

SA's cannabis industry has been identified as a growth market that could play a part in the country's economic recovery. During this year's State of the Nation address in February, President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that the government would streamline regulatory processes to allow producers to grow hemp and cannabis commercially. He believes the sector has the potential to create more than 130,000 new jobs.

The Fair-Trade Independent Cannabis Association, a voluntary non-profit association, believes the industry has the potential to reinvigorate the local economy, becoming the poster child for transformation. One of the core pillars of the association is to support and mobilise indigenous small-scale growers and sellers of cannabis into a more formal system.

SA legalised marijuana for personal use in 2018. In 2019, cabinet decided to develop an industrial strategy and a master plan to harness the potential of the cannabis industry. These moves were widely welcomed as a way of removing the biggest obstacle to realising the economic potential of hemp and cannabis.

But, as encouraging as President Ramaphosa's announcement was, the reality is that policy and regulatory uncertainty continues to act as a major obstacle. Without an enabling regulatory framework, the industry's potential is not being realised, particularly as far as medical cannabis is concerned.

While the medical cannabis market is still in its infancy globally, this is changing fast as a growing number of countries implement new legislation to meet demand.

According to Prohibition Partners, a company focused on researching the industry, at least 15 European countries are cultivating medical cannabis for commercial purposes. It predicts that €2.3bn (R38.6bn) worth of unlicensed cannabis medicines will be sold in Europe



Daimon Findlay and Vanessa Jarvis Findlay run NEKED, a boutique cannabis café in Clarens. The shop considers itself the 'Woolies of Weed'. Picture: SUPPLIED

## TIME TO LET CANNABIS THRIVE

by 2026. The company says 2021 was a huge year for the liberalisation of cannabis in Europe with legislation, regulations and market developments continuing to evolve for the better. Germany has promised to legalise and commercialise adult-use cannabis while legal sales are due to commence in Switzerland by the end of 2022, followed by the Netherlands.

The cannabis market also offers huge potential for Africa given the continent's climate, affordable land and low cost of

labour, says Prohibition Partners. It has predicted that the market in Africa could be worth more than US\$7.1bn (R112.5bn).

Rob French, a director at Toredo, distributors of the Koi range of CBD products, says SA has the building blocks in place to develop a huge cannabis export market. However, the country won't realise this ambition until it fixes the legislative issues around both sales and consumption.

One of the biggest challenges is overzealous regulation. Insiders say a

thriving CBD industry is the foundation of any cannabis market, yet the government has imposed a 20mg CBD limit. This has been criticised for being arbitrary, without scientific basis, and below World Health Organisation recommendations.

"CBD has been proven to play an important role in reducing symptoms of some serious illnesses," says French. "However, in SA people using CBD would need to break the law to treat themselves."

He adds that using CBD as a lifestyle supplement is legal. "It's perfectly acceptable to add some CBD to your coffee while shopping, but it's illegal to have a dose high enough to be therapeutic for chronic illness."

French says that when the limits came into effect, Koi was forced to shrink its range by more than 50%. He says restricting the industry from selling products that use D9 – Delta 9 tetrahydrocannabinol is the main psychoactive ingredient that causes people to feel high – in conjunction with other cannabinoids is undermining the potential benefits of the plant.

Vanessa Jarvis Findlay is the founder of NEKED, a boutique cannabis café in Clarens in the Free State. A cancer survivor and sufferer of complex post-traumatic stress disorder, she has personal experience of the benefits of medicinal cannabis.

She agrees that the local dosage limits are out of kilter with the rest of the world.

"This is unfortunate because there's no question that many people experience significant relief from chronic pain, anxiety, depression, insomnia, epilepsy, MS, high blood pressure, menopause, arthritis and cancer, among others, when using cannabis," she says.

NEKED, which was established in late 2019, employs nine people with a wide-ranging customer demographic, says Findlay. "We've seen an upsurge of customers seeking relief from anxiety, insomnia and arthritis." Lynette Dickey

[www.NEKED.co.za](http://www.NEKED.co.za)



NEKED

#TogetherWeedGetBetter



Tell us where it's Eina?  
We have something for that!



PJ Powers / Thandeka

Hi guys, I wanted to say thank you. I have been battling with my back since 2015, I've had two spinal fusion blocks done under anaesthetic in this time which were relatively successful but not lasting. I just wanted to tell you that I have been using KOI for 3 months now and I feel like a different person. Thank you for bringing something onto the market that is so soothing and works so incredibly at the same time.

I will never be without KOI again, it's made me believe the miracles do happen. Warm regards and HUGE thanks. PS could you solve my insomnia now too Pleeeeee!!!!



## NEKED & STILL UNAFRAID IN 2022

It's been nearly 3 years since Vanessa Jarvis Findlay, a Cannabis Activist, rode kaal gat through the tourist town of Clarens, in the Free State, on a white horse to launch her must visit Cannabis café, NEKED.

Together with her husband Daimon & team NEKED, they have visitors from all over joining the ultimate natural healing movement, no matter what age. As the founder, Vanessa believes that "everyone deserves a chance to heal from whatever made them eina."

When interviewing the SAMA award-winning, cancer surviving, Cannabis Social Justice, Lady Godiva we got some insight into the NEKED #IamFree2Choose movement.

"COVID traumatised all of us. We have experience in helping people with their trauma," says Vanessa. "My tiny shop [opened December 2019] provides employment for 9 South Africans," she adds, "our focus is healing ourselves and others."

With the government announcing 130,000 potential jobs in the industry & land being offered to grow cannabis,

Vanessa states, "I believe that we should see, in every town across the country, an establishment as fine as mine."

NEKED recently re-launched its online store [www.NEKED.co.za](http://www.NEKED.co.za) where you can shop safely online, for award-winning CBD, Cannabis & Edible products. You can even book your tickets the first ever Clarens Cannabis Experience, 17 – 20 March 2023.

Over & above the online store, NEKEDs' café & CBD dispensary feels miles ahead of its time. A true experience, in a safe space where you can get expert advice that is reliable & trustworthy. This is a far cry beyond the back door or alley purchasing we have previously been forced to endure.

"I use award-winning KOI CBD, imported from California, for my own cancer, anxiety, insomnia, PTSD and menopause," shares Vanessa. "KOI CBD has been listed in the top 5 CBD brands in the world according to Forbes Magazine."

She adds, "We have helped everyone from celebs to CEOs to mom's, brothers, sisters, husbands & more. Our café is open 7 days a week. Come & visit our healing town of Clarens & enjoy a pre rolled joint or a very special brownie that can turn any frowny upside down & a CBD coffee on our beautiful NEKED deck."



Canna-Curlous?

WhatsApp: 0742263151 Email: [high@neked.co.za](mailto:high@neked.co.za) Follow us: @NEKEDinClarens | @koinaturals\_southafrica

Address: Shop 2 | Country Hub Centre | Main Street | Clarens | Free State | 9707 | South Africa