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## **Aphria Medical Marijuana to double its Leamington operation**

**By summer, site will be twice current size and operating in 2 buildings, as shipments grow**

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One of Canada's licensed medical marijuana facilities will double in size this summer, a year after Health Canada radically changed industry rules.

Aphria Medical Marijuana cultivates 17,000 marijuana plants in a 3,000-square-metre facility operating in Leamington, Ont., south of Windsor. By summer, it will be twice that size and operating in two buildings, rather than one.

The company won't start producing double the amount of pot until late fall.

Aphria has 25 full-time employees with no casual workers.

In April 2014, Health Canada moved medical pot production from a cottage industry of thousands of loosely regulated growers to a commercially competitive sector.

Earlier this week, Aphria completed its first two wholesale shipments of medical marijuana, totalling 54,000 grams.

CBC took a tour of the medical marijuana operation shortly after the shipments were made.

The company is one of 25 licensed by Health Canada across the country.

John Cervini, a fourth-generation vegetable grower and the chief agrologist at Aphria, helped establish a flower greenhouse operation on whose site Aphria now is located.

Cervini says it was a natural progression to move from growing flowers to growing pot in a greenhouse.

"The actual farming and the basics of the plant is the same no matter where the plant or what the plant is," he said.

"A plant uses light, water and carbon dioxide through a photosynthetic process to create sugars, to create the dry matter that makes a plant grow, and it doesn't matter if it's a tomato or a geranium or a cannabis plant. That photosynthetic action is the same."

Vic Neufeld, former chief executive officer of Jamieson Laboratories, signed on as CEO of Aphria a year ago. He says he accepts that the industry, as well as government regulation, is still changing.

"They're constantly evolving, adding, strengthening, and we're all for it. If they could spend the next two years and come out with that final book, this is the bible of medical marijuana, that would be ideal."