by the cultivator.
- 24 (4) ~~Department. – The North Carolina Department of Agriculture.~~  
25 ~~Consumer Services.~~
- 26 (4a) Federally defined THC level for hemp. – A delta-9 THC concentration of not  
27 more than three-tenths percent (0.3%) on a dry weight basis.
- 28 (5) ~~Grower. – Any person licensed to grow industrial hemp by the Commission~~  
29 ~~pursuant to this Article.~~
- 30 (5a) Handling. – Possessing or storing hemp plants for any period of time on  
31 premises owned, operated, or controlled by a person licensed to handle hemp.  
32 "Handling" also includes possessing or storing hemp plants in a vehicle for  
33 any period of time other than during its actual transport from the premises of  
34 a person licensed to cultivate, handle, or process hemp to the premises of  
35 another licensed person. "Handling" does not include possessing or storing  
36 finished hemp products.
- 37 (5b) Hemp. – The plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.) and any part of that plant, including  
38 the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids, isomers, acids,  
39 salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, within the federally  
40 defined THC level for hemp.
- 41 (5c) Hemp extract. – An extract from hemp, or a mixture or preparation containing  
42 hemp plant material or compounds, within the federally defined THC level for  
43 hemp.
- 44 (6) ~~Hemp products. – All products made from industrial hemp, including, but not~~  
45 ~~limited to, cloth, cordage, fiber, food, fuel, paint, paper, particleboard,~~  
46 ~~plastics, seed, seed meal and seed oil for consumption, and verified propagules~~  
47 ~~for cultivation if the seeds originate from industrial hemp varieties.~~  
48 ~~product. – Any product within the federally defined THC level for hemp derived from,~~  
49 ~~or made by, processing hemp plants or plant parts, that are prepared in a form~~  
50 ~~available for commercial sale, including, but not limited to, cosmetics,~~  
51 ~~personal care products, food intended for animal or human consumption as~~

1 approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration or the United  
 2 States Department of Agriculture, cloth, cordage, fiber, fuel, paint, paper,  
 3 particleboard, plastics, and any product containing one or more hemp-derived  
 4 cannabinoids, such as cannabidiol. "Hemp product" does not include  
 5 smokable hemp.

6 ~~(7) Industrial hemp.—All parts and varieties of the plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.),~~  
 7 ~~cultivated or possessed by a grower licensed by the Commission, whether~~  
 8 ~~growing or not, that contain a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration of~~  
 9 ~~not more than three-tenths of one percent (0.3%) on a dry weight basis.~~

10 ~~(7a) Industrial hemp research program.—The research program established~~  
 11 ~~pursuant to G.S. 106-568.53(1).~~

12 ~~(7b) State land grant university.—North Carolina State University and North~~  
 13 ~~Carolina A&T State University.~~

14 ~~(7c) Licensee. – An individual or business entity possessing a license issued by the~~  
 15 ~~Commission under the authority of this Article to cultivate or handle hemp.~~

16 ~~(7d) Processing. – Converting an agricultural commodity into a marketable form.~~

17 ~~(7e) Smokable hemp. – Harvested raw or dried hemp plant material, in a form~~  
 18 ~~intended to allow THC to be introduced into the human body by inhalation of~~  
 19 ~~smoke, including hemp buds or hemp flowers, hemp cigars, and hemp~~  
 20 ~~cigarettes. "Smokable hemp" does not include hemp extracts.~~

21 ~~(8) Tetrahydrocannabinol or THC. – The natural or synthetic equivalents of the~~  
 22 ~~substances contained in the plant, or in the resinous extractives of, cannabis,~~  
 23 ~~or any synthetic substances, compounds, salts, or derivatives of the plant or~~  
 24 ~~chemicals and their isomers with similar chemical structure and~~  
 25 ~~pharmacological activity.~~Any of the chemical analogues belonging to the  
 26 Cannabinoid subgroup Tetrahydrocannabinol. These compounds include the  
 27 chemical equivalents contained in the plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.), or in the  
 28 resinous extractive compounds, salts, or derivatives of the plant or chemicals  
 29 and their isomers with similar chemical structure and pharmacological  
 30 activity.

31 ~~(9) Verified propagule.—A seed or clone from an industrial hemp plant from~~  
 32 ~~which THC concentration samples have been tested by a qualified laboratory~~  
 33 ~~and confirmed as having a delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol concentration less~~  
 34 ~~than that adopted by federal law in the Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S.C.~~  
 35 ~~§ 801, et seq.~~

36 **"§ 106-568.52. North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission.**

37 (a) Creation and Membership. – The North Carolina ~~Industrial~~ Hemp Commission is  
 38 established and shall consist of nine members as follows:

39 (1) The Commissioner of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designee, who shall  
 40 serve as vice-chair.

41 (2) One appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the  
 42 President Pro Tempore of the Senate in accordance with G.S. 120-121, who  
 43 shall at the time of appointment be a municipal chief of police.

44 (3) One appointed by the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Speaker  
 45 of the House of Representatives in accordance with G.S. 120-121, who shall  
 46 at the time of appointment be an elected sheriff or the sheriff's designee.

47 (4) Two appointed by the Governor who shall at the time of appointment be a  
 48 full-time or Emeritus faculty member of a State land grant university who  
 49 regularly works in the field of agricultural science or research. One of these  
 50 members shall be appointed from North Carolina A&T State University, who

1 shall reflect the spirit and relationship to the education and research for which  
2 the land grant program was established.

3 (5) Two appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture, who shall be a full-time  
4 farmer with at least 10 years of experience in agricultural production in the  
5 State. One of these members shall be a small farmer who is a historically  
6 underserved African-American farmer.

7 (6) One appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture, ~~who shall be a~~  
8 ~~professional agricultural consultant as recommended by the Small and~~  
9 Minority Farm Program.

10 (7) One appointed by the Commissioner of Agriculture, who shall be an  
11 agribusiness professional.

12 (b) Terms of Members. – Members of the Commission shall serve terms of four years,  
13 beginning effective July 1 of the year of appointment, and may be reappointed to a second  
14 four-year term. The terms of members designated by subdivisions (a)(1), (a)(2), (a)(4), and (a)(6)  
15 of this section shall expire on June 30 of any year evenly divisible by four. The terms of the  
16 remaining members shall expire on June 30 of any year that follows by two years a year evenly  
17 divisible by four. However, the terms of all members of the Commission shall expire July 1,  
18 2021.

19 (c) Chair. – The members of the Commission shall elect a chair. The chair shall serve a  
20 two-year term and may be reelected.

21 (d) Vacancies. – Any appointment to fill a vacancy on the Commission created by the  
22 resignation, dismissal, death, or disability of a member shall be made by the original appointing  
23 authority and shall be for the balance of the unexpired term.

24 (e) Removal. – The appointing authority shall have the power to remove any member of  
25 the Commission appointed by that authority from office for misfeasance, malfeasance, or  
26 nonfeasance.

27 (f) Reimbursement. – The members of the Commission shall receive per diem and  
28 necessary travel and subsistence expenses in accordance with the provisions of G.S. 138-5.

29 (g) Quorum. – Five members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the  
30 transaction of business.

31 (h) Staff. – The Commission is authorized and empowered to employ no more than two  
32 persons as staff to assist the Commission in the proper discharge of its duties and responsibilities.  
33 The chair of the Commission shall organize and direct the work of the Commission staff. The  
34 salaries and compensation of all such personnel shall be determined by the Commission;  
35 provided, however, that the aggregate cost for salaries and benefits of the staff may not exceed  
36 two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000).

37 **"§ 106-568.53. Powers and duties of the Commission.**

38 The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

39 (1) ~~To establish an industrial hemp research program the North Carolina Hemp~~  
40 ~~Program to grow or cultivate industrial hemp in the State, to be directly~~  
41 ~~managed and coordinated by State land grant universities. The Commission~~  
42 ~~shall pursue any permits or waivers from the United States Drug Enforcement~~  
43 ~~Agency or any other federal agency that are necessary for the establishment~~  
44 ~~of the industrial hemp research program established by this Article. This~~  
45 ~~research program shall consist primarily of demonstration plots planted and~~  
46 ~~cultivated in North Carolina by selected growers. The growers shall be~~  
47 ~~licensed pursuant to subdivision (2) of this section prior to planting any~~  
48 ~~industrial hemp.State.~~

49 (2) To issue licenses allowing a person, firm, or corporation to cultivate ~~industrial~~  
50 ~~or handle hemp for research purposes~~ to the extent allowed by federal law,  
51 upon proper application as the Commission may specify, and in accordance

1 with G.S. 106-568.53A. Each licensee shall provide a complete and accurate  
2 legal description of the location of the industrial hemp farming operation,  
3 including GPS coordinates, and the license shall be issued for cultivation only  
4 in those locations identified in the application and shall include on its face the  
5 description of those areas. The Commission may delegate approval of license  
6 applications to Commission staff, but the Commission shall hear any appeals  
7 of denial of a license. The Department shall provide administrative support to  
8 the Commission for the processing of applications and issuance of licenses.

9 (3) ~~To support the Commission's activities, and to reimburse the Department for~~  
10 ~~expenses associated with the issuance of cultivation licenses under~~  
11 ~~subdivision (2) of this section, the Commission may charge the following fees:~~

12 a. ~~An initial, graduated license fee, to be paid by each cultivator, based~~  
13 ~~upon the number of acres proposed for cultivation of industrial hemp,~~  
14 ~~not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000), with incentive provisions~~  
15 ~~to encourage the participation of small acreage farmers.~~

16 b. ~~An annual fee that is the sum of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00)~~  
17 ~~and two dollars (\$2.00) per acre of industrial hemp cultivated.~~

18 ~~In setting fees under this subdivision, the Commission may create fair and~~  
19 ~~reasonable licensing preferences for license applicants from North Carolina~~  
20 ~~counties that have been recognized as economically depressed or~~  
21 ~~disadvantaged. The Department shall collect and manage all fees charged by~~  
22 ~~the Commission and shall remit all funds collected under this subdivision to~~  
23 ~~the Commission at least monthly. The Department may retain its actual~~  
24 ~~expenses associated with the issuance of cultivation licenses from the amount~~  
25 ~~to be remitted to the Commission.~~

26 (4) ~~To receive gifts, grants, federal funds, and any other funds both public and~~  
27 ~~private needed to support the Commission's duties and programs.~~

28 (5) ~~To establish procedures for reporting to the Commission by the growers and~~  
29 ~~processors for agricultural or academic research and to collaborate and~~  
30 ~~coordinate research efforts with the appropriate departments or programs of~~  
31 ~~North Carolina State University and North Carolina A & T State University.~~

32 (6), (7) Repealed by Session Laws 2016-93, s. 3, effective July 11, 2016.

