

Melancthon cannabis farm plans to plant first crop in the spring

Written By BRIAN LOCKHART

A new cannabis farm in Melancthon hopes to plant its first crop in May of 2020.

Work has already begun at the farm, located on the Second Line Southwest of Melancthon near County Road 17.

Owned by NWN Scientific Inc, a Toronto based pharmaceutical organization, the farm includes a total of almost 500 acres that will accommodate a growing area, nursery, administrative offices and a processing facility.

It will be developed into one of the largest outdoor cannabis farming operations in Canada.

The venture resulted from Health Canada granting approval for outdoor cultivation of the product.

Local real estate agent Kyle Ferris has been involved with planning the project from selecting the land to working with architects and engineers and reaching out to the community.

"This will be an outdoor open air cannabis facility," Mr. Ferris explained. "They will be turning the flowers into oil. It will be used to make edibles, for vaping, creams, and things like that."

The plan is to start planting, then grow the operation in phases over the next few years.

With cannabis operations there is always a concern for crop theft. The facility will be designed with a 10-foot-high barbed wire fence surrounding the property along with security cameras

"The entire property will be fenced and have proper security," Mr. Ferris explained. "That's actually a requirement of Health Canada. Ideally the first crop will be going into the ground this coming May."

The company plans to be an active member of the community and the upside locally is that the farm will bring jobs to the area.

They are planning on employing around 40 people full-time and another 60 part-time, however numbers could increase over time as things are still in the planning stages.

The company held a public meeting in Horning's Mills on October 16, to bring awareness to the local community about what was being planned at the location.

"Everyone was welcome," Mr. Ferris said. "The purpose of the meeting was to give people that live close by an opportunity to know what to expect and not be alarmed. There was a fairly big turnout and the plan was received very well. It's going to be great for the area with the job creation."

Selecting the location for the farm was based on several factors.

"It's great land. It's an agricultural community and it's an agricultural product being grown on agricultural land. We thought it would be a great opportunity for the township."

There has been no push-back from the Township council who are considering this to be another agricultural operation.

Some residents have voiced concerns about the smell that comes with marijuana plants.

However they have been assured that the particular odor only happens when the plants are left out to dry.

This operation plans to freeze the plants before moving them into a production facility so there won't be a problem with a smell wafting across the fields and bothering nearby residents.