

BOOK REVIEW

Review of *Craft Weed: Family Farming and the Future of the Marijuana Industry*, by Ryan Stoa. Cambridge, MA; MIT Press, 2018.

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Craft Weed is authored by Ryan Stoa, an associate professor of law at Concordia University School of Law in Boise, Idaho. Instead of rehashing familiar arguments about the ethics of legalization, Stoa covers new ground by exploring the future of the marijuana industry as legalization expands. He argues that the industry should ideally be concentrated in the hands of small craft farmers who share the market with large corporations.

Few academic books about marijuana agriculture seem to exist, although articles about legalization have been a popular topic in national newspapers in recent years. *Craft Weed* provides a historical context for marijuana regulations in the United States at the state and federal levels. Because this history covers a variety of laws from multiple states, this chapter, while informative, can be challenging to follow without a visual aid.

Craft Weed sets itself apart in its examination of the marijuana industry through an agricultural lens. Stoa demystifies the industry for lay readers, detailing the plant's many uses and varieties that make it suitable for craft farming, as well as describing cultivation methods. He believes that marijuana is an agricultural product, but state governments have focused more on regulating retail sale and consumption. To address this gap, he proposes agricultural standards to guide the industry, providing a comprehensive look at the environmental impacts – such as water and energy use – with suggestions for mitigating them. Stoa's background in law can occasionally make his arguments seem self-debating. In his diligence to give time to all sides of an issue, he can appear noncommittal to a position, although he ultimately favors small craft

farming and energy-saving outdoor cultivation. This carefully considered analysis rewards patient readers.

Craft Weed paves the way for future scholarship in this area. Much of Stoa's analysis, including interviews with farmers, is centered on California, where state regulations tend to be more favorable towards marijuana agriculture. Although Stoa briefly discusses recent entrants into the field, such as Washington and Florida, this reader wishes he had widened the lens to more fully cover agricultural practices in other states. Despite this precise focus, *Craft Weed* offers a valuable academic perspective on a culturally relevant topic that would appeal to a broad range of professionals in law, sociology, and agriculture. It is well-referenced, well-researched, and will benefit agricultural scholarship as the industry enters its renaissance.

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