

LeafWorks, Botanical Genomics Company, Launches its Gender ID Test for Both Cannabis and Hemp Industries



Delivers solutions to enable rapid detection and elimination of male plants for growers. Offers a borderless testing solution for the \$12.1B cannabis industry. Soon to offer Herbal ID and Cultivar ID Tests

SEBASTOPOL, Calif. ? April 8, 2019 /[Canna Newswire](#)/ ? Today LeafWorks, a female scientist-led plant genetics company specializing in botanical identification for cannabis and hemp, launched its proprietary Gender ID Test to solve a pervasive problem among cannabis cultivators ? male plants. Rapid and 99.9 percent accurate screening and removal of male plants is critical in the cannabis industry as males lack the desirable buds sold at dispensaries and can ruin harvests with accidental pollination of neighboring females, which turns lucrative buds into seeds.

The normal wait time to learn a cannabis plant's gender can be more than five weeks after germination. LeafWorks' DNA-based test for Gender ID turns five weeks into 14 days saving cultivators significant time, money, resources and labor, and eliminates the human-error factor prevalent in traditional plant ?sexing.?

Comprised of a diverse leadership team of specialized plant geneticists trained in next-generation genomic methods, chemistry, and bioinformatics, LeafWorks is the first herbal genetics company to offer a comprehensive DNA validation system in the cannabis market, and it is the first herbal genetics company to apply modern science with a socially conscious approach.

?LeafWorks is dedicated to serving the people and organizations that built the US cannabis industry,? said LeafWorks CEO Eleanor Kuntz, PhD. ?We provide science-based solutions to solve critical issues for the people who cultivate cannabis and help them grow the market.?

LeafWorks' state-of-the-art botanical DNA verification tools have a borderless reach. By only working with DNA, which is not subject to Schedule I restriction, LeafWorks is able to provide comprehensive DNA-based solutions for cannabis supply chain issues no matter where they occur.

Gender ID Test - Available Today

Cannabis plants come in two sexes - male and female, both determined by a XY and XX chromosomal system, respectively. LeafWorks' rapid identification of males in 14 days is integral to maintain efficient supply to the \$12.1B US cannabis industry. By enabling seedling stage identification of the Y chromosome in cannabis males with 99.9 percent accuracy for quick male removal, the LeafWorks Gender ID Test saves at least 20 percent of operational costs per harvest.

With the median annual operating cost of a grow at an estimated \$330,000 (Source: 2019 Marijuana Business Daily Market Report), this can save growers a range of \$13,000 to \$50,000 per harvest. Growers are able to optimize their cultivation spaces for maximum return by quickly replacing males with females before initial investment becomes substantial.

LeafWorks' Gender ID test is a simple solution to a major problem faced by cannabis cultivators. The test kit is easy to use and only

takes five minutes to prepare a DNA sample that is then compliant to mail. This means that LeafWorks' Gender ID testing is available internationally and can serve the entire cannabis and hemp markets.

The Power of DNA Testing

“Our DNA technology is game-changing for the cannabis and herbal industries,” added LeafWorks Chief Scientific Officer, Kerin Law, PhD. “LeafWorks aims to provide accessible next-generation science to cannabis and botanical producers so they can grow their businesses, reduce potential for costly fraud, and provide consumers with the information they need to make confident choices as they turn to medicinal plants for mental and physical health.”

LeafWorks requires only small amounts of DNA for its state-of-the-art verification tests to benefit every sector of the cannabis supply chain and know what is bought, sold or grown. The methodology employed by LeafWorks utilizes cannabinoid-free processing, delivering DNA only sampling for a global testing market. LeafWorks cannabis certification falls into three categories: gender identification, cultivar (strain name) identification, and a critical DNA-based compliance program that tracks strains from seed to sale. LeafWorks' products will ensure genetic fidelity, label accuracy, brand loyalty, and empower consumers to know what they are buying at the dispensary counter.

Market Size

Cannabis is a projected \$27B US industry by 2023, with a 21 percent compound annual growth rate (CAGR), and the US cannabis testing sector alone is valued at \$1.4B with 11.5 percent CAGR (source: 2019 Marijuana Business Daily Market Report). LeafWorks provides the most robust plant DNA testing offerings to the US and global cannabis, hemp and herbal markets.

Expansion into Herbal ID & Cultivar ID Testing

Using next-generation genomic techniques, LeafWorks will launch its Herbal ID test to help combat widespread fraud in the larger botanical industry. Today the herbal supply chain does not have a reliable process for verifying that the herbs sold at any point in the chain are actually what they are labeled. The FDA requests that herbal companies use DNA identification to avoid fraud, but reliable DNA tests are not widely available. LeafWorks will soon offer its proven Herbal ID Test to give brands and consumers peace of mind to know the ginseng in their pill is actually ginseng and not celery powder.

Similarly, LeafWorks is in the final stages of development for a cannabis Cultivar ID Test, which will provide the cannabis industry cultivar name verification from the only vetted test on the market.

How LeafWorks Began

When Eleanor Kuntz, PhD and Kerin Law, PhD graduated with their respective degrees in genetics, they were driven by a passion to use their knowledge to do good science. Through their deep connections in both the herbal and cannabis communities, Kuntz and Law identified a critical need not being served – accurate verification of herbal products that combines the robustness of DNA testing with an approachable, purpose-driven ethos that could redefine what it means to be a biotech company in natural products. This led to LeafWorks being born in 2016; however, Kuntz and Law quickly discovered that the fundamental scientific resources for commercial herbs did not exist for cannabis, preventing them from serving their mission. As such, LeafWorks began a comprehensive cannabis research program that has led to the creation of the first male and female high-quality cannabis genomes and 99.9 percent accurate Gender ID Test in identifying the presence of the Y chromosome in a cannabis male.

Continuing on their holistic approach to cannabis, the two started Canndor in 2016, the world's first and only cannabis herbarium, a separate non-profit focused on documenting and preserving cannabis diversity that directly works with the cannabis community to establish real cultivar standards and definitions rooted in the history and stewardship of this prized plant.

Herbaria are traditional houses of dried, preserved plant material that serve as a library of historical and biological records. They act as the foundation of real plant standards – standards that the originators themselves should define. The herbarium specimens housed at Canndor are physical proof of cultivation and give long-time plant cultivators claim to their material that outsiders cannot dispute.

Before Canndor, for-profit science companies accepted cannabis plant DNA from any source without regard to sample authenticity and defined cultivars based on these unknown and unsubstantiated samples. This was perceived by the community as outsiders coming in to tell them what they have. Kuntz and Law were frustrated by the lack of responsible science happening in the industry. To compare this to dog breeding, it is the dog breeders who establish breed definitions, not outsiders telling them what genetic markers make a Labrador.

Transparency and integrity are at the heart of the relationship between Canndor and LeafWorks. The Cannabis community that engages with and submits samples to Canndor has the option to share the DNA with LeafWorks if they want to be included in the only community-defined cultivar test on the market.

About LeafWorks

LeafWorks is a female-led plant genetics company in Northern California that creates botanical DNA verification tools for the cannabis and herbal industries; DNA tools that are built with the community to serve the community. Comprised of a diverse leadership team of specialized plant geneticists trained in next-generation genomic methods, chemistry, and bioinformatics, LeafWorks is the first herbal genetics company to offer a comprehensive DNA validation system in the cannabis and hemp markets, and it is the first herbal genetics company to apply modern science with a socially conscious approach. For more information, please visit www.LeafWorks.com.

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