

BACKGROUND

Niagara College's Commercial Cannabis Production (CCP) Graduate Certificate Program

On September 5, 2018, Niagara College launched Canada's first post-secondary credential in the production of commercial cannabis. Classes are held at the College's Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus in a state-of-the art, fully secure facility.

Qualifications, applications and enrolment

- 24 students were accepted into the first cohort for the program in September 2018. This will ensure students receive individual attention from faculty and unhampered access to equipment and facilities.
- In order to provide the program in accordance with Health Canada's existing regulatory framework and security clearance requirements, the program is currently open only to domestic students.
- Over 300 applications were received for the initial September 2018 intake.
- As a Graduate Certificate Program, applicants must possess a diploma or degree in the areas of Horticulture, Greenhouse Technology, Agricultural Sciences, Plant Sciences, Biology or a related discipline

Program components and courses

- Students are trained in the cultivation and practices of cannabis production, and will also possess the knowledge and skills to navigate Health Canada's strict and complex regulatory framework that governs the industry in Canada.
- Graduates will be equipped to:
 - Design and implement plant nutrition, lighting programs and integrated pest management to support optimal crop growth and quality.
 - Interpret data to assess crop health and quality and adapt to growth conditions/pest management strategies.
 - Comply with all regulatory and trade requirements for the safe and legal production and packaging of cannabis.
 - Comply with and execute appropriate security protocols to ensure the safety and security of staff and crop.

- Graduates will go on to pursue careers working with licensed producers (LPs) as growers, operation managers, and positions related to quality control and assurance, post-harvest and propagation operation

Facility, security, and control of cannabis

- No cannabis will be consumed as part of the program. Sample analysis in a secure lab will be used to assess growing and quality control practices
- Cannabis will be grown, managed and stored in a secure facility located near the existing NC Teaching Greenhouse at Niagara College's Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus.
- The facility is constructed from a series of 5 retrofitted shipping containers, and conforms to Health Canada's strict security and environmental control regulations.
- Delivery of the new facility took place March 23, 2018.
- Course material not specific to the production of cannabis is also delivered at NC's Teaching Greenhouse and other areas of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Campus.
- Access to the facility is tightly controlled and is limited to program participants
- As the College has obtained an exemption licence from Health Canada for education and research purposes, under its current regulations, cannabis grown in NC's facility will not be used or sold on-site.

Legalization of cannabis for recreational use

- Niagara College's CCP program conforms to existing Health Canada regulations
- The CCP program was designed to respond to an already existing demand for qualified, knowledgeable growers and producers expressed by businesses currently in the medical cannabis market.
- Niagara College will continue to respond to the evolving needs and regulations governing Canada's rapidly expanding cannabis market.

Niagara College's Greenhouse Technician Program

- NC's 2-year Greenhouse Technician program equips students with knowledge and skills that are foundational for success in the emerging commercial cannabis industry, including greenhouse management, crop production, and horticultural research, making it an excellent educational pathway to NC's Graduation Commercial Cannabis Production Program.