

JB PRITZKER, GOVERNOR · JERRY COSTELLO II, DIRECTOR

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Illinois Department of Agriculture Issues Operational Permits to First Social Equity Craft Grower, Infuser Licensees

First Adult Use Licenses Issued Under the CRTA Are Now Operational

SPRINGFIELD, IL – The Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) announced today that Star Buds IL, a social equity Craft Grow licensee, was issued an operational permit and has now successfully commenced business operations. Located in Rockford, Star Buds is 66% Black-owned.

Of the 2021 licensing cohort of which Star Buds is part, 67% of those licensees identified as Non-White. Of the 48 Craft Grow Licenses issued by the Department in July of 2022, 42% (20) are majority Black-owned, 36% (17) are majority White-owned, 8% (4) are majority Hispanic-Owned, and 8% are owned by a partnership group. Six percent of awardees did not provide that information. One hundred percent of new licenses were issued to [Social Equity Applicants](#).

“Thanks to the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, I am proud that 100% of our Craft Grow licensees are qualified social equity applicants,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “This is how we build an equitable cannabis industry and begin to repair the devastating harm done by the War on Drugs on communities of color. Congratulations to Star Buds IL and to the many social equity Craft Grow licensees who will soon follow in opening their doors.”

"Illinois is showing that a commitment to equity is about righting the wrongs of the past and also about creating opportunities that will make a brighter future for all. That is the mission at the core of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act, and it continues to guide our efforts in building our state's cannabis industry," **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. "I join the Governor in congratulating Star Buds IL and the social equity Craft Grow licensees who are helping us build the future our communities deserve."

Since 2021, the Department has issued 88 craft grow licenses, 54 infuser licenses, 189 transporter licenses, and approved 10 community colleges to participate in Community College Cannabis Vocational Training Pilot Program. These are in addition to the 21 existing Early Approval Adult Use Cultivation Centers, previously approved under the Compassionate Use of Medical Cannabis Program.

“This is the first of the 342 cannabis licensees issued by the Department in the last year to open their doors, and there are dozens more who will be joining them soon, **“said Department of Agriculture Director, Jerry Costello II.** “Our team has remained highly focused on its core mission of developing a well-regulated and equitable industry. Now, with two cohorts of 100% social equity licensees, we’re proud to say that we have taken the first steps toward fulfilling the vision of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act passed by the Legislature.”

The full list of licensees is available on the department’s [website](#).

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