

U.S. giving away the \$30B medical marijuana industry

By Josh Dean, Bloomberg

Lyle Craker is an unlikely advocate for any political cause, let alone one as touchy as marijuana law, and that's precisely why Rick Doblin sought him out almost two decades ago. Craker, Doblin likes to say, is the perfect flag bearer for the cause of medical marijuana production—not remotely controversial and thus the ideal partner in a long and frustrating effort to loosen the Drug Enforcement Administration's chokehold on cannabis research.

There are no counterculture skeletons in Craker's closet; only dirty boots and botany books. He's never smoked pot in his life, nor has he tasted liquor.

"I have Coca-Cola every once in a while," says the quiet, white-haired Craker, from a rolling chair in his basement office at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where he's served as a professor in the Stockbridge School of Agriculture since 1967, specializing in medicinal and aromatic plants. He and his students do things such as subject basil plants to high temperatures to study the effects of climate change on what plant people call the constituents, or active elements.

Read the whole story