

Milieu Market, Steinbach – Navigating the Road to a Circular Economy, Literally!

Julia MacCharles is quite literally navigating the road to a circular economy, and doing so from the streets of Steinbach. More on Julia’s impressive entrepreneurship in a moment. But first, what is the circular economy?

Supply Chain Manitoba describes the circular economy as a departure from our traditional “linear economy” which currently relies on large amounts of material and energy while producing a lot of waste. According to the World Circularity Gap Report, the world consumes 100 billion tonnes of materials a year, and wastes over 90% of it! If that seems crazy, it is.



In contrast, a “circular economy”, according to Supply Chain Manitoba, is meant to bring traditional waste products back into production, by extending product life cycles, using renewable resources and energy. A circular economy maximizes the value of all materials and energy while also reducing or eliminating waste across the product value chain. That simply makes sense!

To help inform the way forward, the Canadian Council of Academies formed its Expert Panel on the Circular Economy in Canada. It concluded that “the linear economic model of take-make-use-waste is no longer viable” and that a circular economy has “the ability not only to ease the ecological crisis, but also to create jobs and mitigate social injustices, while allowing Canada to remain economically competitive”. South of the border, the White House Circular Economy Innovation Roundtable in 2023 convened leading businesses from across the U.S. to discuss “game-changing innovations for industrial decarbonization and a circular economy that can achieve net-zero emissions”. And across the Atlantic, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe is working to “harness the power of trade and economic cooperation for the circular transition”.

So, the circular economy is coming soon to a store near you! Which brings us back to Julia’s story.

To help reduce plastic waste, Julia started Milieu Market as a mobile shop on wheels, providing a refill service to Manitoba communities for household cleaners, personal care products, skincare products, baby products, and more. This is the circular economy in action. And this reduction in plastic waste

Case Study

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makes a difference. According to the Government of Canada, better plastics management using a circular economy approach can reduce 1.8 million tonnes of CO2 emissions in Canada, generate billions in revenue, and create approximately 42,000 jobs by 2030.

With an increase in demand for Milieu's line of sustainable products, Julia decided to open a permanent store in Steinbach in 2021. She describes Milieu Market as an eco-friendly, zero waste market and refillery with a mission to help Manitobans practice the 4Rs – reduce, reuse, recycle, and refill. Her goal is to share the possibility and ease of being sustainable in all areas, including home, health, and hygiene.

Every product stocked in the market is extensively researched to ensure it complies with the company's sustainability guidelines. And Julia is particularly proud to offer products that are made exclusively in Canada, with every effort taken to support as many local companies as possible.

Milieu Market, bringing the circular economy to Manitobans, one product at a time!

For more information, visit www.milieumarket.ca