33 (8) ~~To adopt rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this Article, which shall~~  
34 ~~include, but are not limited to, rules for all of the following:~~

35 a. ~~Testing of the industrial hemp during growth to determine~~  
36 ~~tetrahydrocannabinol levels. Testing methods and protocols shall~~  
37 ~~comply in all respects with any and all applicable federal~~  
38 ~~requirements. Prescribe sampling and testing procedures to ensure that~~  
39 ~~hemp cultivated or handled under the authority of this Article does not~~  
40 ~~exceed the federally defined THC level for hemp.~~

41 b. ~~Supervision of the industrial hemp during its growth and harvest,~~  
42 ~~including rules for verification of the type of seeds and plants used and~~  
43 ~~grown by licensees.~~

44 e. ~~The production and sale of industrial hemp, consistent with the rules~~  
45 ~~of the United States Department of Justice and Drug Enforcement~~  
46 ~~Administration for the production, distribution, and sale of industrial~~  
47 ~~hemp.~~

48 d. ~~Means and methods for assisting law enforcement agencies to~~  
49 ~~efficiently ascertain information regarding the legitimate and lawful~~  
50 ~~production of industrial hemp.~~

1 e. ~~Strategies and programs for the promotion of industrial hemp products~~  
 2 ~~and markets, in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of~~  
 3 ~~Agriculture, the North Carolina Department of Commerce, the~~  
 4 ~~University of North Carolina system, and the community college~~  
 5 ~~system.~~

6 f. ~~The fees authorized by subdivision (3) of this section.~~Set and collect a  
 7 schedule of nonrefundable fees for administering the North Carolina  
 8 Hemp Program.

9 ~~The Commission shall adopt by reference or otherwise the federal regulations~~  
 10 ~~in effect regarding industrial hemp and any subsequent amendments to those~~  
 11 ~~regulations. No North Carolina rule, regulation, or statute shall be construed~~  
 12 ~~to authorize any person to violate any federal law or regulation.~~

13 (9) ~~To undertake any additional studies relating to the production, distribution, or~~  
 14 ~~use of industrial hemp as requested by the General Assembly, the Governor,~~  
 15 ~~or the Commissioner of Agriculture.~~

16 (10) ~~To notify the State Bureau of Investigation and all local law enforcement~~  
 17 ~~agencies of the duration, size, and location of all industrial hemp~~  
 18 ~~demonstration plots authorized pursuant to the industrial hemp research~~  
 19 ~~program.~~

20 **"§ 106-568.53A. Responsibilities-Qualification of licensees.**

21 A person granted an industrial hemp license pursuant to this section shall:

22 (1) ~~Maintain records that demonstrate compliance with this Article and with all~~  
 23 ~~other State laws regulating the planting and cultivation of industrial hemp.~~

24 (2) ~~Retain all industrial hemp production records for a minimum of three years.~~

25 (3) ~~Allow industrial hemp crops, throughout sowing, growing, and harvesting, to~~  
 26 ~~be inspected by and at the discretion of the Commission, the State Bureau of~~  
 27 ~~Investigation, or the chief law enforcement officer of the unit or units of local~~  
 28 ~~government where the farm is located.~~

29 (4) ~~Maintain a current written agreement with a State land grant university that~~  
 30 ~~states that the grower is a participant in the industrial hemp research program~~  
 31 ~~managed by that institution.~~

32 (a) No person shall cultivate or handle hemp in this State unless the person holds a hemp  
 33 license issued by the North Carolina Hemp Commission.

34 (b) In order to obtain a license to cultivate hemp pursuant to this Article, a person must  
 35 be a qualifying farmer pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13E(a) or a conditional qualifying farmer  
 36 pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13E(b). The Commission may also grant a license to cultivate hemp to  
 37 a State agency or institution of higher learning, or an employee of a State agency or institution  
 38 of higher learning for use in the scope of the employee's duties.

39 (c) An applicant for a license issued by the Commission shall submit to and pay for an  
 40 annual criminal background check conducted by the State Bureau of Investigation or another  
 41 State or federal law enforcement agency approved by the Commission.

42 (d) A person granted a license to cultivate hemp pursuant to this Article shall provide to  
 43 the Commission prior to issuance of the license:

44 (1) The legal description and global positioning coordinates sufficient for locating  
 45 the fields or greenhouses to be used to cultivate hemp.

46 (2) Written consent allowing representatives of the Department, the State Bureau  
 47 of Investigation, and the chief law enforcement officer of the unit or units of  
 48 local government where the farm is located to enter all premises where hemp  
 49 is cultivated or stored for the purpose of conducting physical inspections or  
 50 ensuring compliance with the requirements of this Article and rules adopted  
 51 by the Commission.

1       (e) Any person convicted of a felony relating to a controlled substance under State or  
2 federal law shall be ineligible to obtain any hemp license for the 10-year period following the  
3 date of the conviction.

4       (f) Any person who materially falsifies any information contained in an application for  
5 a hemp license shall be ineligible to obtain a hemp license.

6       (g) A license issued by the Commission shall afford to the spouse of a licensee all rights  
7 and privileges granted to the licensee, provided the licensee's spouse meets all other  
8 qualifications for licensure as provided in this section.

9       (h) A license issued by the Commission shall be transferrable to a member of the  
10 licensee's immediate family upon the death or incapacity of the licensee, provided the transferee  
11 meets all other qualifications for licensure as provided in this section. In the event of a licensee's  
12 death, the Commission shall modify the license to reflect the transfer of the license to the  
13 transferee without requiring an application for a new license. However, the transferee shall  
14 submit to and pay for an annual criminal background check as required by subsection (c) of this  
15 section if the Commission does not have a current criminal history on record for the transferee.

16       (i) A license issued by the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission shall be valid  
17 for the term of the license. A person who holds a license issued by the North Carolina Industrial  
18 Hemp Commission who wishes to modify the conditions of the license shall be required to apply  
19 for a new license from the North Carolina Hemp Commission.

20 **"§ 106-568.54. Limitations.**

21       ~~The Commission shall not meet or undertake any of its powers and duties under this Article~~  
22 ~~until it has obtained funding from sources other than State funds of at least two hundred thousand~~  
23 ~~dollars (\$200,000) to support operations of the Commission. Funding from non State sources for~~  
24 ~~the Commission's activities may be returned to the donor or funder if not spent or encumbered~~  
25 ~~within 12 months, upon request of the donor or funder. Non State funds donated and carried over~~  
26 ~~at the end of the fiscal year in which they are donated shall be retained and remain eligible for~~  
27 ~~expenditure in the following fiscal year.~~

28 **"§ 106-568.55. Authorized research purposes.**

29       ~~As part of the industrial hemp research program directly managed by a State land grant~~  
30 ~~university, a licensed grower may engage in any of the following research activities:~~

- 31       (1) ~~Studying and investigating marketplace opportunities for hemp products to~~  
32 ~~increase the job base in the State by means of employment related to the~~  
33 ~~production of industrial hemp.~~
- 34       (2) ~~Studying and investigating methods of industrial hemp cultivation that are~~  
35 ~~best suited to soil conservation and restoration.~~
- 36       (3) ~~Overseeing and analyzing the growth of industrial hemp by licensed growers~~  
37 ~~for agronomy research and analysis of required soils, growing conditions, and~~  
38 ~~harvest methods relating to the production of various varieties of industrial~~  
39 ~~hemp that may be suitable for various commercial hemp products.~~
- 40       (4) ~~Conducting seed research on various types of industrial hemp that are best~~  
41 ~~suited to be grown in North Carolina, including seed availability, creation of~~  
42 ~~North Carolina hybrid types, and in the ground variety trials and seed~~  
43 ~~production. The Commission may establish a program to recognize certain~~  
44 ~~industrial hemp seeds as being North Carolina varieties of hemp seed.~~
- 45       (5) ~~Studying the economic feasibility of developing an industrial hemp market in~~  
46 ~~various types of industrial hemp that can be grown in the State, including by~~  
47 ~~commercial marketing and sale of industrial hemp.~~
- 48       (6) ~~Reporting on the estimated value added benefits, including environmental~~  
49 ~~benefits, to North Carolina businesses of an industrial hemp market of North~~  
50 ~~Carolina grown industrial hemp varieties.~~

- 1           (7)     ~~Studying the agronomy research being conducted worldwide relating to~~  
2           ~~industrial hemp varieties, production, and use.~~
- 3           (8)     ~~Researching and promoting on the world market industrial hemp and hemp~~  
4           ~~seed that can be grown in the State.~~
- 5           (9)     ~~Promoting research into the development of industrial hemp and commercial~~  
6           ~~markets for North Carolina industrial hemp and hemp products.~~
- 7           (10)    ~~Studying the feasibility of attracting federal or private funding for the North~~  
8           ~~Carolina industrial hemp research program.~~
- 9           (11)    ~~Studying the use of industrial hemp in new energy technologies, including~~  
10          ~~electricity generation, biofuels, or other forms of energy resources; the growth~~  
11          ~~of industrial hemp on reclaimed mine sites; the use of hemp seed oil in the~~  
12          ~~production of fuels; and the production costs, environmental issues, and costs~~  
13          ~~and benefits involved with the use of industrial hemp for energy.~~

14    **"§ 106-568.55A. Bonding requirement for hemp handlers.**

15       The Commission shall not issue a license to handle hemp to any person who processes hemp  
16       purchased from a cultivator until the person has furnished the Commissioner of Agriculture a  
17       bond satisfactory to the Commissioner in an amount of not less than two hundred fifty thousand  
18       dollars (\$250,000). No bond shall be required for a handler who processes only hemp grown by  
19       the handler. The Commissioner may require a new bond or may require the amount of any bond  
20       to be increased if the Commissioner finds it necessary for the protection of the cultivator. The  
21       bond shall be payable to the State and shall be conditioned upon the fulfilling of all financial  
22       obligations incurred by the handler with all hemp cultivators with whom the handler contracts.  
23       Any cultivator alleging any injury by the fraud, deceit, willful injury, or failure to comply with  
24       the terms of any written contract by a handler may bring suit on the bond against the principal  
25       and the principal's surety in any court of competent jurisdiction and may recover the damages  
26       found to be caused by such acts complained of.

