



Jim McKay says the hemp he grew from Arcadia Biosciences seed fetched a premium price.

## HIGH QUALITY GENETICS YIELD HIGH PROFITS

Jim McKay Farms commands a premium price for its smokable hemp flower with the help of Arcadia Biosciences genetics.

**T**he Willamette Valley of Oregon is known for producing wine. But Jim McKay, owner of Jim McKay Farms, says the region is also becoming known for something else: hemp.

With such fierce competition near his Salem-based businesses, it was important for McKay to select the right genetics for his smokable flower and hemp oil products. The Umpqua variety—now offered by Arcadia Biosciences—has been popular in the area since hemp's legalization, so McKay decided to try that and a few other of the company's varieties.

For the 2020 season, McKay grew more than 300 acres of hemp with three different varieties from Arcadia Biosci-

ences—Umpqua, Rogue and Santiam, all of which are part of Arcadia's GoodHemp line of non-GMO hempseed.

Their quality was apparent immediately. McKay says the buds are reminiscent of peacock feathers, iridescent and glistening with hues of green, gold, purple and even some pink.

"The nugs are dense, they've got the right color and they're super gassy. They smell incredible, and the customers just love it," McKay says. "Over and over, out of 10 varieties, the customers pick [the Arcadia varieties] every time."

At the end of the 2020 growing season, just before harvest, McKay brought groups of potential buyers to take a look at his fields. De-

spite being grown outdoors, he likened the quality of the flower to boutique indoor-grown hemp.

"Some of the buyers literally would say, 'This is the most beautiful flower I've ever seen in my life,'" McKay says. "It was very much considered exotic."

The flower fetched a premium price, McKay says. But the benefits extended beyond the profits they delivered.

After planting in June, McKay says he was able to harvest his plants by late August, "way before anybody else" in the area. He also didn't have problems with botrytis (grey mold).

McKay says he loves the varieties' uniformity, which allows for easier harvesting. After pinching the tips of each stem a month before flowering, he says the plants reminded him of dozens of birthday cakes in the field—all squatty, plump and bursting with candle-like buds. He also didn't find any males among his hemp.

Despite Arcadia Biosciences' popularity both within and outside of the Willamette Valley, McKay says the company

still has a small-town feel.

"They're just willing to help and work with us with whatever we need," McKay says. "They were there to walk the fields, even during the pandemic."

Looking ahead to the 2021 season, McKay will be focused on building out his new company, Premium Hemp Distribution (PHD). Located on his farm, which has more than 2 acres of indoor processing capacity, PHD will be drying, processing, curing, trimming and marketing not only Jim McKay Farms' hemp, but also hemp from other companies in the area.

It's a big job that will require McKay to have consistent, reliable genetics for his growing operations to keep things running smoothly. For that dependability, McKay will be spending another year growing varieties from Arcadia Biosciences.

"The bottom line with smokable flower is it's got to have a certain look," McKay says. "Arcadia Biosciences, they have it down."

Learn more at [arcadiabio.com](http://arcadiabio.com) 🌿

### ABOUT JIM MCKAY FARMS

**LOCATION:** Salem, Ore.

**CULTIVATION SPACE:** 300 outdoor acres, 7 indoor acres

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 12 during off season; more than 60 during harvest

**PRODUCTS/SERVICES:** Flower and biomass for extraction sold at wholesale; PHD will soon offer extraction services.