

Hemp Deal a Growth Opportunity for Griffin Greenhouse Supplies



By [Janeen Wright](#), Managing Editor, Greenhouse Grower | January 23, 2020 |



Photo: Front Range Biosciences

Griffin Greenhouse Supplies and Front Range Biosciences have announced a sales and distribution partnership for hemp plants and seeds.

“Griffin supports all types of greenhouse production, including controlled environment agriculture,” says Chief Operating Officer Craig Hyslip. “We also strive to support industry growth and success. As our customers look to grow and diversify their businesses, Griffin provides solutions to help them

achieve their goals, and hemp brings new opportunities for us and our customers. Front Range Biosciences is an important part of our strategy to provide a full range of solutions to our customers.”

Front Range Biosciences (FRB), an agricultural technology provider for the breeding of new plant varieties and seeds in hemp, coffee, and regulated cannabis, operates its own facilities for producing liners and has its own rooting stations. The company developed the first Clean Stock program for cannabis and hemp and has an advanced breeding program for identifying and improving commercially relevant traits.

“Relationships with growers are generally long-term relationships,” says Dr. Jonathan Vaught, CEO of FRB. “There is no reason to try and recreate that. On the sales and distribution side, it makes sense to partner with Griffin as we will be able to reach the market faster and cover more of the market.”

What This Change Means for Growers

There has been tremendous interest in hemp from ornamentals growers looking to diversify their business, according to Tami Van Gaal, CEA Division Leader for Griffin Greenhouse Supplies. Hemp works on so many different levels for ornamentals growers, she says, because they can either be all-in or grow seasonally. And they usually already have what they need for growing hemp.

Griffin plans to supply seeds, liners, and seedlings of hemp and cannabis to the industry. This is also FRB’s primary offering, and both say they’re open for business.

“We are taking orders now,” Vaught says. “With our production for this season, a lot of those plants were started from tissue culture 18 months ago. We take pre-orders starting in the fall, and we expect to be sold out by shipping season.”

Griffin has been in conversations with its customers since this summer to understand their interest and is also ready to take orders, Van Gaal says.

What About Shortages?

When asked about the current supply and demand challenges hemp growers have faced, both Vaught and Van Gaal say that while the situation is improving, there’s still a ways to go, which is why they’re encouraging growers to enter the market thoughtfully and not overcommit.

“Expect to see more seed out this year,” Vaught says. “We have seen a lot of instability in what is out there now in the market. There are still challenges in creating high-quality, reliable seed. We are trying to educate people and work with them based on what they need for their individual situations.”

“We want growers to learn and walk before they run,” Van Gaal says. “A lot of growers don’t anticipate the labor required. There are also significant shortages on the backside with the processing, which is another reason to step into the market slowly.”