27    **"§ 106-568.55B. Corrective action plans authorized.**

28       (a)     The Commission shall require any person who is required to obtain a hemp license  
29       issued by the Commission to comply with a corrective action plan if the Commission determines  
30       that the person has negligently violated any provision of this Article or any rule adopted by the  
31       Commission, including by negligently failing to obtain a proper license or other required  
32       authorization from the Commission, negligently failing to provide an accurate legal description  
33       of land on which the person produces hemp, or negligently producing *Cannabis sativa* (L.) with  
34       more than the federally defined THC level for hemp.

35       (b)     A corrective action plan required by the Commission shall include at least the date by  
36       which the person shall correct the violation and a requirement that the person shall periodically  
37       report to the Commission on the person's compliance with this Article and all rules adopted by  
38       the Commission for a period of not less than the next two calendar years.

39       (c)     Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the penalty for a negligent violation of  
40       any provision of this Article or any rule adopted by the Commission shall be compliance with a  
41       corrective action plan pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. However, a person who  
42       negligently violates this Article or any rule adopted by the Commission three times in a five-year  
43       period shall be ineligible to obtain a hemp license for a period of five years beginning on the date  
44       of the third violation and shall be subject to criminal and civil penalties for additional violations  
45       during that period.

46       (d)     If the Commission determines that a person has violated this Article or any rule  
47       adopted by the Commission recklessly, willfully, knowingly, or intentionally, the Commission  
48       shall immediately report the person to the Commissioner, Attorney General, and the appropriate  
49       law enforcement authority.

50    **"§ 106-568.56. Civil penalty.**

1 (a) In addition to any other liability or penalty provided by law, the Commissioner may  
2 assess a civil penalty of not more than two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) per violation  
3 against any person who:

4 (1) Violates any provision of this Article or a rule adopted by the Commission, or  
5 conditions of any license, permit, or order issued by the Commission.

6 (2) Manufactures, distributes, dispenses, delivers, purchases, aids, abets,  
7 attempts, or conspires to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, purchase,  
8 or possesses with the intent to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, or  
9 purchase marijuana on property used for ~~industrial~~-hemp production, or in a  
10 manner intended to disguise the marijuana due to its proximity to ~~industrial~~  
11 hemp. This penalty may be imposed in addition to any other penalties  
12 provided by law.

13 (3) Provides the Commission with false or misleading information in relation to  
14 a license application or renewal, inspection, or investigation authorized by this  
15 Article.

16 (4) Tamper with or adulterates ~~an industrial~~-a hemp crop lawfully planted  
17 pursuant to this Article.

18 (b) The Commissioner shall remit the clear proceeds of civil penalties assessed pursuant  
19 to this section to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

20 **"§ 106-568.57. Criminal penalties.**

21 (a) Any person that manufactures, distributes, dispenses, delivers, purchases, aids, abets,  
22 attempts, or conspires to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, purchase, or possesses with  
23 the intent to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, or purchase marijuana on property used  
24 for ~~industrial~~-hemp production, or in a manner intended to disguise the marijuana due to its  
25 proximity to ~~industrial~~-hemp, shall be deemed guilty of a Class I felony. This penalty may be  
26 imposed in addition to any other penalties provided by law.

27 (b) Any person that provides the Commission with false or misleading information in  
28 relation to a license application or renewal, inspection, or investigation authorized by this Article  
29 shall be deemed guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

30 (c) Any person that tampers with or adulterates ~~an industrial~~-a hemp crop lawfully planted  
31 pursuant to this Article shall be deemed guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

32 (d) Any person who sells hemp, hemp products, or hemp extracts to a person less than 18  
33 years old shall be deemed guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

34 **"§ 106-568.58. Hemp products.**

35 (a) Except as provided in G.S. 106-139(g), no license shall be required to possess, handle,  
36 transport, or sell hemp products or hemp extracts.

37 (b) Hemp products may be legally transported to other states and exported to foreign  
38 nations, consistent with the laws of the receiving jurisdiction.

39 **"§ 106-568.59. North Carolina Hemp Program Fund.**

40 (a) The North Carolina Hemp Program Fund is established as a special fund in the  
41 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Fund shall consist of amounts received  
42 from appropriations and any other proceeds from gifts, grants, federal funds, application fees,  
43 license fees, and any other funds, both public and private, made available for purposes of this  
44 Article. Any interest received and accruing from the Fund shall be paid into the State's General  
45 Fund.

46 (b) The Fund shall be used by the Commission and the Department for the costs of  
47 personnel, program administration, testing, and any other costs incurred in administering this  
48 Article, including promotion, marketing, and branding of North Carolina grown and processed  
49 hemp."

50 **SECTION 2.(a)** G.S. 90-87 reads as rewritten:

51 **"§ 90-87. Definitions.**

1 As used in this Article:

2 ...

3 (13a) "Hemp" means the plant *Cannabis sativa* (L.) and any part of that plant,  
4 including the seeds thereof and all derivatives, extracts, cannabinoids,  
5 isomers, acids, salts, and salts of isomers, whether growing or not, within a  
6 delta-9 THC concentration of three-tenths percent (0.3%) on a dry weight  
7 basis.

8 (13b) "Hemp extract" means an extract from hemp, or a mixture or preparation  
9 containing hemp plant material or compounds, within a delta-9 THC  
10 concentration of three-tenths percent (0.3%) on a dry weight basis.

11 (13c) "Hemp product" means any product within a delta-9 THC concentration of  
12 three-tenths percent (0.3%) on a dry weight basis derived from, or made by,  
13 processing hemp plants or plant parts, that are prepared in a form available for  
14 commercial sale, including, but not limited to, cosmetics, personal care  
15 products, food intended for animal or human consumption as approved by the  
16 United States Food and Drug Administration or the United States Department  
17 of Agriculture, cloth, cordage, fiber, fuel, paint, paper, particleboard, plastics,  
18 and any product containing one or more hemp-derived cannabinoids, such as  
19 cannabidiol. "Hemp product" does not include smokable hemp.

20 ...

21 (16) "Marijuana" means all parts of the plant of the genus *Cannabis*, whether  
22 growing or not; the seeds thereof; the resin extracted from any part of such  
23 plant; and every compound, manufacture, salt, derivative, mixture, or  
24 preparation of such plant, its seeds or resin, but shall not include the mature  
25 stalks of such plant, fiber produced from such stalks, oil, or cake made from  
26 the seeds of such plant, any other compound, manufacture, salt, derivative,  
27 mixture, or preparation of such mature stalks (except the resin extracted  
28 therefrom), fiber, oil, or cake, or the sterilized seed of such plant which is  
29 incapable of germination. The term "marijuana" also includes smokable hemp.  
30 The term does not include industrial hemp as defined in G.S. 106-568.51,  
31 when the industrial hemp is produced and used in compliance with rules  
32 issued by the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission. hemp, when in the  
33 possession, custody, or control of a person who holds a license permitting that  
34 person to cultivate or handle hemp; hemp products; or hemp extracts. A  
35 licensed cultivator or licensed handler may possess raw hemp plant material  
36 for the purpose of (i) selling the raw hemp plant material to a licensed handler  
37 or a person who may legally receive the raw hemp plant material in that  
38 person's jurisdiction or (ii) processing the raw hemp plant material into a hemp  
39 product or hemp extract.

40 ...

41 (25a) "Smokable hemp" means harvested raw or dried hemp plant material, in a  
42 form intended to allow THC to be introduced into the human body by  
43 inhalation of smoke, including hemp buds or hemp flowers, hemp cigars, and  
44 hemp cigarettes. "Smokable hemp" does not include hemp extracts.

45 ...."

46 **SECTION 2.(b)** G.S. 90-94 reads as rewritten:

47 **"§ 90-94. Schedule VI controlled substances.**

48 This schedule includes the controlled substances listed or to be listed by whatever official  
49 name, common or usual name, chemical name, or trade name designated. In determining that  
50 such substance comes within this schedule, the Commission shall find: no currently accepted  
51 medical use in the United States, or a relatively low potential for abuse in terms of risk to public

1 health and potential to produce psychic or physiological dependence liability based upon present  
2 medical knowledge, or a need for further and continuing study to develop scientific evidence of  
3 its pharmacological effects.

4 The following controlled substances are included in this schedule:

5 (1) Marijuana.

6 (2) ~~Tetrahydrocannabinols~~; Tetrahydrocannabinols, except for  
7 tetrahydrocannabinols in hemp products or hemp extracts.

8 (3) Repealed by Session Laws 2017-115, s. 8, effective December 1, 2017, and  
9 applicable to offenses committed on or after that date."

10 **SECTION 2.(c)** Article 5 of Chapter 90 of the General Statutes is amended by adding  
11 a new section to read:

12 **"§ 90-94.5. Immunity for hemp licensees.**

13 (a) Immunity. – Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, an individual who  
14 possesses a valid hemp license from the North Carolina Hemp Commission shall not be  
15 prosecuted for a violation of G.S. 90-95(a)(1) or (a)(3) with respect to a commodity cultivated  
16 by the licensee containing a THC level that exceeds the federally defined THC level for hemp,  
17 as defined by G.S. 106-568.51, unless the licensee committed the violation willfully, knowingly,  
18 or intentionally.

19 (b) Penalty. – No criminal penalty for a violation of G.S. 90-95(a)(1) or (a)(3) shall attach  
20 for a licensee negligently producing *Cannabis sativa* (L.) with more than the federally defined  
21 THC level for hemp. The penalty for a licensee's negligent violation shall be determined by the  
22 North Carolina Hemp Commission pursuant to G.S. 106-568.55B."

23 **SECTION 3.(a)** G.S. 105-113.106 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

24 "(3a) Hemp. – Any of the following:

25 a. Hemp as defined in G.S. 106-568.51(5b).

26 b. Hemp extracts as defined in G.S. 106-568.51(5c).

27 c. Hemp products as defined in G.S. 106-568.51(6)."

