

# bare market

## Providing Waste-Free Alternatives



### Promoting Reuse and Reduction Options for Body Care and Household Items

A pop-up shop for package-free and reusable goods, bare market is a for-profit business with a mission to make sustainable product choices readily available. Ways that bare market promotes the circular economy include:

- 0 researching products and source ingredients to provide options that are less toxic and that rely on fewer resources
- 0 promoting the supply and use of package-free and reusable products
- 0 using an alternative business model that includes collaboration with partners to avoid overhead costs in order to determine business' viability in various communities.

60

**pop-up shops  
since June 2018**

99%

**of bulk home and  
body care items made in  
Canada**

6,573

**pieces of single-use  
plastic/disposables  
diverted**

20-45%

**lower price for bulk  
products on average**

### Collaborators

To make the enterprise viable during the start-up phase, the organization has relied on volunteers to help run its pop-up shops. A number of organizations, such as Patagonia Toronto, the Toronto Tool Library, Providence Health Care and the City of Toronto, have provided bare market with use of their space. A small retail business advisor, as well as a retail coach and mentor, have also provided business and marketing plan advice throughout the start-up phase.



“The goal through research and industry analysis was to determine how we could make package-free goods more physically and financially accessible.”

- Dayna Stein, Founder  
bare market

By offering bulk body care and home care, DIY ingredients and reusable personal and home care products, bare market helps its customers reduce the amount of single-use plastic they buy and subsequently dispose of or downcycle. All products are reviewed by a third-party cosmetic chemist to ensure that they are safe for the consumer and the environment and do not contain source ingredients that have negative environmental, health or economic impacts.

All bulk products sold at bare market are offered at a significant discount compared to what you would pay at a retail store. To purchase bulk goods, customers can bring in their own containers or borrow — for a refundable deposit of \$2.50 — or purchase glass or aluminum containers from bare market. While bulk products are priced on a 100-gram basis, customers can buy as much or as little as they need or can afford.

Disposable product alternatives, such as durable dish washing brushes and body care products, as well as bulk powders (e.g. laundry powder, dry shampoo, and facial clays) are also available through bare market's online store.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



## Our Circular Economy Future

By January 2020, bare market plans to begin retailing from its newly leased storefront. The location will have an in-store cafe where rescued surplus produce will be made into delicious snacks and meals. To build community, bare market will also use the space to host workshops, classes, discussion panels and more.

[baremarket.ca](https://baremarket.ca)  
[@baremrkt](https://twitter.com/baremrkt)



# FEED IT FORWARD

## Reducing Food Waste & Food Insecurity



### Giving Food Value

Feed It Forward rescues food destined for landfill and diverts it to its food redistribution programs, which include: a Pay-What-You-Can (PWYC) Grocery Store, a PWYC Soup Bar at Humber College and food and meal donations to food banks and shelters.

Feed It Forward is a volunteer-run, non-profit organization that revalues food and supports a circular economy by:

- stopping nutritious food from being wasted in the supply and distribution chain
- making the food accessible regardless of people's financial ability.

### Pay-What-You-Can Grocery Store, Bakery & Coffee Shop

1<sup>st</sup>

**pay-what-you-can  
grocery store**

12,000+

**pounds of food  
rescued per week**

50+

**families of four  
fed per day**

94%

**of food rescued is  
redistributed**



### Collaborators

Feed It Forward relies on local farmers, food producers, distributors and retailers for donations of unsold or blemished food; members of the public, community organizations and businesses for financial support; and over 900 volunteers from the community to deliver its programs.





“It’s the first time in the world, as far as we know, that anyone’s offered a pay-what-you-can grocery store.”

- Dave Hunsburger, Treasurer  
Feed It Forward

Feed It Forward was started in 2014 by Chef Jagger Gordon as a way to reduce the food waste he witnessed in his industry. He started by packing up the untouched leftover meals from his catering events and distributing them to people nearby. From there, he started the Feed Families program by freezing the leftover catering meals and making them available to families in need. The number of families and individuals wanting to take advantage of the program was overwhelming. To meet this demand, Gordon solicited food-related businesses in the GTA to donate unsold, edible and nutritious food rather than sending it to landfill. A small, but growing number of community-minded organizations now donate their unsold food, including produce, meat, fish, baked goods and other products, on a regular basis.

