

*European Industrial Hemp Association (www.eiha.org)
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World debut for the first sustainably certified natural fibre: European hemp fibre for automotive applications and insulation material receives ISCC PLUS certificate

Natural fibres show significant environmental benefits in light weight biocomposites for automotive interiors and in construction. Up until now a sustainability certification for the natural fibre itself was not available. Now the requests from customers can be satisfied. In June 2016, hemp straw and fibres produced by the Dutch company HempFlax B.V. received the established ISCC PLUS certificate, the first natural fibre worldwide to achieve this.

ISCC (www.iscc-system.org) is one of the leading certification systems for sustainability and greenhouse gas emissions worldwide. In July 2011, the European Commission recognized ISCC as one of the first certification schemes to demonstrate compliance with the EU Renewable Energy Directive's (RED) requirements.

Additionally, ISCC PLUS has been developed for food, feed and technical as well chemical applications (e.g. fibres, bioplastics and biocomposites). ISCC certification can be applied to demonstrate the sustainability and traceability of feedstock in a wide range of industries, including automotive and construction. Meanwhile more than 4,500 biomass feedstocks are certified with an ISCC certificate. The certificate proves that the biomass is not produced on land with high biodiversity and high carbon stock. Good agricultural practices protecting soil, water and air are applied and human rights, labour and land rights are respected.

In 2015, the European Industrial Hemp Association (www.eiha.org) decided to motivate and support their members to certify the raw materials of the hemp crop to prove the sustainability of the hemp industry.

As the first hemp producer, HANF FARM GmbH, Germany, received the ISCC PLUS certification for their hemp seeds, hemp leaves and flowers in January 2016 (ISCC-PLUS-Cert-DE105-81763301). The certificate aims to satisfy the growing demand of the health food industry. Rafael Dulon, CEO of HANF FARM GmbH says: "We aim to manufacture innovative and sustainable products with regard to ecological, social and economic aspects. It was the only consistent step forward to get the certificate for our products."

In June 2016, the Dutch company HempFlax Exploitatie, Oude Pekela, cultivating and processing industrial hemp, received the certification for hemp straw and fibres (ISCC-PLUS-Cert-DE110-75160108). For the second factory of HempFlax in Romania the certification will follow next year.

Now for the first time, the automotive industry can gain access to a sustainably certified natural fibre for producing light weight biocomposite, mainly for interior applications. Now the sustainability can be traced and confirmed in the value chain from its agriculture source to the final car component. Mark Reinders, managing director from HempFlax and president of EIHA, expects high demand: "We are proud that we are the first supplier in the world of a

sustainably certified natural fibre. Also we will certify our Romanian production as soon as possible and more hemp fibre producers will follow. Please contact us to secure your ISCC PLUS certified feedstock.”

Michael Carus, managing director of EIHA, sees more members of the association following HempFlax and HANF FARM: “The future belongs to sustainability certified biomass. Big companies will not risk discussions with the public or NGOs on the sustainability of biomass in their products, especially if sustainable alternatives are available.”

Responsible under press legislation (V.i.S.d.P.):

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The European Industrial Hemp Association (EIHA) is a consortium of the hemp-processing industry. It represents the common interest of industrial hemp farmers and producers, both nationally and on a European level. EIHA is the only European consortium in the industrial hemp sector. This sector includes, amongst other things, the use of hemp fibres, shavings, seeds and cannabinoids. Originally founded as an association for the European hemp industry, a quarter of the 130 EIHA’s members are based in countries outside the EU.