28 **SECTION 3.(b)** G.S. 105-113.107A reads as rewritten:

29 **"§ 105-113.107A. Exemptions.**

30 (a) Authorized Possession. – The tax levied in this Article does not apply to a substance  
31 in the possession of a dealer who is authorized by law to possess the substance. This exemption  
32 applies only during the time the dealer's possession of the substance is authorized by law.

33 (b) Certain Marijuana Parts. – The tax levied in this Article does not apply to the  
34 following marijuana:

35 (1) Harvested mature marijuana stalks when separated from and not mixed with  
36 any other parts of the marijuana plant.

37 (2) Fiber or any other product of marijuana stalks described in subdivision (1) of  
38 this subsection, except resin extracted from the stalks.

39 (3) Marijuana seeds that have been sterilized and are incapable of germination.

40 (4) Roots of the marijuana plant.

41 (c) Hemp. – The tax levied in this Article shall not apply to hemp when lawfully  
42 possessed in accordance with Article 50E of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes."

43 **SECTION 4.(a)** The Commissioner of Agriculture, in consultation with the  
44 Governor and Attorney General, shall submit to the Secretary of the United States Department  
45 of Agriculture a State plan for the regulation of hemp production, which shall include:

46 (1) A procedure to maintain relevant information regarding land on which hemp  
47 is produced in the State, including a legal description of the land. The  
48 procedure shall ensure the information is maintained for a period of not less  
49 than three calendar years.

50 (2) A procedure for testing, using post-decarboxylation or other similarly reliable  
51 methods, delta-9 THC concentration levels of hemp produced in the State.

- 1 (3) A procedure for the effective disposal of products that are produced in  
2 violation of Article 50E of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes or any rule  
3 adopted by the North Carolina Hemp Commission.
- 4 (4) A procedure to comply with the enforcement process set forth in  
5 G.S. 106-568.64.
- 6 (5) A procedure for conducting annual inspections of, at a minimum, a random  
7 sample of hemp producers to verify that hemp is not produced in violation of  
8 this Article or rules adopted by the North Carolina Hemp Commission.
- 9 (6) A procedure for submitting (i) contact information for each hemp producer in  
10 the State, (ii) a legal description of the land on which hemp is produced, and  
11 (iii) the licensing status of each hemp producer in the State to the Secretary of  
12 the United States Department of Agriculture not more than 30 days after the  
13 date on which the information is received.

14 **SECTION 4.(b)** If the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture  
15 disapproves the State plan submitted pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Commissioner  
16 of Agriculture, in consultation with the Governor and Attorney General, shall submit to the  
17 Secretary an amended State plan.

18 **SECTION 5.** Section 4 of S.L. 2015-299 reads as rewritten:

19 **"SECTION 4.** Section 2 of this act becomes effective on the first day of the month following  
20 the adoption of permanent rules pursuant to Section 3 of this act and applies to acts involving the  
21 production, possession, or use of industrial hemp occurring on or after that date. The remainder  
22 of this act is effective when it becomes law. This act shall expire on ~~June 30 of the fiscal year in~~  
23 ~~which the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission adopts and submits to the Governor and~~  
24 ~~to the Revisor of Statutes a resolution that a State pilot program allowing farmers to lawfully~~  
25 ~~grow industrial hemp is no longer necessary because (i) the United States Congress has enacted~~  
26 ~~legislation that removes industrial hemp from the federal Controlled Substances Act and (ii) the~~  
27 ~~legislation has taken effect, the later of December 1, 2019, or 30 days after the effective date of~~  
28 regulations adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture pursuant to Section 297D of  
29 the Agriculture Marketing Act of 1946, as amended by the Agriculture Improvement Act of  
30 2018."

31 **SECTION 6.** The North Carolina Hemp Commission shall adopt temporary rules to  
32 implement Section 1 of this act. The temporary rules shall remain in effect until permanent rules  
33 that replace the temporary rules become effective.

34 **SECTION 6.1.** Article 50E of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is repealed.

35 **SECTION 7.** Section 1 of this act becomes effective on the later of the following  
36 dates:

- 37 (1) December 1, 2019.
- 38 (2) Thirty days after the effective date of regulations adopted by the United States  
39 Department of Agriculture pursuant to Section 297D of the Agriculture  
40 Marketing Act of 1946, as amended by the Agriculture Improvement Act of  
41 2018.

42 G.S. 106-568.57, as amended by Section 1 of this act, becomes effective December  
43 1, 2019, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date. Section 2 of this act becomes  
44 effective December 1, 2019, and applies to offenses committed on or after that date. Section 3 of  
45 this act is effective for taxes imposed for taxable years beginning on or after July 1, 2019, and  
46 expires July 1, 2021. Sections 4, 5, 6, and 7 of this act are effective when they become law.  
47 Section 6.1 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2021.

48  
49 **TRANSFER HEMP PROGRAM AUTHORITY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF**  
50 **AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES ON JULY 1, 2021**



- 1           (10) "Hemp extract" means an extract from hemp, or a mixture or preparation  
2 containing hemp plant material or compounds, within the federally defined  
3 THC level for hemp.
- 4           (11) "Hemp product" means any product within the federally defined THC level  
5 for hemp derived from, or made by, processing hemp plants or plant parts, that  
6 are prepared in a form available for commercial sale, including, but not limited  
7 to, cosmetics, personal care products, food intended for animal or human  
8 consumption as approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration  
9 or the United States Department of Agriculture, cloth, cordage, fiber, fuel,  
10 paint, paper, particleboard, plastics, and any product containing one or more  
11 hemp-derived cannabinoids, such as cannabidiol. "Hemp product" does not  
12 include smokable hemp.
- 13           (12) "Licensee" means an individual or business entity possessing a license issued  
14 by the Department under the authority of this Article to cultivate or handle  
15 hemp.
- 16           (13) "Processing" means converting an agricultural commodity into a marketable  
17 form.
- 18           (14) "Smokable hemp" means a material, compound, mixture, or preparation that  
19 allows THC to be introduced into the human body by inhalation of smoke.  
20 "Smokable hemp" includes whole or ground raw hemp plant material,  
21 including hemp buds and hemp flowers; hemp cigars; and hemp cigarettes.
- 22           (15) "Tetrahydrocannabinol" or "THC" means any of the chemical analogues  
23 belonging to the Cannabinoid subgroup Tetrahydrocannabinol. These  
24 compounds include the chemical equivalents contained in the plant *Cannabis*  
25 *sativa* (L.), or in the resinous extractive compounds, salts, or derivatives of  
26 the plant or chemicals and their isomers with similar chemical structure and  
27 pharmacological activity.

28 **"§ 106-568.62. Powers and duties of the Department.**

29 The Department shall have the following powers and duties:

- 30           (1) To issue licenses allowing a person, firm, or corporation to cultivate or handle  
31 hemp, upon proper application as the Commissioner may specify, and in  
32 accordance with G.S. 106-568.63. The Commissioner may delegate approval  
33 of license applications to Department staff but the Commissioner shall hear  
34 all appeals of denial of a license.
- 35           (2) To receive gifts, grants, federal funds, and any other funds both public and  
36 private needed to support the North Carolina Hemp Program.
- 37           (3) To adopt rules necessary to carry out the purposes of this Article, which shall  
38 include, but are not limited to, rules to do all of the following:
- 39           a. Prescribe sampling and testing procedures to ensure that hemp  
40 cultivated or handled under the authority of this Article does not  
41 exceed the federally defined THC level for hemp.
- 42           b. Set and collect a schedule of nonrefundable fees for administering the  
43 North Carolina Hemp Program.

44 **"§ 106-568.63. Qualification of licensees.**

45           (a) No person shall cultivate or handle hemp in this State unless the person holds a hemp  
46 license issued by the Department.

47           (b) In order to obtain a license to cultivate hemp pursuant to this Article, a person must  
48 be a qualifying farmer pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13E(a) or a conditional qualifying farmer  
49 pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13E(b).

50           (c) A person granted a license to cultivate hemp pursuant to this Article shall provide to  
51 the Department prior to issuance of the license:

1           (1)    The legal description and global positioning coordinates sufficient for locating  
2           the fields or greenhouses to be used to cultivate hemp.

3           (2)    Written consent allowing representatives of the Department, the State Bureau  
4           of Investigation, and the chief law enforcement officer of the unit or units of  
5           local government where the farm is located to enter all premises where hemp  
6           is cultivated or stored for the purpose of conducting physical inspections or  
7           ensuring compliance with the requirements of this Article and rules adopted  
8           by the Department.

9           (d)    Any person convicted of a felony relating to a controlled substance under State or  
10          federal law shall be ineligible to obtain any hemp license for the 10-year period following the  
11          date of the conviction.

12          (e)    Any person who materially falsifies any information contained in an application for  
13          a hemp license shall be ineligible to obtain a hemp license.

14          (f)    A license issued by the Commission shall afford to the spouse of a licensee all rights  
15          and privileges granted to the licensee, provided the licensee's spouse meets all other  
16          qualifications for licensure as provided in this section.

17          (g)    A license issued by the Commission shall be transferrable to a member of the  
18          licensee's immediate family upon the death or incapacity of the licensee, provided the transferee  
19          meets all other qualifications for licensure as provided in this section. In the event of a licensee's  
20          death, the Commission shall modify the license to reflect the transfer of the license to the  
21          transferee without requiring an application for a new license. However, the transferee shall  
22          submit to and pay for an annual criminal background check as required by subsection (c) of this  
23          section if the Commission does not have a current criminal history on record for the transferee.

24          (h)    A license issued by the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Commission shall be valid  
25          for the term of the license. A person who holds a license issued by the North Carolina Industrial  
26          Hemp Commission who wishes to modify the conditions of the license shall be required to apply  
27          for a new license from the Department.

28          **"§ 106-568.64. Bonding requirement for hemp handlers.**

29          The Department shall not issue a license to handle hemp to any person who processes hemp  
30          purchased from a cultivator until the person has furnished the Commissioner of Agriculture a  
31          bond satisfactory to the Commissioner in an amount of not less than two hundred fifty thousand  
32          dollars (\$250,000). No bond shall be required for a handler who processes only hemp grown by  
33          the handler. The Commissioner may require a new bond or may require the amount of any bond  
34          to be increased if the Commissioner finds it necessary for the protection of the cultivator. The  
35          bond shall be payable to the State and shall be conditioned upon the fulfilling of all financial  
36          obligations incurred by the handler with all hemp cultivators with whom the handler contracts.  
37          Any cultivator alleging any injury by the fraud, deceit, willful injury, or failure to comply with  
38          the terms of any written contract by a handler may bring suit on the bond against the principal  
39          and the principal's surety in any court of competent jurisdiction and may recover the damages  
40          found to be caused by such acts complained of.

