



Business

OrganiGram: The Maritime Licensed Producer With Wind In Its Sails

The history of New Brunswick Licensed Producer OrganiGram

By **Lauren Wilson** • Jul 11, 2018



The New Brunswick-based **OrganiGram** got its start in 2013, when it became one of only thirteen licensed producers (LPs) in Canada. Today, the company is one of the biggest LPs in the country.

OrganiGram and the Maritimes

As the Canadian cannabis industry gears up for adult-use legalization coming this October, OrganiGram finds itself right in the heart of a province-wide cannabis revolution.

New Brunswick is actively courting licensed producers with subsidies and cheap power, aiming to build an “ecosystem” devoted to cannabis. This includes workforce training programs at community colleges and cannabis-focused research chairs at the province’s universities.

OrganiGram is supporting these efforts by partnering with Le Collège Communautaire du Nouveau-Brunswick (CCNB) and the New Brunswick Department of Post-Secondary Education, Training and Labour to develop the first **commercial cannabis cultivation technician program** in Canada.

Another big piece of the N.B. cannapuzzle is the province’s Research and Productivity Council (RPC), a crown corporation that helps private companies with science and engineering projects in two main areas: analytical services and market-led research driven by industry needs.

As reported by the **Financial Post**, RPC’s labs were some of the first licensed by Health Canada to test cannabis for pesticides, heavy metals, moulds and THC/CBD levels (among other things). Its scientists do testing for **around half of Canada’s licensed producers**. RPC has hired 54 new people in the past two years, largely to handle testing and product development for cannabis companies.

In addition to OrganiGram, three other **licensed producers** have set up shop in New Brunswick: Zenabis Ltd., Canopy Growth Corp. and Aphria Inc. New Brunswick also played host to the first ever **World Cannabis Summit** this past June.

OrganiGram’s growth

OgraniGram has got a lot going on. The company is rolling forward with big facility expansion plans, unveiling its newest **100,000 square-foot** portion of the expansion this past March. Once the full expansion is completed in April 2020, they will reach a whopping 480,000 square feet in a three-tiered facility, and output is expected to soar to 100,000 kg (100 million grams) annually.

The company is also growing its workforce, and hosted their third career fair of 2018 this past June, adding more valuable **jobs** to the Moncton economy. OrganiGram’s facility currently employs about 300 people. That number is expected to grow beyond 400 by the end of the year.

In addition to their staff, the company employs over 100 skilled tradespeople as contractors who are working on the facility expansion. Chief executive **Greg Engel** told the Financial Post that it’s currently the largest project in the province, and huge for job creation.

And not only has OrganiGram signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the New Brunswick Government to supply, at minimum, five million grams of cannabis per year, but has in place a similar deal and signed MOU with the Prince Edward Island Liquor Control Commission. They also have a supply agreement in place with the Manitoba Liquor & Lotteries Corporation (MBLL). Most recently, the company brokered a deal with the Alberta Gaming, Liquor & Cannabis Commission (AGLC) to sell its products in the province.

Globally, **OrganiGram** was granted a "Permit to Export Cannabis" from Health Canada, with its first shipments going to Australia. They made their first international expansion efforts through investments in the German producer Alpha-Cannabis Germany.

OrganiGram’s growing pains

Growth does not come without setbacks however. In 2017, the company faced challenges with large-scale product recalls and legal action after a Globe and Mail investigation revealed that OrganiGram, along with other LPs, had sold cannabis with **banned pesticides** on its plants that some patients say made them sick. It sparked a **national overhaul on testing regulations**.

A **class-action lawsuit** continues, and in response the company has done a thorough investigation on the source of contamination and implemented several **new measures and policies** to increase the quality and protect consumers.

As a result of the recalls, the company’s organic certification was revoked, but they anticipate it being reinstated this year.

OrganiGram: products and reviews

These are OrganiGram's most popular medical **cannabis strains reviewed** by the Lift & Co. community.

STRAIN	TYPE	THC	CBD	PRICE
Acadia	Sativa	22%	0	\$10
Hunter’s Corner (Hash Plant)	Indica	17.6%	0.6%	\$9
Highlands (CBD Critical Mass)	Indica	8-9%	9%	\$9.50
Lighthouse (Mongolian)	Indica	13.5%	0.05%	\$9/g
Low Tide	Indica	17.2%	0.07%	\$7/g

The brand expansion

Gearing up for the adult-use recreational market, OrganiGram has crafted **three new brands** to appeal to different consumer segments of the market.

The Edison Cannabis Company will offer products for the “mid-use and highly experienced markets” in the form of dry-herb, pre-rolls and oils, while ANKR Organics will help OrganiGram (who was Canada’s original organic producer) get back in the organics game once their certification is reinstated. ANKR will offer pre-rolls and oil products.

Last, the company has partnered with Trailer Park Productions to offer Trailer Park Buds, a more light-hearted brand that will appeal to “value-conscious consumers” with pre-rolled and blended products.

As one of the first LPs and with legalization on the horizon, it will be interesting to see where this Maritime LP sails to next.

--

Lauren Wilson is a writer and well-rounded geeker-outer. She is co-author of the forthcoming book **Healing with CBD: How Cannabidiol Can Transform Your Health Without the High**, available September 18th, 2018, from Ulysses Press.