



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **CannaBiz**

*The inside story of Canada's secret \$20-billion marijuana industry*

**Premieres on CBC TV's *Doc Zone* on Thursday, January 28 at 9 pm PT/ET**

**VANCOUVER, BC (January 8, 2010)** The one-time code of the marijuana industry – No guns, No coke – has changed. Canada's \$20-billion marijuana industry is now at a violent crossroads between crime and commerce. Impossible to police, yet steadily gaining public acceptance, the cannabis industry is now so vast and vital to Canada's national economy that it can no longer be ignored.

Premiering **Thursday, January 28th at 9 pm PST/EST** on **CBC TV's *Doc Zone***, *CannaBiz* untangles the inner workings of the exploding marijuana business and raises serious questions about Canada's drug laws.

*CannaBiz* unfolds in Grand Forks, BC, a small border town nestled in the Kootenay Mountains, where draft dodgers planted the first "BC Bud" in the 1960s. After the pine beetle chewed through what was left of the forest industry, marijuana became the backbone of the local economy. In secret forest plots, basements, barns and high-tech underground bunkers, growers nurture some of the world's most potent bud. Most of the marijuana here, and in the rest of Canada, is destined for the US market, where a pound of premium weed sells for a street price of \$4,500.

Across the country, formerly laid-back marijuana growers now live in fear of armed thieves, and smugglers take huge risks to cross the beefed up American border. Conflicted police and RCMP officers like Harland Venema continue to fight a seemingly futile battle. In Grand Forks, Brian Taylor, once nicknamed "the marijuana mayor," is campaigning for medical marijuana as a prescription for economic prosperity. Ex-con Sam Mellace dreams of supplying medical marijuana nationally through Shoppers Drug Mart outlets.

Are the staggering profits from the cannabis industry better off in the pockets of hard-core smugglers and criminal gangs, or would the Canadian economy benefit from taxing this exploding industry? With inside access to growers, gangsters and police, *CannaBiz* reveals the inside story of Canada's secret \$20-billion marijuana industry, which now employs as many Canadians as the auto industry.

Preceding the premiere of *CannaBiz*, CBC's marijuana-themed night begins on *The Nature of Things with David Suzuki* with the debut of *The Downside of High*, a new documentary examining whether today's strong pot is damaging young minds.

Photos available on [www.cbc.ca/imagegallery](http://www.cbc.ca/imagegallery). Interviews, press kits and screeners available upon request.

*CannaBiz* is produced by Omni Film Productions Ltd. in association with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, directed by Lionel Goddard, written by Lionel Goddard and Chris Aikenhead, produced by Leigh Badgley and Chris Aikenhead and executive produced by David Gullason and Gabriela Schonbach.

**About Omni Film Productions Ltd.**

Vancouver-based Omni Film Productions Ltd. is one of Canada's most respected television production companies, producing top-quality programming in a wide variety of genres. Since 1979, Omni has produced hundreds of hours of television dramas, documentaries, factual and lifestyle series and children's programming, garnering over 100 national and international awards. ([www.omnifilm.com](http://www.omnifilm.com))

**About Doc Zone**

CBC's flagship documentary series, *Doc Zone*, explores and expands on the major issues of our time. Around the corner, around the world, our cameras bring viewers to the centre of the stories everyone is talking about. Informed, exciting and eventful, *Doc Zone* presents a sweeping panoramic view of what matters most to Canadians. Airs Thursday nights at 9 pm PT/ET, on CBC TV. ([www.cbc.ca/documentaries/doczone](http://www.cbc.ca/documentaries/doczone))

- 30 -

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