41          **"§ 106-568.65. Corrective action plans authorized.**

42          (a)    The Department shall require any person who is required to obtain a hemp license  
43          issued by the Department to comply with a corrective action plan if the Commissioner determines  
44          that the person has negligently violated any provision of this Article or any rule adopted by the  
45          Department, including by negligently failing to obtain a proper license or other required  
46          authorization from the Department, negligently failing to provide an accurate legal description  
47          of land on which the person produces hemp, or negligently producing *Cannabis sativa* (L.) with  
48          more than the federally defined THC level for hemp.

49          (b)    A corrective action plan required by the Department shall include at least the date by  
50          which the person shall correct the violation and a requirement that the person shall periodically

1 report to the Department on the person's compliance with this Article and all rules adopted by  
2 the Department for a period of not less than the next two calendar years.

3 (c) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the penalty for a negligent violation of  
4 any provision of this Article or any rule adopted by the Department shall be compliance with a  
5 corrective action plan pursuant to subsection (b) of this section. However, a person who  
6 negligently violates this Article or any rule adopted by the Department three times in a five-year  
7 period shall be ineligible to obtain a hemp license for a period of five years beginning on the date  
8 of the third violation and shall be subject to criminal and civil penalties for additional violations  
9 during that period.

10 (d) If the Commissioner determines that a person has violated this Article or any rule  
11 adopted by the Department recklessly, willfully, knowingly, or intentionally, the Department  
12 shall immediately report the person to the Attorney General and the appropriate law enforcement  
13 authority.

14 **"§ 106-568.66. Civil penalties.**

15 (a) The Commissioner may assess a civil penalty of not more than two thousand five  
16 hundred dollars (\$2,500) per violation against any person who:

17 (1) Violates any provision of this Article or a rule adopted by the Commission, or  
18 conditions of any license, permit, or order issued by the Commission.

19 (2) Manufactures, distributes, dispenses, delivers, purchases, aids, abets,  
20 attempts, or conspires to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, purchase,  
21 or possesses with the intent to manufacture, distribute, dispense, deliver, or  
22 purchase marijuana on property used for hemp production, or in a manner  
23 intended to disguise the marijuana due to its proximity to hemp. This penalty  
24 may be imposed in addition to any other penalties provided by law.

25 (3) Provides the Department with false or misleading information in relation to a  
26 license application or renewal, inspection, or investigation authorized by this  
27 Article.

28 (4) Tamper with or adulterates a hemp crop lawfully planted pursuant to this  
29 Article.

30 (b) The Commissioner shall remit the clear proceeds of civil penalties assessed pursuant  
31 to this section to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

32 **"§ 106-568.67. Criminal penalties.**

33 (a) Any person who willfully, knowingly, or intentionally manufactures, distributes,  
34 dispenses, delivers, purchases, aids, abets, attempts, or conspires to manufacture, distribute,  
35 dispense, deliver, purchase, or possesses with the intent to manufacture, distribute, dispense,  
36 deliver, or purchase marijuana on property used for hemp production, or in a manner intended to  
37 disguise the marijuana due to its proximity to hemp, shall be guilty of a Class I felony. This  
38 penalty may be imposed in addition to any other penalties provided by law.

39 (b) Any person who willfully, knowingly, or intentionally provides the Department with  
40 false or misleading information in relation to a license application or renewal, inspection, or  
41 investigation authorized by this Article shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

42 (c) Any person who willfully, knowingly, or intentionally tampers with or adulterates a  
43 hemp crop lawfully planted pursuant to this Article shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor.

44 (d) Any person who sells hemp, hemp products, or hemp extracts to a person less than 18  
45 years old shall be deemed guilty of a Class 2 misdemeanor.

46 **"§ 106-568.68. Hemp products.**

47 (a) Except as provided in G.S. 106-139(g), no license shall be required to possess, handle,  
48 transport, or sell hemp products or hemp extracts.

49 (b) Hemp products may be legally transported to other states and exported to foreign  
50 nations, consistent with the laws of the receiving jurisdiction.

51 **"§ 106-568.69. North Carolina Hemp Program Fund.**

1       (a) The North Carolina Hemp Program Fund is established as a special fund in the  
2 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Fund shall consist of amounts received  
3 from appropriations and any other proceeds from gifts, grants, federal funds, application fees,  
4 license fees, and any other funds, both public and private, made available for purposes of this  
5 Article. Any interest received and accruing from the Fund shall be paid into the State's General  
6 Fund.

7       (b) The Fund shall be used by the Department for the costs of personnel, program  
8 administration, testing, and any other costs incurred in administering this Article, including  
9 promotion, marketing, and branding of North Carolina grown and processed hemp."

10       **SECTION 8.(b)** The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall have  
11 the authority to enforce the rules adopted by the North Carolina Hemp Commission to implement  
12 Section 1 of this act until the Department amends or repeals the rules, pursuant to  
13 G.S. 150B-21.7.

14       **SECTION 9.** G.S. 90-94.5(b), as enacted by Section 2(c) of this act, reads as  
15 rewritten:

16       "(b) Penalty. – No criminal penalty for a violation of G.S. 90-95(a)(1) or (a)(3) shall attach  
17 for a licensee negligently producing *Cannabis sativa* (L.) with more than the federally defined  
18 THC level for hemp. The penalty for a licensee's negligent violation shall be determined by the  
19 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services pursuant to ~~G.S. 106-568.55B-~~  
20 G.S. 106-568.65."

21       **SECTION 10.(a)** G.S. 105-113.106 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

22       "(3a) Hemp. – Any of the following:

23           a. Hemp as defined in G.S. 106-568.61(9).

24           b. Hemp extracts as defined in G.S. 106-568.61(10).

25           c. Hemp products as defined in G.S. 106-568.61(11)."

26       **SECTION 10.(b)** G.S. 105-113.107A reads as rewritten:

27       "**§ 105-113.107A. Exemptions.**

28       (a) Authorized Possession. – The tax levied in this Article does not apply to a substance  
29 in the possession of a dealer who is authorized by law to possess the substance. This exemption  
30 applies only during the time the dealer's possession of the substance is authorized by law.

31       (b) Certain Marijuana Parts. – The tax levied in this Article does not apply to the  
32 following marijuana:

33           (1) Harvested mature marijuana stalks when separated from and not mixed with  
34 any other parts of the marijuana plant.

35           (2) Fiber or any other product of marijuana stalks described in subdivision (1) of  
36 this subsection, except resin extracted from the stalks.

37           (3) Marijuana seeds that have been sterilized and are incapable of germination.

38           (4) Roots of the marijuana plant.

39       (c) Hemp. – The tax levied in this Article shall not apply to hemp when lawfully  
40 possessed in accordance with Article 50F of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes."

41       **SECTION 11.** Sections 8 through 11 of this act become effective July 1, 2021.

42  
43 **DIRECT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES TO**  
44 **REGULATE CANNABINOID-RELATED COMPOUNDS**

45       **SECTION 12.(a)** G.S. 106-121 reads as rewritten:

46       "**§ 106-121. Definitions and general consideration.**

47       For the purpose of this Article:

48           (1) The term "advertisement" means all representations disseminated in any  
49 manner or by any means, other than by labeling, for the purposes of inducing,  
50 or which are likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of food,  
51 drugs, devices or cosmetics.

1           (1a) The term "cannabinoid-related compounds" means chemical compounds and  
 2           constituents found within the hemp plant that are biologically active and are  
 3           classified in subgroups such as cannabinoids, terpenes, flavonoids, and all  
 4           other related compounds derived from hemp. "Cannabinoid-related  
 5           compounds" shall not include smokable hemp, as defined in  
 6           G.S. 106-568.51(7e).

7           ~~(1a)~~(1b) The term "color" includes black, white, and intermediate grays.

8           ~~(1b)~~(1c) The term "color additive" means a material which:

9           ...."

10           **SECTION 12.(b)** G.S. 106-139 is amended by adding two new subsections to read:

11           "(f) The Board may adopt rules to establish current good manufacturing practices in  
 12           manufacturing, packaging, labeling, or holding operations for cannabinoid-related compounds  
 13           derived from hemp, as defined in G.S. 106-568.51(5b). The manufacture, sale, delivery, holding,  
 14           or offering for sale of any cannabinoid-related compounds that does not comply with rules  
 15           adopted by the Board shall be prohibited under this Article and shall also be subject to  
 16           G.S. 106-123 and G.S. 106-125.

17           (g) No person, including individuals, partnerships, firms, associations, or corporations,  
 18           that are subject to rules adopted by the Board shall engage in manufacturing, packaging, labeling,  
 19           processing, holding, or sale of cannabinoid-related compounds without a valid license issued by  
 20           the Commissioner. Application for a license shall be made to the Commissioner on forms  
 21           provided by the Department. The application shall set forth the name and address of the applicant,  
 22           the applicant's principal place of business, and such other information as the Commissioner may  
 23           require. The Board shall develop a schedule of license fees, including fees for out-of-state and  
 24           online retailers. Fees collected pursuant to this subsection shall be used by the Department to  
 25           cover all reasonable costs of administering the licensing program. Failure to comply with this  
 26           Article or rules adopted thereunder shall be cause for suspension or revocation of a license."

27           **SECTION 12.(c)** G.S. 106-121 reads as rewritten:

28           "**§ 106-121. Definitions and general consideration.**

29           For the purpose of this Article:

30           (1) The term "advertisement" means all representations disseminated in any  
 31           manner or by any means, other than by labeling, for the purposes of inducing,  
 32           or which are likely to induce, directly or indirectly, the purchase of food,  
 33           drugs, devices or cosmetics.

34           (1a) The term "cannabinoid-related compounds" means chemical compounds and  
 35           constituents found within the hemp plant that are biologically active and are  
 36           classified in subgroups such as cannabinoids, terpenes, flavonoids, and all  
 37           other related compounds derived from hemp. "Cannabinoid-related  
 38           compounds" shall not include smokable hemp, as defined in  
 39           G.S. 106-568.61(14).

40           ~~(1a)~~(1b) The term "color" includes black, white, and intermediate grays.

