



Paging Dr. Green Thumb

BY NGAIO BEALUM / ask420@newsreview.com

Spring weather seems so early this year. Would it be cool if I put my cannabis plants outside right now? I want them to get that good sunlight.

Slow your roll, big fella. Unless you are growing some sort of ruderalis hybrid, it is still too early to put your cannabis plants outside. Cannabis is a “photoperiodic” plant, meaning that it starts to bloom as the days get shorter. Seeing as the days are still fairly short, any plant you put outside right now will go into flower immediately. But since the spring equinox isn’t until March 19 and a cannabis flower takes seven to 12 weeks to reach full maturity, your plants will either go back into vegetative mode or freak out completely and die. Both of those are bad. You might as well wait until after the equinox to make sure your garden is set up. Get your dirt and your tools together and create a nice happy space for your plants to thrive once you plant them in April.

By the way, ruderalis hybrids are “autoflowering” plants, which means they don’t care about long days or short days. They just go into flower when they feel the time is right. Upside: You can grow autoflower cannabis plants all year ’round. Downside: ruderalis hybrids are usually a little smaller so they don’t yield as much. But if you are harvesting all year as opposed to just once, it may even out. I am sure that if you poke around on the internet a bit, you can find someone to sell you some autoflowering cannabis seeds. Have fun in the garden!

Did I hear something about bees loving cannabis plants? Please explain.

You heard correctly. According to a study published in the latest issue of Environmental Entomology, bees absolutely love the pollen from the cannabis plant. And the higher the plant, the happier the bee. Now before you start growing giant pot plants in your garden while yelling, “This isn’t for me! This is for the bees!” at your neighbors, understand that you would have to grow all male plants. It’s the male plants that produce the pollen that makes the bees happy, while it’s the female plants that get you high. (The sweet sticky resin from the female cannabis plants is designed to capture pollen from the males so seed-making can occur, thus ensuring the survival of the species.) Having a bunch of male plants spraying their pollen everywhere is an easy way to create seeds in an entire garden or neighborhood, so you might want to reconsider your plans. Sigh.

Here’s the thing though: Industrial hempfields contain male and female plants. We need to talk Big Agriculture into growing as much hemp as possible. It’s a win-win. Hemp can save the bees and save the planet. □

GOT A QUESTION?

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