

Health Canada on Extracts vs Edibles

Caleb McMillan :: 2023-02-03



Where does [Health Canada](#) come down on extracts vs [edibles](#)? [Last week](#), Canada's federal bureaucracy caught the [cannabis industry](#) by surprise. Some [licensed producers](#) have been marketing "chewable extracts," which Health Canada says are actually [edibles](#).

In an email to CLN, a Health Canada spokesperson said:

"Health Canada has identified edible [cannabis](#) products erroneously being classified and marketed as cannabis extract products. These non-compliant products do not meet the controls in the [Cannabis Act](#) and [Cannabis Regulations](#) which serve to mitigate against public health and public safety risks associated with edible cannabis."

[Aurora Cannabis](#), for example, has a product called "Glitches." These chewable extracts typically come in a pack of ten. Every single extract contains 10mg of [THC](#). So when you buy an entire package, you buy up to 100mg.

But according to Health Canada, this product is an edible, so an entire pack shouldn't exceed 10mg of THC. In other words, each chewable extract should be 1mg.

“We take compliance seriously and developed our Aurora Drift Glitches in accordance with the regulations and fulfilled all requirements by Health Canada prior to market launch,” said a spokesperson from Aurora. “We respect Health Canada’s oversight and continue to have regular, open dialogue about moving forward.”

HEXO CEO on Extracts vs Edibles



So where does Health Canada come down on extracts vs [edibles](#)? Beyond the issue of THC limits, which are a product of bad laws, there is the issue of food-borne illnesses.

Extract products do not go through the same regulatory framework as edible products. Ergo, there’s a problem when [LPs](#) are using edible ingredients and labelling the product “extracts.”

This is what concerns HEXO’s CEO, [Charlie Bowman](#). When Health Canada first announced the change, some Canadian cannabis connoisseurs feared the federal bureaucracy was coming after any potent extracts.

After all, HEXO, which owns Redecan, produces an MCT-oil-based cannabis extract that can yield up to 800mg of THC. Was Health Canada concerned that individuals like myself were discarding the 8mg dispenser and downing half the bottle?

Fortunately, HEXO did not receive one of these letters. “We don’t have any products that would be considered mislabeled or misrepresented,” Charlie told CLN.

Regulating Food



Health Canada's issue stems from ingredients. "I think Health Canada is doing the industry a big favour by pulling it back and saying what you can and cannot put in those," said Charlie.

"My whole career has been in the food industry. I take food safety and food issues pretty seriously. Because if you get something wrong, you can hurt a lot of people just from the mass amount of product that's produced on a daily basis."

[Redecan](#) stays away from lozenges, or anything consumers could construe as an edible. This is to keep children away, but it also has to do with product quality.

For Charlie, product consistency is essential. That's his issue with producers who may label edible products as extracts.

"You can get 2,000 products made up and if you tested them you might get at least 1500 different answers of what the concentrate was in those products," Charlie said.

"The way to do this properly is through nano emulsion."

Nano emulsion is a technique entrepreneurs can use to extract [cannabinoids](#) from cannabis plants. Nano emulsion breaks down the compounds into tiny droplets suspended in water, creating a stable mixture.

This increases the bioavailability of the active compounds and makes them easier to incorporate into various products, such as [edibles](#) and beverages. This also allows for greater consistency.



While one can argue that Health Canada's concern over food-borne illnesses justifies their action, one has to wonder, what are they [smoking](#) over there?

Of course, as a federal bureaucracy, they follow the rules and regulations. There is no profit motive or competition from other businesses. Obedience to the political hierarchy is what drives action at government bureaus.

But the people at the top who make the rules don't know the first thing about cannabis. If they did, there wouldn't be a THC limit, period.

According to George Smitherman of the Cannabis Council of Canada, THC limits are basically a "\$500 million gift to the illicit market."

Government officials cite public health and safety reasons for the THC limit. Yet, what are these alleged harms? Dry mouth? The [munchies](#)?

Meanwhile, anyone in Canada over 19 years old can go to their local liquor store and buy enough whiskey to kill themselves (while potentially seriously harming others in the process).

Anyone with even a little common sense can see that alcohol is objectively more dangerous than THC.

So why the THC limits? It's ideology. It's not science because it's certainly not "evidence-based." Like everything else from this government, adherence to doctrine trumps reason.

Footnote(s)