41           ~~(1b)~~(1c) The term "color additive" means a material which:

42           ...."

43           **SECTION 12.(d)** G.S. 106-139 is amended by adding two new subsections to read:

44           "(f) The Board may adopt rules to establish current good manufacturing practices in  
 45           manufacturing, packaging, labeling, or holding operations for cannabinoid-related compounds  
 46           derived from hemp, as defined in G.S. 106-568.61(9). The manufacture, sale, delivery, holding,  
 47           or offering for sale of any cannabinoid-related compounds that does not comply with rules  
 48           adopted by the Board shall be prohibited under this Article and shall also be subject to  
 49           G.S. 106-123 and G.S. 106-125.

50           (g) No person, including individuals, partnerships, firms, associations, or corporations,  
 51           that are subject to rules adopted by the Board shall engage in manufacturing, packaging, labeling,

1 processing, holding, or sale of cannabinoid-related compounds without a valid license issued by  
2 the Commissioner. Application for a license shall be made to the Commissioner on forms  
3 provided by the Department. The application shall set forth the name and address of the applicant,  
4 the applicant's principal place of business, and such other information as the Commissioner may  
5 require. The Board shall develop a schedule of license fees, including fees for out-of-state and  
6 online retailers. Fees collected pursuant to this subsection shall be used by the Department to  
7 cover all reasonable costs of administering the licensing program. Failure to comply with this  
8 Article or rules adopted thereunder shall be cause for suspension or revocation of a license."

9 **SECTION 12.(e)** The Board of Agriculture shall adopt temporary rules to implement  
10 this section no later than November 1, 2019. The temporary rules shall remain in effect until  
11 permanent rules that replace the temporary rules become effective.

12 **SECTION 12.(f)** Subsection (a) of this section is effective when it becomes law, and  
13 expires July 1, 2021. Subsection (b) of this section is effective January 1, 2020, and expires July  
14 1, 2021. Subsections (c) and (d) of this section are effective July 1, 2021. The remainder of this  
15 section is effective when it becomes law.

## 16 17 **ALLOW DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES TO** 18 **MARKET HEMP**

19 **SECTION 13.(a)** G.S. 106-550 reads as rewritten:

20 **"§ 106-550. Policy as to promotion of use of, and markets for, farm products; official**  
21 **marketing campaign.**

22 (a) It is declared to be in the interest of the public welfare that the North Carolina farmers  
23 who are producers of livestock, poultry, seafood, field crops and other agricultural products,  
24 including cattle, sheep, broilers, turkeys, commercial eggs, peanuts, cotton, hemp, potatoes,  
25 ~~sweet potatoes, sweetpotatoes~~, peaches, apples, berries, vegetables and other fruits of all kinds,  
26 as well as bulbs and flowers and other agricultural products having a domestic or foreign market,  
27 shall be permitted and encouraged to act jointly and in cooperation with growers, handlers,  
28 dealers and processors of such products in promoting and stimulating, by advertising and other  
29 methods, the increased production, use and sale, domestic and foreign, of any and all of such  
30 agricultural commodities. The provisions of this Article, however, shall not include the  
31 agricultural products of tobacco, strawberries, strawberry plants, porcine animals, or equines,  
32 with respect to which separate provisions have been made.

33 (b) The "Got to be NC" marketing campaign of the Department of Agriculture and  
34 Consumer Services shall be the official agricultural marketing campaign for the State."

35 **SECTION 13.(b)** Article 50 of Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is amended by  
36 adding a new section to read:

37 **"§ 106-554.1. Application to North Carolina Hemp Commission for authorization of hemp**  
38 **referendum.**

39 Notwithstanding G.S. 106-554, the North Carolina Hemp Commission shall be the entity that  
40 provides certification and approval for the purpose of conducting a referendum among the  
41 growers or producers of hemp. The North Carolina Hemp Commission shall perform the same  
42 function as the Board of Agriculture in all other respects for cultivators of hemp for the purposes  
43 of this Article."

44 **SECTION 13.(c)** This section is effective when it becomes law. Subsection (b) of  
45 this section expires July 1, 2021.

## 46 47 **SMOKABLE HEMP STUDY**

48 **SECTION 14.(a)** At least quarterly, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
49 Services, the North Carolina Industrial Hemp Association, the North Carolina Hemp  
50 Commission, the State Bureau of Investigation, and other law enforcement agencies and district  
51 attorneys as requested by the State Bureau of Investigation, shall meet to discuss best practices

1 for the hemp industry. The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services shall report any  
2 findings and legislative recommendations from these meetings to the Agriculture and Forestry  
3 Awareness Study Commission within 30 days of each meeting.

4 **SECTION 14.(b)** The State Bureau of Investigation shall notify the Agriculture and  
5 Forestry Awareness Study Commission in writing when the United States Drug Enforcement  
6 Agency has adopted an approved immediate testing method to determine whether hemp is within  
7 the federally defined THC level for hemp. Upon the receipt of notification from the State Bureau  
8 of Investigation, the Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission shall study whether  
9 the prohibition on the sale of smokable hemp should be repealed and make legislative  
10 recommendations.

11 **SECTION 14.(c)** This section is effective when it becomes law.

12  
13 **REQUIRE UTILITY COMPANIES TO DISPOSE OF CERTAIN UNUSED**  
14 **EASEMENTS UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE**  
15 **AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY AWARENESS STUDY COMMISSION**

16 **SECTION 15.(a)** Article 9 of Chapter 62 of the General Statutes is amended by  
17 adding a new section to read:

18 **§ 62-193. Disposition of certain unused easements.**

19 (a) The underlying fee owner of land encumbered by any easement acquired by a utility  
20 company, whether acquired by purchase or by condemnation, on which construction has not been  
21 commenced by the utility company for the purpose for which the easement was acquired within  
22 20 years of the date of acquisition, may file a complaint with the Commission for an order  
23 requiring the utility company to terminate the easement in exchange for payment by the  
24 underlying fee owner of the current fair market value of the easement.

25 (b) Upon receipt of the complaint, the Commission shall serve a copy of the complaint  
26 on each utility company named in the complaint, together with an order directing that the utility  
27 company file an answer to the complaint within 90 days after service.

28 (c) If the utility company agrees to terminate the easement, the utility company shall  
29 submit to the Commission, within the time allowed for answer, an original plus four copies of a  
30 statement of the utility company's agreement to terminate the easement.

31 (d) If the utility company does not agree that the easement should be terminated, the  
32 utility company may request a determination from the Commission as to whether the easement  
33 is necessary or advisable for the utility company's long-range needs for the provision of utilities  
34 to serve its service area, and whether termination of the easement would be contrary to the  
35 interests of the using and consuming public. The Commission may conduct a hearing on the  
36 matter, which shall be conducted in accordance with Article 4 of this Chapter. Either party may  
37 appeal the Commission's decision in accordance with Article 5 of this Chapter. The burden of  
38 proof shall be on the utility company to show that the easement is necessary or advisable for the  
39 utility company's long-range needs for the provision of utilities to serve its service area and that  
40 termination of the easement would be contrary to the interests of the using and consuming public.

41 (e) If the underlying fee owner and the utility company cannot reach a mutually agreed  
42 upon fair market value of the easement, whether terminated voluntarily or by order of the  
43 Commission, the Commission shall make a request to the clerk of superior court in the county  
44 where the easement is located for the appointment of commissioners to determine the fair market  
45 value of the easement in accordance with the process set forth in G.S. 40A-48.

46 (f) If the Commission decides that the easement should not be terminated, the underlying  
47 fee owner may not file a complaint with the Commission under this section regarding the same  
48 easement for a period of five years from the date of the decision.

49 (g) For purposes of this section, the term "utility company" means a public utility as  
50 defined in G.S. 62-3(23), a municipality providing utility services, an authority organized under  
51 the North Carolina Water and Sewer Authorities Act, a sanitary district, a metropolitan water

1 district, a metropolitan sewerage district, a metropolitan water and sewerage district, a county  
2 water and sewer district, or an electric or telephone membership corporation."

3 **SECTION 15.(b)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2019, and applies to  
4 easements acquired on or after that date.

#### 6 **RIGHT-OF-WAY FOR LEFT-TURNING FARM EQUIPMENT**

7 **SECTION 16.(a)** G.S. 20-150 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

8 "(e1) The driver of a vehicle shall not overtake and pass self-propelled farm equipment  
9 proceeding in the same direction when the farm equipment is (i) making a left turn or (ii)  
10 signaling that it intends to make a left turn."

11 **SECTION 16.(b)** This section becomes effective December 1, 2019, and applies to  
12 offenses committed on or after that date.

#### 14 **EXPAND AGRICULTURAL OUTDOOR ADVERTISING**

15 **SECTION 17.** G.S. 136-129 reads as rewritten:

##### 16 **"§ 136-129. Limitations of outdoor advertising devices.**

17 No outdoor advertising shall be erected or maintained within 660 feet of the nearest edge of  
18 the right-of-way of the interstate or primary highway systems in this State so as to be visible from  
19 the main-traveled way thereof after the effective date of this Article as determined by  
20 G.S. 136-140, except the following:

21 ...

22 (2a) Outdoor advertising ~~which advertises the sale of any fruit or vegetable crop~~  
23 ~~by the grower at a roadside stand or by having the purchaser pick the crop on~~  
24 ~~the property on which the crop is grown provided: (i) to promote a bona fide~~  
25 ~~farm that is exempt from zoning regulations pursuant to G.S. 153-340(b),~~  
26 ~~provided the sign is no more than two-three feet long on any side; (ii) side and~~  
27 ~~the sign is located on property owned or leased by the grower where the crop~~  
28 ~~is grown; (iii) the grower is also the seller; and (iv) the sign is kept in place by~~  
29 ~~the grower for no more than 30 days.~~ any bona fide farm property owned or  
30 leased by the owner or lessee of the bona fide farm.

31 ...."

