

HEMP-SYS: Design, Development and Up-Scaling of a Sustainable Production System for HEMP Textiles: an Integrated Quality SYStems Approach.

Stefano Amaducci , Gianpietro Venturi***

* Inst. of Agronomy, University of Piacenza, Italy

** Dep. of Agro-environmental Science and Technology, University of Bologna, Italy

Worldwide, there is a growing interest in hemp fibre for textile applications. It is in the economic and social interest of the EU to become self-supportive in that area. In the EU, there is no large scale production of hemp yarns and fabrics, because of poor fibre quality and poor fibre homogeneity. Those aspects and the uncertainty of a constant supply of hemp fibre limit the interest of EU-industries.

HEMP SYS [European Union (EU) Project funded for 36 months under the thematic programme: Quality of life and management of living resources of the 5th Framework, key action 5.2, officially started on 1st November 2002] aims to solve these problems by providing decision support to primary producers, integrated quality control systems for raw and processed products, and dissemination of information to support the entire chain of the hemp fibre industry.

Scientific and industrial partners will tackle the main problems of the hemp fibre production chain for textile destination from cultivation till end products development.

More specifically to promote the development of a competitive and innovative hemp fibre textile industry in Europe, main objectives of the Project are:

- Development of an improved, environmentally friendly production chain for high quality hemp fibre textiles including a prototype decision support tool for primary producers, new and innovative decorticating systems, integrated quality control through the whole production chain, and demonstrated end-use as high-value, fashionable hemp textile based products.
- Preparation of a comprehensive economic assessment of EU and international fibre markets, consumer requirements and EU-production costs and returns.
- Dissemination of the public knowledge generated in the project using the latest information technologies to inform primary producers, processing and end-use.

Main expected project results are: innovative hemp fibre production systems with decision support tools for farmers, optimal processing methods, a prototype for an integrated quality control system, disseminated knowledge and high-value hemp textile end products.