



For the first time in generations, marijuana is legally growing in New Jersey. In a sign that the Garden State's budding medical marijuana program is finally moving forward, the first crop has been growing hydroponically for about a month in a 5,000-square-foot warehouse in an undisclosed location, officials said.

The first plants are about a foot high, said Joseph Stevens, president of the Greenleaf Compassion Center, the first licensed provider of medical pot. By mid-September, the center's Montclair dispensary should be open and accepting patients to buy marijuana, he said.

"We're excited. There's finally light at the end of the tunnel," said Mr. Stevens, who estimated his agency has spent \$350,000 in start-up costs.

News of Greenleaf's crop marked a step forward for a medical-marijuana program that had been delayed by resistance from local governments and residents and the state's strict security requirements. Another nonprofit, the Compassionate Care Foundation, is also moving ahead and hopes to harvest a crop around November.

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