#### 33 **AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY AWARENESS STUDY COMMISSION COCHAIR** 34 **HOLDOVER**

35 **SECTION 18.** G.S. 120-150 reads as rewritten:

##### 36 **"§ 120-150. Creation; appointment of members.**

37 (a) There is created an Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission. Members  
38 of the Commission shall be citizens of North Carolina who are interested in the vitality of the  
39 agriculture and forestry sectors of the State's economy. Members shall be as follows:

- 40 (1) Three appointed by the Governor.
- 41 (2) Three appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.
- 42 (3) Three appointed by the Speaker of the House.
- 43 (4) The chairs of the House Agriculture Committee.
- 44 (5) The chairs of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and Natural  
45 Resources.
- 46 (6) The Commissioner of Agriculture or the Commissioner's designee.
- 47 (7) A member of the Board of Agriculture designated by the chair of the Board of  
48 Agriculture.
- 49 (8) The President of the North Carolina Farm Bureau Federation, Inc., or the  
50 President's designee.
- 51 (9) The President of the North Carolina State Grange or the President's designee.

1 (10) The Secretary of Environmental Quality or the Secretary's designee.

2 (11) The President of the North Carolina Forestry Association, Inc., or the  
3 President's designee.

4 (b) Members shall be appointed for two-year terms beginning October 1 of each  
5 odd-numbered year. The Chairs of the House Agriculture Committee and the Chairs of the Senate  
6 Committee on Agriculture, Environment, and Natural Resources shall serve as cochairs. The  
7 President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives may each  
8 appoint an additional member of the Senate and House, respectively, to serve as cochair. If  
9 appointed, these cochairs shall be voting members of the Commission. A quorum of the  
10 Commission is nine members.

11 (c) Cochairs' terms on the Commission are for two years and begin on the convening of  
12 the General Assembly in each odd-numbered year. Except as otherwise provided in this  
13 subsection, a cochair of the Commission shall continue to serve for so long as the cochair remains  
14 a member of the General Assembly and no successor has been appointed. A cochair of the  
15 Commission who does not seek reelection or is not reelected to the General Assembly may  
16 complete a term of service on the Commission until the day on which a new General Assembly  
17 convenes. A member of the Commission who resigns or is removed from service in the General  
18 Assembly shall be deemed to have resigned or been removed from service on the Commission."  
19

20 **ADD HUNTING, FISHING, SHOOTING SPORTS, AND EQUESTRIAN ACTIVITIES**  
21 **TO THE DEFINITION OF AGRITOURISM, AND LIMIT REGULATION OF**  
22 **CATERING BY BONA FIDE FARMS**

23 **SECTION 20.(a)** G.S. 99E-30 reads as rewritten:

24 **"§ 99E-30. Definitions.**

25 As used in this Article, the following terms mean:

26 (1) Agritourism activity. – Any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows  
27 members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational  
28 purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching,  
29 historic, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, hunting, fishing, shooting  
30 sports, equestrian activities, or natural activities and attractions. An activity is  
31 an agritourism activity whether or not the participant paid to participate in the  
32 activity. For purposes of this section, properties used for shooting sports shall  
33 comply with guidelines for design and site evaluation as established by the  
34 Wildlife Resources Commission. "Agritourism activity" includes an activity  
35 involving any animal exhibition at an agricultural fair licensed by the  
36 Commissioner of Agriculture pursuant to G.S. 106-520.3.

37 (2) Agritourism professional. – Any person who is engaged in the business of  
38 providing one or more agritourism activities, whether or not for compensation.

39 (3) Inherent risks of agritourism activity. – Those dangers or conditions that are  
40 an integral part of an agritourism activity including certain hazards, including  
41 surface and subsurface conditions, natural conditions of land, vegetation, and  
42 waters, the behavior of wild or domestic animals, and ordinary dangers of  
43 structures or equipment ordinarily used in farming and ranching operations.  
44 Inherent risks of agritourism activity also include the potential of a participant  
45 to act in a negligent manner that may contribute to injury to the participant or  
46 others, including failing to follow instructions given by the agritourism  
47 professional or failing to exercise reasonable caution while engaging in the  
48 agritourism activity.

49 (4) Participant. – Any person, other than the agritourism professional, who  
50 engages in an agritourism activity.

- 1 (5) Person. – An individual, fiduciary, firm, association, partnership, limited  
2 liability company, corporation, unit of government, or any other group acting  
3 as a unit."

4 **SECTION 20.(b)** G.S. 153A-340(b)(2a) reads as rewritten:

5 "(2a) A building or structure that is used for agritourism is a bona fide farm purpose  
6 if the building or structure is located on a property that (i) is owned by a person  
7 who holds a qualifying farmer sales tax exemption certificate from the  
8 Department of Revenue pursuant to G.S. 105-164.13E(a) or (ii) is enrolled in  
9 the present-use value program pursuant to G.S. 105-277.3. Failure to maintain  
10 the requirements of this subsection for a period of three years after the date  
11 the building or structure was originally classified as a bona fide purpose  
12 pursuant to this subdivision shall subject the building or structure to applicable  
13 zoning and development regulation ordinances adopted by a county pursuant  
14 to subsection (a) of this section in effect on the date the property no longer  
15 meets the requirements of this subsection. For purposes of this section,  
16 "agritourism" means any activity carried out on a farm or ranch that allows  
17 members of the general public, for recreational, entertainment, or educational  
18 purposes, to view or enjoy rural activities, including farming, ranching,  
19 historic, cultural, harvest-your-own activities, hunting, fishing, shooting  
20 sports, equestrian activities, or natural activities and attractions. For purposes  
21 of this section, properties used for shooting sports shall comply with  
22 guidelines for design and site evaluation as established by the Wildlife  
23 Resources Commission and local zoning and development ordinances. A vote  
24 of the full board of county commissioners shall be required to determine  
25 whether a property used for shooting sports is in compliance with the  
26 guidelines adopted by the Wildlife Resources Commission and local zoning  
27 and development ordinances. A building or structure used for agritourism  
28 includes any building or structure used for public or private events, including,  
29 but not limited to, weddings, receptions, meetings, demonstrations of farm  
30 activities, meals, and other events that are taking place on the farm because of  
31 its farm or rural setting."

32 **SECTION 20.(c)** Article 6 of Chapter 153A of the General Statutes is amended by  
33 adding a new section to read:

34 **"§ 153A-145.8. Limitations on regulation of catering by bona fide farms.**

35 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no county may require a business located on a  
36 property used for bona fide farm purposes, as provided in G.S. 153A-340(b), that provides  
37 catering services on and off-site from the bona fide farm property, to obtain a permit to provide  
38 catering services within the county. This section shall not be construed to exempt the business  
39 from any health and safety rules adopted by a local health department, the Department of Health  
40 and Human Services, or the Commission for Public Health."

41 **SECTION 20.(d)** Article 8 of Chapter 160A of the General Statutes is amended by  
42 adding a new section to read:

43 **"§ 160A-203.2. Limitations on regulation of catering by bona fide farms.**

44 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no city may require a business located on a  
45 property used for bona fide farm purposes, as provided in G.S. 153A-340(b), that provides  
46 catering services on and off-site from the bona fide farm property, to obtain a permit to provide  
47 catering services within the city. This section shall not be construed to exempt the business from  
48 any health and safety rules adopted by a local health department, the Department of Health and  
49 Human Services, or the Commission for Public Health."

1 **ENACT THE NORTH CAROLINA SWEETPOTATO ACT FOR THE PROMOTION OF**  
2 **NORTH CAROLINA SWEETPOTATOES**

3 **SECTION 21.** Chapter 106 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
4 Article to read:

5 "Article 87.

6 "North Carolina Sweetpotato Act.

7 **"§ 106-1065. Title.**

8 This Article shall be known and may be cited as the "North Carolina Sweetpotato Act of  
9 2019."

10 **"§ 106-1066. Definitions.**

11 As used in this Article:

- 12 (1) "Commissioner" means the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture  
13 and Consumer Services.  
14 (2) "Department" means the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.  
15 (3) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, or any  
16 other legal entity.  
17 (4) "North Carolina Sweetpotato Advisory Council" means the advisory council  
18 established pursuant to G.S. 106-1070.

19 **"§ 106-1067. North Carolina sweetpotato brand.**

20 Only sweetpotatoes that are grown in the State of North Carolina may be identified, classified,  
21 packaged, labeled, or otherwise designated for sale inside or outside the State as North Carolina  
22 sweetpotatoes.

23 **"§ 106-1068. Powers of Commissioner to regulate and promote North Carolina**  
24 **sweetpotatoes.**

25 (a) The Commissioner of Agriculture may take all actions necessary and appropriate to  
26 create, register, license, promote, and protect a trademark for use on or in connection with the  
27 sale or promotion of North Carolina sweetpotatoes and products containing North Carolina  
28 sweetpotatoes. The Commissioner may impose and collect a reasonable royalty or license fee per  
29 hundredweight of sweetpotatoes for the use of such trademark on products containing North  
30 Carolina sweetpotatoes or the packaging containing such sweetpotato products. The  
31 Commissioner shall determine the fee in consultation with representatives of the sweetpotato  
32 industry and the Marketing Division of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.  
33 The Commissioner shall remit all royalties and license fees received from this Article, less any  
34 costs associated with monitoring the use of the trademark, prohibiting the unlawful or  
35 unauthorized use of the trademark, and enforcing rights in the trademark, to the North Carolina  
36 SweetPotato Commission for the promotion of North Carolina sweetpotatoes.

37 (b) The Board of Agriculture may adopt rules that may include, but are not limited to,  
38 quality standards, grades, packing, handling, labeling, and marketing practices for the marketing  
39 of sweetpotatoes in this State, and such other rules as are necessary to administer this Article.  
40 The Board of Agriculture may also adopt rules establishing a registration, inspection, and  
41 verification program for the production and marketing of North Carolina sweetpotatoes in this  
42 State. All North Carolina sweetpotatoes sold shall conform to the prescribed standards and grades  
43 and shall be labeled accordingly.

44 (c) The Commissioner and the Commissioner's agents and employees may enter any  
45 premises or other property where sweetpotatoes are produced, stored, sold, offered for sale,  
46 packaged for sale, transported, or delivered to inspect the sweetpotatoes for the purpose of  
47 enforcing the provisions of this Article and the rules adopted under this Article.

48 **"§ 106-1069. Standards for grades.**

49 The most recent standards for grades adopted by the United States Department of Agriculture,  
50 Agricultural Marketing Service, United States Standards for Grades of Sweetpotatoes are  
51 adopted by reference and shall be the standards for grades in this State, except that the

1 Commissioner may establish tolerances or allowable percentages of United States standards each  
 2 season upon the recommendation of the North Carolina Sweetpotato Advisory Council.