In 2018, Feed It Forward expanded to open a PWYC Grocery Store in the Junction at 3324 Dundas Ave. W. The store promotes community building and social inclusion by allowing customers to determine food prices, without seeking proof of their financial need. Feed It Forward also offers a food literacy program to the community to help them plan healthy meals and show them how to avoid food waste at home.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto’s Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



**FEED IT FORWARD**  
BY CHEF JAGGER GORDON

## Our Circular Economy Future

Feed It Forward is working on an app that will connect food donors (individuals and businesses) directly with those in need. This will empower individuals to make a difference by helping to reduce food waste and food insecurity in Toronto.

Feed It Forward is also launching a prepared meals program called Feed the Future to tackle food insecurity among low-income families, students and seniors. Through a pay-it-forward model, each meal purchased at a cost of \$5 provides a nutritious chef-prepared frozen meal delivered to someone else in need.

[feeditforward.ca](https://feeditforward.ca)



# FREE GEEK TORONTO

Reducing Electronic Waste & Providing Access to Technology



## Extending the Life of Electronics through Refurbishment and Resale

Free Geek Toronto collects and refurbishes used electronics that are destined for recycling or disposal and offers them for resale at an affordable price. As a not-for-profit employment social enterprise, Free Geek provides employment and training opportunities by offering experience in technical software, technology, communications, and customer service work. Free Geek advances Toronto's circular economy by:

- prioritizing reuse and refurbishment over recycling
- providing capacity building for computer software and technology refurbishment and repair.

2,000

**refurbished computers  
and devices**

75%

**of employees gained  
opportunities afterward**

5-8

**job positions sustained  
over 4 years**

100

**tonnes of e-waste  
recycled**

## Collaborators

Free Geek Toronto collaborates with local employment and social service agencies to help identify candidates who would benefit from its employment opportunities. It has received financial support in the form of grants and/or in-kind marketing through partners — such as the Toronto Enterprise Fund, The eBay Foundation and the Canadian Internet Registry Authority Community Fund — that has allowed it to continue to deliver its social and environmental mission.



“As a not-for-profit social enterprise, Free Geek uses unwanted electronics to provide employment and training opportunities as well as access to affordable technology.”

- Ryan Fukunaga, Executive Director  
Free Geek Toronto

As a certified electronics refurbisher and recycler in Ontario, Free Geek Toronto accepts donations of e-waste, such as laptops, desktops, amplifiers, cameras, cables, hard drives and monitors. Free Geek securely wipes the data from the donated items and tests them before reselling them. Laptops and computers are refurbished and upgraded with up-to-date open source software and operating systems in order to provide modern technology to customers at a low cost. Refurbished equipment comes with a 30-day-limited hardware warranty. Other donated equipment that can be reused but is not refurbished, such as amplifiers, cameras, cables, hard drives and monitors, are sold in Free Geek Toronto's thrift store 'as is'.

Free Geek Toronto also has a Community Technology Hub, which provides free access to computers and the internet as well as access to tools for disassembling and repairing your own devices. It also offers workshops on basic digital literacy.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



## Our Circular Economy Future

Free Geek Toronto hopes to broaden its geographical reach through pop up-shops to provide access to technology to those who are unable to get to their downtown storefront. It is also hoping to expand the range of products it offers in its thrift shop to include used computer and electronic parts to enable others to repair and refurbish their own computers.

[freegeektoronto.org](http://freegeektoronto.org)





# FURNITURE BANK

## Furniture Rescue & Redistribution



### Providing Good Quality Used Furniture to Families in Need

Furniture Bank generates revenue through its professional furniture removal services and through the sale of refurbished furniture. It develops the circular economy by:

- 0 keeping quality furniture in circulation
- 0 repairing furniture so it doesn't become waste
- 0 allowing people without financial resources to have higher quality and more durable pieces.

\$11.11

**social ROI to the community per dollar invested**

602,000

**pieces of furniture redistributed**

250,000

**cubic metres of furniture diverted from landfill**

42,000

**families provided with the furniture needed to assemble a home**



### Collaborators

Furniture Bank has a social procurement grant through the City of Toronto to provide clients in social housing with free furniture and home goods. Furniture Bank Toronto is currently working with Furniture Link Inc. – whose mandate is to create commercial alliances – to increase the flow of usable goods acquired from businesses without additional costs to the charity.



“We are trying to develop a self-sustaining charity that intersects poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability.”

