Introduction:
The 2014 Farm Bill permitted industrial hemp to be grown in the form of a pilot program in order to study its potential as a fully legal consumer product. Minnesota launched an industrial hemp pilot program to do exactly as the 2014 Farm Bill had laid out. While, the 2014 Farm Bill was a major step forward, hemp remained on the list of Schedule I Narcotics. With the passing of the 2018 Farm Bill, hemp was removed from the list of Schedule 1 Narcotics and included in the crop insurance program. This is a big step forward, question still remains: How can Minnesota capitalize on the new freedoms surrounding hemp production granted by the 2018 Farm Bill? Can hemp become a significant “cash” crop in Minnesota? Can it be a crop with revenue as close to the major current crops of Minnesota, i.e. corn and soy? Can hemp see success as a sustainable agricultural resource in the state of Minnesota?

Methods:
Research for this thesis was characterized by an extensive literature review of hemp products and how they compare ecologically with their non-hemp derived counterparts. A review of the agronomic needs of hemp was also conducted to determine whether hemp has the capability of being a resource for a variety of products and with advancements in technology, hemp’s capabilities have only grown. Source: www.trustedclothes.com

Results:
This study found that products made from hemp have ecological benefits that make them favorable over other products made from conventional resources, including cotton and timber. Hemp or CBD-based products is expected to experience huge growth in the United States consumer market. However, regulations are still in flux and must be made clearer for future investments to grow. Hemp research and funding in the U.S., and specifically Minnesota, needs to be increased to provide farmers with additional information and resources to be successful in cultivation. Businesses are interested, but are curious to see if the economics will work out for industrial hemp and its products, including textiles, paper, and composites.

Interview Findings:
This study found similar statements made in regards to the necessity of a market for the hemp products. Harold made a major point when he stated, “Minnesota agriculture has a wonderful history meeting many challenges. So as these markets get defined for hemp fiber and food, for example, agricultural industry is going to respond and we will produce. But we don’t want to get producers producing things that the market is not yet ready for.”

Conclusion:
Hemp will likely be a multi-billion dollar business by 2022. However, unless regulations in the United States become clear and easy to work with, the majority of the raw material for hemp products will come from foreign sources. While there are indeed environmental benefits to the cultivation of hemp and production of its products, in comparison to other resources, there are still questions that remain as to how beneficial hemp is to the environment. This is a result of the criminalization of the product historically. Minnesota farmers are in need of a new crop with high profit potential, hemp fits this economic need. Minnesota farmers are enthusiastic to learn about hemp and its cultivation. The hemp industry will grow in Minnesota, however, it will likely take over 10 years for it to become a significant commodity like corn or soy.