

GMP Collective Webinar: Croptober Prep Best Practices

GMP Collective Hosts 24th Webinar in “When Things Go Wrong” Series

September 25, 2025 — The GMP Collective presented the 24th installment of their webinar series, *When Things Go Wrong*. This episode, titled “Croptober: Crucial Best Practices for Harvest Season,” focused on cannabis cultivation and post-harvest processes. Moderated by Bethany Moore, Director of Content Strategy and Market Growth at the GMP Collective, the webinar featured expert insights from Alex Cass, Manager of Plant Sciences at Native Roots, and Nelson Oldham, Associate Director of Post-Harvest at Native Roots.

Best Practices for Drying and Curing Cannabis

One of the primary topics of the webinar was the ideal drying and curing process for cannabis—key stages to ensure product quality and avoid common pitfalls. Nelson Oldham took the lead, explaining the fundamental aspects of drying, beginning with clean flower and strict environmental controls. He emphasized the importance of maintaining appropriate temperature and humidity levels throughout the drying process. Critical factors such as standard operating procedures, proper bud testing for dryness, and monitoring moisture levels were also discussed.

Oldham noted the significant overlap between drying and curing, with curing requiring the same careful attention to temperature, humidity, and microbial control. He outlined strategies to prevent mold growth and microbial proliferation during curing, which can otherwise degrade cannabinoid and terpene profiles.

Alex Cass added further insights, addressing the challenges of managing fungi and bacteria, as well as strategies to protect the integrity of cannabinoids and terpenes during the drying and curing process. He stressed the importance of preventing the loss of these valuable compounds, which contribute to both the medicinal and aromatic properties of cannabis.

“As growers, we all have a bunch of cheesy sayings when it comes to drying and curing,” Oldham remarked. “One of my favorite sayings is, ‘an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.’ If you’re being diligent with your setup, if you’re being diligent with scouting and ensuring that you’re not putting unhealthy plants into your drying space, you’ll be setting yourself up for success.”

Avoiding Common Curing Mistakes

Oldham shared practical advice for avoiding common mistakes made during the curing process. He detailed the pros and cons of using different types of containers for storage and curing, the importance of “burping” containers to release excess moisture, and the essential steps for maintaining quality control. Alex Cass also touched on the role of packaging in the curing process, ensuring that the quality of the product is preserved after harvest.

To illustrate what to do when things go wrong, Oldham provided a real-life example from Native Roots. He described how the team responded to a recent power outage at their facility, taking quick actions to maintain the quality of their plants and products, avoiding what could have been a significant loss.

Croptober's Impact on the Cannabis Supply Chain

The discussion shifted to the broader implications of harvest season, particularly during “Croptober,” a crucial time in the cannabis industry. Alex Cass explained that during this time, processing facilities can become overwhelmed, leading to bottlenecks in production. He recommended staggering harvest schedules to avoid overcrowding and delays in processing. Outdoor cultivation facilities face unique challenges during Croptober, such as fluctuating environmental conditions, but careful planning and management can mitigate these risks.

Cass also stressed the importance of proper handling and storage practices to prevent contamination of the final product. He explained that monitoring key environmental factors—such as water activity and temperature—helps reduce contamination risks. In addition, he emphasized the role of employees in maintaining hygiene standards, with appropriate protective equipment and well-structured workflows being essential to prevent the spread of contaminants. Oldham reinforced this by discussing the importance of comprehensive standard operating procedures (SOPs) and thorough employee training.

Transparency in Cannabis Product Labeling

The webinar concluded with a discussion around transparency in cannabis product labeling, particularly regarding products that have undergone irradiation, remediation, or decontamination. One attendee raised the question of whether consumers should be informed if a product has been treated in such ways.

Alex Cass responded by highlighting the need for consumer education and transparency. “I think that we should get as much information to the consumer as possible,” he said. “But I also think that we should look at ways to educate the consumer, because, in my opinion, irradiation is a value add. I think that it increases the quality of our product, it increases shelf life, and it enhances safety for the consumer. And it is no small cost to our organization.”

The GMP Collective's *When Things Go Wrong* webinar series continues to provide valuable insights for cannabis professionals, and this latest installment was no exception. With the harvest season underway, the discussion offered crucial best practices for drying, curing, and ensuring product safety in the cannabis industry. As Croptober approaches, growers and producers will benefit from these expert recommendations to navigate the complexities of post-harvest processes and mitigate potential challenges.

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