- Dan Kershaw, Executive Director  
Furniture Bank

Furniture Bank was started in 1996 by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Toronto who were helping refugees find housing through their shelter program. The Sisters discovered that, once suitable accommodations had been found, most families could not afford to furnish or buy the necessary houseware for their homes. The Sisters started collecting good used furniture and giving it to the families who needed it.

Furniture Bank now generates revenue and furniture donations through its professional furniture removal services. Collected furniture is housed at the Furniture Bank's 26,000-square-foot warehouse, where clients can browse and select the items needed for their home. Donated furniture in need of small repairs is made usable by Furniture Bank's workshop and placed on the floor for client selection. Furniture Bank Studio also refurbishes damaged pieces or those which are less functional. These items are sold to generate additional revenues for the charity. The organization currently has 52 full-time employees.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



**FURNITURE BANK**

## Our Circular Economy Future

As a centre of excellence and the lead member of the newly formed North American Furniture Bank Network, Furniture Bank Toronto actively shares its experiences and best practices with other furniture banks to help them increase their capacity. It is currently supporting the city of Barrie with the expansion of its local furniture bank, which is run in collaboration with Redwood Park Communities.

[furniturebank.org](https://furniturebank.org)





# MATERIAL EXCHANGE

Connecting Industries to help them share



## Exchanging Resources for Reuse

Material Exchange facilitates the transfer of surplus materials between businesses and non-profit organizations to divert waste from landfill and support local communities. The program contributes to a circular economy by:

- 0 facilitating local exchanges to keep materials in circulation longer
- 0 preventing businesses from having to dispose of surplus material, which can reduce their waste management costs
- 0 providing community groups with free materials that are of value to them.

40

**non-profits within the  
Material Exchange  
network**

142

**exchanges of material  
facilitated**

723

**tonnes of materials  
diverted from landfill**

\$625,000

**dollars worth of  
materials exchanged**

## Collaborators

The Material Exchange program is offered through Partners In Project Green, which is a partnership between the Greater Toronto Airports Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. The program is delivered through collaboration with external businesses, recyclers, community groups and non-profit organizations that can accept and reuse the excess materials generated within the Greater Toronto Area.



“It’s a program that helps to facilitate reuse and support social organizations doing great work in the community.”

- Catherine Leighton,  
Coordinator, Waste Management,  
Partners in Project Green

The Material Exchange program was started by Partners In Project Green to see if they could successfully apply an industrial symbiosis philosophy in a local context. In order to participate, business members and non-profit organizations just need to provide the Material Exchange team with basic information about the type and volume of material they have or want to receive. The Material Exchange team then conducts research to identify local organizations that can reuse or recycle the material, prioritizing charitable organizations that can reuse the materials over recycling or for-profit options.

No money is exchanged during this process. The company with the excess or waste materials saves money from the reduction of costs associated with landfilling and the end-user saves money by receiving needed materials for free.

The team also provides facilitation services throughout the negotiations and exchange.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



## Our Circular Economy Future

The Material Exchange believes that the program is scalable and replicable, especially in areas with a high density of industrial, commercial and institutional organizations. Their plan for the future is to continue to identify organizations that can accept and reuse more types of materials, to continue to grow their network of non-profit organizations that can accept materials and continue to engage in initiatives that will drive a transition to a more circular economy.

[partnersinprojectgreen.com/mex](https://partnersinprojectgreen.com/mex)



# REPAIR CAFÉ TORONTO

Bringing people together to fix broken household items



## Developing a Community and Culture of Repair

Repair Café Toronto is a grassroots organization that offers free repair events in communities across Toronto. This Toronto organization is one of the over 1,900 Repair Cafés around the world in the network of Repair Café Foundation based in Amsterdam. Repair Café Toronto contributes to the circular economy by:

- 0 keeping household items in use for longer
- 0 providing free repair services
- 0 teaching people how to repair their own items
- 0 helping other groups start a Repair Café in their community
- 0 advocating for products to be designed for repair.

100+

active volunteers and  
a mailing list of over 700  
volunteers

83

Repair Café events  
delivered in the  
last year

6,050+

items diverted from  
landfill since 2013

60 -75%

repair success rate

## Collaborators

Repair Café Toronto co-hosts events with community centres, libraries, churches, art galleries, farmers' markets and more. It also collaborates with Toronto Tool Library who offers it part of their storefront for free community repair services on Sundays. Since its launch in 2013, Repair Café Toronto has benefited from the support of various donors who have generously provided repair supplies, refreshments and more.