3 **"§ 106-1070. North Carolina Sweetpotato Advisory Council.**

4 The Commissioner shall appoint a North Carolina Sweetpotato Advisory Council, to consist  
 5 of individuals involved in growing, packing, or growing and packing North Carolina  
 6 sweetpotatoes; at least one sweetpotato processor; at least one sweetpotato retailer; at least one  
 7 county cooperative extension agent familiar with the production of North Carolina  
 8 sweetpotatoes; and any other person or persons selected by the Commissioner, for the purpose  
 9 of rendering advice upon his or her request regarding the exercise of the Commissioner's  
 10 authority pursuant to G.S. 106-1068. Members of the North Carolina Sweetpotato Advisory  
 11 Council shall receive no compensation for their service."

12  
 13 **SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION JOB APPROVAL AUTHORITY**

14 **SECTION 22.(a)** G.S. 89C-25 reads as rewritten:

15 **"§ 89C-25. Limitations on application of Chapter.**

16 This Chapter shall not prevent the following activities:

17 ...

- 18 (6) Practice by members of the Armed Forces of the United States; employees of  
 19 the government of the United States while engaged in the practice of  
 20 engineering or land surveying solely for the government on  
 21 government-owned works and projects; or practice by those employees of the  
 22 Natural Resources Conservation Service, county employees, ~~or~~ employees of the  
 23 Soil and Water Conservation ~~Districts~~ Districts, or employees of the  
 24 Division of Soil and Water Conservation of the Department of Agriculture  
 25 and Consumer Services who have ~~federal~~ engineering job approval authority  
 26 issued by the Natural Resources Conservation Service or the Soil and Water  
 27 Conservation Commission that involves the planning, designing, or  
 28 implementation of best management practices on agricultural ~~lands~~ lands, or  
 29 for the planning, designing, or implementation of best management practices  
 30 approved for cost-share funding pursuant to programs identified in  
 31 G.S. 139-4(d)(9).

32 ...."

33 **SECTION 22.(b)** G.S. 139-3 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

34 "(19) "Job approval authority" means the authority granted by the Commission to  
 35 Soil and Water Conservation District staff or employees of the Division of  
 36 Soil and Water Conservation of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
 37 Services who have demonstrated the appropriate knowledge, skill, and ability  
 38 to plan, design, and certify the installation of best management practices  
 39 approved for cost-share funding pursuant to programs identified in  
 40 G.S. 139-4(d)(9)."

41 **SECTION 22.(c)** G.S. 139-4 reads as rewritten:

42 **"§ 139-4. Powers and duties of Soil and Water Conservation Commission generally.**

43 (a) through (c) Repealed by Session Laws 1973, c. 1262, s. 38.

44 (d) In addition to the duties and powers hereinafter conferred upon the Soil and Water  
 45 Conservation Commission, it shall have the following duties and powers:

46 ...

- 47 (14) To develop and implement a program for granting job approval authority to  
 48 Soil and Water Conservation District staff and employees of the Division of  
 49 Soil and Water Conservation of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer  
 50 Services to plan, design, and certify the installation of best management

practices approved for cost-share funding pursuant to programs identified in  
G.S. 139-4(d)(9).

...."

## PRESENT-USE VALUE DISQUALIFICATION EVENT NOTIFICATION

SECTION 23.(a) G.S. 105-277.4 reads as rewritten:

"§ 105-277.4. **Agricultural, horticultural and forestland – Application; appraisal at use value; notice and appeal; deferred taxes.**

...

(b1) Notice and Appeal. – If the assessor determines that the property loses its eligibility for present-use value classification for a reason other than failure to file a timely application required due to transfer of the land, the assessor shall provide written notice of the decision as required by G.S. 105-296(i). The notice shall include the property's tax identification number, the specific reason for the disqualification, and the date of the decision. Decisions of the assessor regarding the qualification or appraisal of property under this section may be appealed to the county board of equalization and review or, if that board is not in session, to the board of county commissioners. An appeal must be made within 60 days after date of the written notice of the decision of the assessor. If an owner submits additional information to the assessor pursuant to G.S. 105-296(j), the appeal must be made within 60 days after the assessor's decision based on the additional information. Decisions of the county board may be appealed to the Property Tax Commission.

A new appeal to a decision of the assessor regarding the disqualification of property for which notice was received is not required to be submitted for subsequent tax years while the appeal of that disqualifying event is outstanding. When a property's present-use value classification is reinstated upon appeal of the disqualifying event, it is reinstated retroactive to the date the classification was revoked, as provided under G.S. 105-296(j).

If, while an assessor's decision that a property has lost its eligibility for present-use value classification is under appeal to the county board or to the Property Tax Commission, the assessor determines that the property is no longer eligible for present-use value classification because of an additional disqualifying event independent of the one that is the basis of the disqualification under appeal, the assessor shall follow the notice and appeal procedure set forth in this subsection with regard to the subsequent disqualification.

...."

SECTION 23.(b) This section is effective when it becomes law.

## CHANGE NAME OF FOOD PROCESSING INNOVATION CENTER COMMITTEE AND SUNSET THE FOOD INNOVATION LAB

SECTION 24.(a) Section 10.24(a) of S.L. 2017-57 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 10.24.(a) There is created the ~~Food Processing Innovation Center North Carolina~~ Food Innovation Lab Committee (Committee), which shall be located administratively in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Committee shall consist of 14 members, including:

...."

SECTION 24.(b) Section 10.24(h) of S.L. 2017-57 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 10.24.(h) This section expires January 1, ~~2025~~.2020."

## SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION CONFIDENTIALITY CHANGE

SECTION 25.(a) Article 1 of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 139-8.2. **Certain information confidential.**

1 (a) All information that is collected by soil and water conservation districts from farm  
 2 owners, animal owners, agricultural producers, or owners of agricultural land that is confidential  
 3 under federal or State law shall be held confidential by the soil and water conservation districts,  
 4 including:

- 5 (1) Information provided by an agricultural producer or owner of agricultural land  
 6 concerning the agricultural operation, farming or conservation practices, or  
 7 the land itself, in order to participate in soil and water conservation programs.  
 8 (2) Geospatial information otherwise maintained by the district about agricultural  
 9 lands or operations for which information described in subdivision (1) of this  
 10 subsection is provided.

11 (b) This section shall not include applications for cost-share assistance and associated  
 12 contract documents that require the approval of the soil and water conservation district or the  
 13 Soil and Water Conservation Commission, or complaints to a soil and water conservation district  
 14 resulting in a determination that a violation of the law has occurred."

15 **SECTION 25.(b)** This section becomes effective October 1, 2019.

## 17 CLARIFY PERMITTING FOR CERTAIN SWINE FARM MODIFICATIONS

18 **SECTION 27.** G.S. 143-215.10I reads as rewritten:

19 **"§ 143-215.10I. Performance standards for animal waste management systems that serve**  
 20 **swine farms; lagoon and sprayfield systems prohibited.**

21 (a) As used in this section:

- 22 (1) "Anaerobic lagoon" means a lagoon that treats waste by converting it into  
 23 carbon dioxide, methane, ammonia, and other gaseous compounds; organic  
 24 acids; and cell tissue through an anaerobic process.  
 25 (2) "Anaerobic process" means a biological treatment process that occurs in the  
 26 absence of dissolved oxygen.  
 27 (3) "Lagoon" has the same meaning as in G.S. 106-802.  
 28 (4) "Swine farm" has the same meaning as in G.S. 106-802.

29 (b) The Commission shall not issue or modify a permit to authorize the construction,  
 30 operation, or expansion of an animal waste management system that serves a swine farm that  
 31 employs an anaerobic lagoon as the primary method of treatment and land application of waste  
 32 by means of a sprayfield as the primary method of waste disposal. ~~The Commission may issue a~~  
 33 ~~permit for the construction, operation, or expansion of an animal waste management system that~~  
 34 ~~serves a swine farm under this Article only if the Commission determines that the animal waste~~  
 35 ~~management system will meet or exceed all of the following performance standards:~~  
 36 unless:

- 37 (1) The permitting action does not result in an increase in the permitted capacity  
 38 of the swine farm, as measured by the annual steady state live weight capacity  
 39 of the swine farm; or  
 40 (2) The Commission determines that the animal waste management system will  
 41 meet or exceed all of the following performance standards:  
 42 ~~(1)~~a. Eliminate the discharge of animal waste to surface water and  
 43 groundwater through direct discharge, seepage, or runoff.  
 44 ~~(2)~~b. Substantially eliminate atmospheric emission of ammonia.  
 45 ~~(3)~~c. Substantially eliminate the emission of odor that is detectable beyond  
 46 the boundaries of the parcel or tract of land on which the swine farm  
 47 is located.  
 48 ~~(4)~~d. Substantially eliminate the release of disease-transmitting vectors and  
 49 airborne pathogens.  
 50 ~~(5)~~e. Substantially eliminate nutrient and heavy metal contamination of soil  
 51 and groundwater."

1  
2 **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMISSION STUDY OF GENERAL PERMIT**  
3 **PROCESS FOR ANIMAL WASTE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS THAT SERVE SWINE,**  
4 **CATTLE, AND POULTRY OPERATIONS**

5 **SECTION 33.** The Environmental Review Commission shall study the Department  
6 of Environmental Quality's process for the development and adoption of general permits for  
7 animal waste management systems for swine, cattle, and poultry operations. The study shall  
8 specifically include consideration of whether the general permit process should comply with the  
9 Administrative Procedure Act. In conducting this study, the Environmental Review Commission  
10 shall seek input from the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; the Office of  
11 Administrative Hearings; the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at North Carolina State  
12 University; the College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences at North Carolina A&T State  
13 University; representatives of swine, cattle, and poultry farmers; representatives of  
14 environmental protection and natural resource conservation groups, including the Environmental  
15 Defense Fund; and other interested parties. The Environmental Review Commission shall report  
16 its findings and recommendations, including any legislative proposals, to the 2020 Regular  
17 Session of the 2019 General Assembly upon its convening.

18  
19 **SEVERABILITY CLAUSE AND EFFECTIVE DATE**

20 **SECTION 34.(a)** If any provision of this act or the application thereof to any person  
21 or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications  
22 of this act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and, to this end,  
23 the provisions of this act are declared to be severable.

24 **SECTION 34.(b)** Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes  
25 law.