



Cannabis Council
of Canada

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#FUTUREOFCANADIANCANNABIS 🇨🇦 ISSUES BACKGROUNDER

1. Expunge criminal records for possession of cannabis for personal use.

A criminal record for the simple possession of cannabis can create barriers to accessing employment, housing and education programs. There are between 250,000 to 500,000 Canadians with criminal records for cannabis possession. According to Cannabis Amnesty, a non-governmental organization: “The war on cannabis has hit racialized communities especially hard. Decades of unfair and unequal enforcement of cannabis laws has meant that marginalized and racialized Canadians have been disproportionately burdened by cannabis convictions”.

2. Loosen the rules that restrict consumer education and harm reduction.

As a result of the limited means of communication about the effects of cannabis products, sales of cannabis products in the adult-use market have skewed towards high concentration THC flower. The consumption of high concentration THC products is counter to the advice of public health officials. Today’s informed consumers are looking to educate themselves about the profile and characteristics of the products they consume and to learn about different and potentially less harmful forms of consumption.

3. Get the profits of illicit cannabis out of the hands of criminals and the tax revenues of legal cannabis into the coffers of governments.

Statistics Canada estimates that at least 50% of Canadian cannabis sales involve criminal cannabis products while other estimates claim the illicit market share to be higher. Criminal cannabis generates upwards of \$ 4 - 5 billion dollars per year for Canada’s organized criminal enterprises, which are used to support additional criminal activities causing harm and violence in communities across Canada meanwhile depriving governments of hundreds of millions in lost tax revenue annually.

4. Remove the taxes on practitioner authorized medical cannabis.

Researchers have found that medical cannabis can help treat several conditions. Evidence shows that therapeutic effects of cannabis relate to its ability to reduce chronic pain, nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy, and spasticity [tight or stiff muscles] from MS. While opioids and other prescribed medicines are not subject to a federal excise tax or to the HST, the cost of medical cannabis authorized by a health care practitioner is subject to both taxes.



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5. Invest to increase the economic participation of BIPOC communities in Canadian cannabis.

Legalization initiatives for medical and adult-use cannabis in the United States have been accompanied by widespread calls for public policies focused on the creation of an equitable and diverse cannabis industry in order to reverse years of stigmatization and the impacts of criminalization. Here in Canada a lack of diversity within the industry has been similarly identified with calls for fully implementing the Black Entrepreneurship Cannabis Social Equity Program alongside progress for the enhanced participation of indigenous Canadians.

6. Enhance access to CBD wellness products, especially for seniors.

Canada's approach to regulating CBD has restricted access for Canadians and restricted exports of our products to rapidly growing global markets. The Institute for Fiscal Studies and Democracy Estimates that the Canadian CBD market is worth \$2 billion per year. According to Grandview Research, the global market for CBD products is set to reach \$17B per year by 2028.

7. Promote the export of quality Canadian cannabis products to meet expanding global demand.

Canada is a global leader in a medical cannabis industry that is expanding rapidly. Medical cannabis is legal in over 40 countries. Medical cannabis is legal in 36 states in the United States. According to Grandview Research the global sales of medical cannabis are set to reach \$90 billion in the next 5 years. Medical cannabis sales in Canada are \$150 million per year.