

Press Release for Immediate Release, 9/30/2026

## **The Institute of Cannabis Research at CSU Pueblo Signs MOU with Kangwon National University to Advance International Hemp Research Collaboration**

CHUNCHEON, SOUTH KOREA — September 29, 2026 — [The Institute of Cannabis Research](#) (ICR) at Colorado State University Pueblo has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Kangwon National University in South Korea to strengthen international research collaboration and expand opportunities for advancing hemp science, innovation, and industrial development. The agreement builds on the ICR's longstanding research relationships in South Korea and creates a foundation for expanding collaboration with institutions in the South Korean [Chuncheon region](#). Through the MOU, the institutions will have a framework for sharing expertise, identifying common research priorities, and exploring opportunities for collaborative research between the United States and South Korea.

A key opportunity for collaboration centers on [Pink Pepper](#), a hemp accession developed through research collaboration with [Kangwon National University](#) that now serves as a high-quality reference genome for *Cannabis sativa*. The Pink Pepper reference genome provides researchers with a detailed genetic framework for studying cannabis genetics, gene function, plant traits, and responses to environmental conditions. Building on this genomic resource, the partnership can support research in plant breeding, cultivation, stress physiology, cannabinoid production, and other agricultural and industrial applications of hemp.

“We are pleased to expand our partnership with Kangwon National University and create new opportunities for international collaboration,” said Dr. Marion McNabb, Director of the Institute of Cannabis Research at Colorado State University Pueblo. “By bringing together our research expertise and institutional strengths, we can explore new scientific questions, advance our understanding of hemp, and identify opportunities for research that benefits both countries.” The ICR's international collaboration in South Korea began in 2019 with the [Chuncheon Bioindustry Foundation](#) through a five-year research funding initiative. The collaboration established an important foundation for international research engagement and provided opportunities to develop relationships and advance hemp research.

Potential areas of shared research interest include hemp genetics and cultivation, the Pink Pepper hemp plant, medicinal and agricultural applications, plant science, chemistry, and the development of innovative industrial materials. The partnership may also create opportunities for researcher engagement, knowledge exchange, and future joint research initiatives.

“This MOU represents an important expansion of the ICR's international collaboration network in South Korea,” said Dr. Sanghyuck Park, Associate Director of Research at the Institute of Cannabis Research at Colorado State University Pueblo. “Our first international collaboration began in 2019 with the Chuncheon Bioindustry Foundation through a five-year, approximately \$150,000 research funding initiative. Building on the fruitful outcomes of that collaboration, our partnership with Kangwon National University provides an exciting opportunity to further expand our research network within the same region. We look forward to continued multi-institutional collaboration, advancing innovative hemp research, and exploring opportunities to translate our research into practical and commercially viable applications.”

The MOU reflects the ICR's commitment to building international research partnerships that support high-quality, objective, and unbiased science while expanding opportunities to translate research into practical applications. By connecting research institutions, scientific expertise, and potential agricultural and industrial partners, the collaboration aims to support innovation and advance the understanding of hemp's potential across multiple fields.

#### **About the Institute of Cannabis Research**

The Institute of Cannabis Research at Colorado State University Pueblo is Colorado's cannabis research leader in funding, conducting, and disseminating high-quality, objective, and unbiased science. Learn more at: [www.instituteofcannabisresearchcolorado.org](http://www.instituteofcannabisresearchcolorado.org)

#### **About Kangwon National University**

Kangwon National University is a national university in South Korea with academic and research programs spanning a range of disciplines. The university contributes to research, education, and regional development.

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