

Two firms first to export LatAm medicinal marijuana to Europe

April 25 2019, by Leonardo Haberkorn



In this Jan. 30, 2019 file photo, employees prune marijuana plants at a Fotmer SA, greenhouse in Nueva Helvecia, Uruguay. On April 24, 2019, Fotmer in Uruguay and another company in Colombia announced they will become the first to export legal medical marijuana products from Latin America to Europe, part of what the firms hope will become a growing trade. (AP Photo/Matilde Campodonico, File)

Two companies from Uruguay and Colombia will become the first in Latin America to export medical marijuana products to Europe under deals announced Wednesday.

Fotmer Life Sciences of Uruguay and Clever Leaves of Colombia will export [cannabis extract](#) and dried [marijuana](#) flowers to Germany, which they called the largest market in Europe, with an estimated 700,000 people using [medicinal products](#) derived from marijuana.

Uruguay in December 2013 became the first country in the world to legalize a national cannabis market from growing to purchase for personal use, and the government later legalized the export of medical marijuana products to countries where it is legal, a move that has brought a wave of investment. Colombia, which has decriminalized pot use, legalized medical marijuana products.

The announcements of the deals did not provide a dollar figure or start date.

"This puts Uruguay on the world map" of pharmaceutical cannabis, said Fotmer CEO Jordan Lewis, an American who moved to Uruguay to participate in the cannabis industry after its legalization.

In a press statement from Germany, Clever Leaves CEO Andrés Fajardo said the export deal shows "that the Colombian market can reach international standards and produce high quality medicinal cannabis."

The German company that will import the products, Cansativa GmbH, said it is the first time a European company is buying medicinal cannabis from Latin America. Benedikt Sons, co-founder and director of Cansativa, said in a statement the trade with Latin America will ensure better prices in Germany by expanding sources of supply beyond the Netherlands and Canada.

Fotmer, based in the small town of Nueva Helvecia, employs 80 people and is investing \$7 million in laboratories and 10 tons of marijuana crops for the export market. It sells dried cannabis flowers.

Clever Leaves produces extracts oil from marijuana flowers that is used in pills, creams, ointments, patches and other products for the treatment of epilepsy and chronic pain, among other uses. It plans to produce 32 tons of dried marijuana flowers this year and increase that to 85 tons by 2020.

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