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Subject:	FYI: Willamette Week media inquiry
Date:	Wednesday, February 24, 2016 1:17:31 PM

JIC Team,

Wanted to just give you a heads up about a request from the Willamette Week, from the guy who writes the rather cheeky – but nonetheless educational – "Dr. Know" column, Marty Smith. The subject: What about metals uptake in home-grown marijuana crops?

Submission to "Dr. Know":

There are warnings about eating food grown in the danger zones in Portland near glass factories. What about if you grew weed in your backyard last summer? Can you smoke it? Geographically, I'm near the Laurelwood on Sandy. You know: The Green Mile.

Response from Dave Farrer:

Some plants, including cannabis, can take up heavy metals from the soil they are grown in. Current temporary rules related to cannabis testing in Oregon do not require testing for heavy metals. However, there are ongoing conversations in scientific advisory committees about whether metals testing should be required in the permanent rules under development.

It is unlikely that cannabis grown in the Portland Metro area could contain enough metals to significantly affect the health of people who consume cannabis. Smoking cannabis produces other chemicals that could increase cancer risk, such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and particulate matter. There would likely be significantly more of those other potentially harmful chemicals in cannabis smoke than heavy metals.

The levels of metals that would be harmful in any product depends on the amount of that product that people consume. While metals concentrations could get high enough in some settings to harm people who use it as a staple food item, like rice, it is unlikely that people who consume cannabis (even people who consider themselves heavy users) consume as much cannabis as they consume actual foods like rice or vegetables.

The column is likely to appear in the WW's March 3 edition.

Jonathan