First Food Safety Course for Makers of Pot Edibles

The National Cannabis Industry Association

DENVER, CO — The National Cannabis Industry Association (NCIA) announced today that it will launch the first ServSafe Food Safety Basics course specifically for cannabis industry professionals. Participants in the course, based on a curriculum developed originally by the National Restaurant Association, will learn about the significance of foodborne illness, proper personal hygiene, time and temperature control, how to prevent cross-contamination, cleaning, sanitizing and emergency procedures, and more.

"The interest in edibles and other infused products keeps growing," said NCIA deputy director Taylor West. "We know our industry is under a microscope, and we want to make sure cannabis product-makers continue developing the highest quality and safest products possible."

NCIA also announced a new Sell-SMaRT Responsible Cannabis Vendor course that will teach marijuana dispensary employees, or "budtenders," responsible selling practices, such as how to check ID, educate customers about responsible consumption, and handle tricky situations.

These courses are developed and facilitated by Maureen McNamara, founder of Cannabis Trainers, an NCIA member business. McNamara has been teaching the ServSafe course to traditional food industry professionals for the last 18 years, but this will be her first course geared solely for makers of marijuana edibles. McNamara served as a consultant and facilitator for courses and course design with the National Restaurant Association and has partnered with the Colorado Restaurant Association to deliver their trainings since 1999. She worked with the Colorado Department of Revenue's Liquor Enforcement Division to develop the Responsible Vendor Act that was passed in 2005 and will be working with the Colorado Marijuana Enforcement Division to design the Responsible Cannabis Vendor Program this year.

Colorado became the first state to implement the legal sale of marijuana for non-medical purposes in January of this year. Sales have been thriving since then, and marijuana-infused products, often referred to as "edibles," represent two-thirds of the burgeoning market.

For many consumers, marijuana-infused products are an attractive alternative to smoking. They are particularly vital to those who use marijuana for medical reasons, because their effects last longer and can be manufactured with doses that meet patients' needs in a reliable way. While the expansion of legal medical and adult-use cannabis markets has been predominantly successful and smooth, isolated cases of production issues and irresponsible consumption show the potential benefit

of more widespread training programs for businesses in the legal industry.

"This is a great example of how the industry is self-regulating to make marijuana-infused products as safe as possible for consumers," said Art Way, Director of the Drug Policy Alliance (DPA)'s Colorado office. "We applaud NCIA for taking this important step forward."

NCIA's pilot partnership with Cannabis Trainers will include both ServSafe and Sell-SMaRT training courses produced by Cannabis Trainers. The first trainings will take place in Denver, Colorado on August 6 (ServSafe) and August 19 (Sell-SMaRT), with additional trainings to be scheduled in the coming months. Members of the press who are interested in attending either of these courses must RSVP to taylor@thecannabisindustry.org [1].

Upon successful implementation of the pilot training program, NCIA anticipates expanding its training programs to include additional states and training partners in the future. More information on the first training sessions and how cannabis professionals can attend can be found at https://thecannabisindustry.org/servsafe-sell-smart-ncia-partners-cannabis-trainers [2].

The National Cannabis Industry Association (NCIA) is the largest cannabis trade association in the U.S. and the only organization representing cannabis-related businesses at the national level. NCIA promotes the growth of a responsible and legitimate cannabis industry and works toward a favorable social, economic, and legal environment for that industry in the United States.

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[1] mailto:taylor@thecannabisindustry.org
[2] https://thecannabisindustry.org/servsafe-sell-smart-ncia-partners-cannabis-trainers