

14 APR 2016

Mr Gregory Soar  
GreenCross NZ  
Email: Gregory Soar <fyi-request-3798-88ab922c@requests.fyi.org.nz>

Dear Mr Soar

**Ref: H201601013 - Response to your request for official information**

Thank you for your request of 22 March 2016 under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) as follows:

“I would like to know:

1. If a register for industrial hemp root exists.

If such a register exists:

2. To be provided a copy of the register for industrial hemp root.”

In response to your request I advise that the Ministry of Health (the Ministry) holds no register of industrial hemp root.

Until 2015 the Ministry was unaware that the root of industrial hemp was being used to make industrial hemp products and the annual reports provided by hemp licensees did not differentiate the roots from the plant. Hemp seed and bare hemp stalks were the primary parts of the hemp plant harvested. Other parts of the plant including the leaves and roots were used as baleage or ploughed into the soil.

Once the Ministry became aware that hemp root was being sold separately to make skin products, it was ascertained that the legislation did not mention the hemp root. Legal advice was sought to determine whether the root could be considered part of the stem, and therefore exempt from licensing requirements, or whether it was part of the hemp plant and therefore required a licence. It was determined that hemp root is part of the plant and thus a licence is required to possess, use and trade in hemp root.

The Ministry does not expect hemp root to be reported on by industrial hemp licensees unless it is bought or sold separately from other industrial hemp plant material. Reports for the 2015/16 growing season have not been received at this time.

No information has been withheld.

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review my decision to withhold information under this request.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Phil Knipe  
**Acting Director**  
**Protection, Regulation and Assurance**