“We were looking for a way to reduce environmental impacts and liked the Repair Café model as it does not require capital investment or special equipment, just passionate people.”

- Paul Magder & Wai Chu Cheng  
Founders, Repair Café Toronto

Repair Café Toronto is a volunteer-run community group that offers free repair events. Organizations can approach Repair Café Toronto to hold an event at their location as long as they have a suitable space that is available free of charge. Depending on the size of the space, either a full-scale event (where they will fix anything you can carry) or a mini event (where the organizers limit the types of items accepted for repair) will be organized.

At the event, volunteer ‘fixers’ assess and fix items that visitors bring, including small appliances, computers, electronics, furniture, clothing, jewelry, toys, books, and bikes and more.

If an item is not fixable, the volunteers will advise the owner on how to properly dispose of or recycle it. In some cases, unrepairable items are donated to the Repair Café so that their spare parts can be reused.

Repair Café Toronto also offers training workshops so that everyone can learn to be a fixer.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



## Our Circular Economy Future

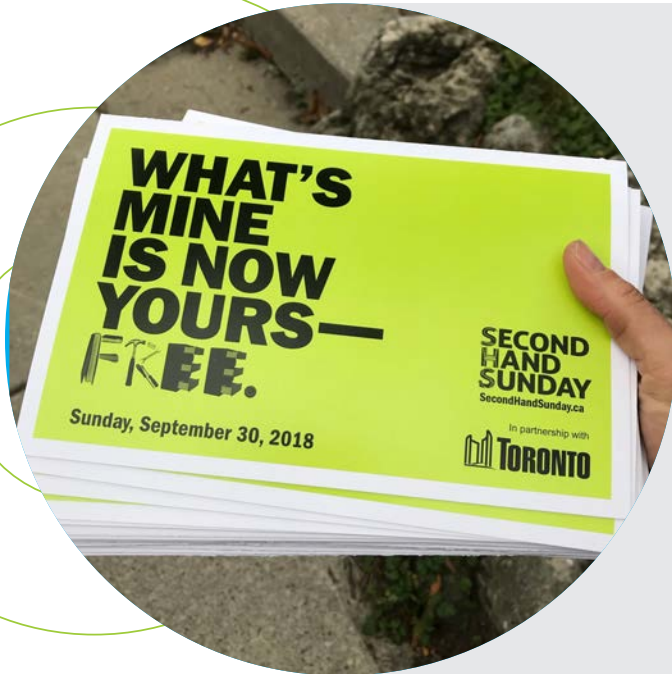
Repair Café Toronto aims to change the mindset of our throwaway society and encourage people to repair broken items whenever possible instead of replacing them. It wants to see repair skills be part of the core curriculum being taught to every child in school. Repair Café Toronto is building a world where waste is seen as resource it is – something to be fixed, reused, repurposed, given new life and sustained through a circular economy.

[repaircafetoronto.ca](http://repaircafetoronto.ca)



# SECONDHAND SUNDAY

Promoting Neighbourhood Sharing



## Scheduling Two Days a Year to Share

Secondhand Sunday is a twice yearly event where residents of participating neighbourhoods are encouraged to leave items that they no longer want on their front lawns to be taken by those who need or want them. Neighbourhood volunteers promote and oversee the event in participating neighbourhoods. Secondhand Sunday is developing Toronto's circular economy by:

- promoting a culture of sharing in urban communities
- keeping household goods in use for longer
- making used items available for free to neighbours and local charities.

## September 2018 Secondhand Sunday Event

6

participating  
neighbourhoods

150

participating  
households

3,000

approximate # of items  
made available

67%

of items taken

## Collaborators

Collaborators include the Green Neighbours Network of Toronto – a group of locally focused green neighbour alliances – and the City of Toronto who helped Secondhand Sunday roll the event out to five additional neighbourhoods in 2018. A small grant received through The Flavelle Family Foundation has enabled the organization to purchase print materials, pay for door-to-door flyer delivery and hire a social media coordinator.



“This is one small way that we can feel empowered to make change around the culture of how we consume.”

- Caroline Brooks, Co-Founder  
& Lead Organizer  
Secondhand Sunday

Secondhand Sunday was initiated in 2015 by Caroline Brooks and Colin Love who were looking for a fun and effective way to share the “stuff” that they had collected and no longer needed. They adapted the idea of Secondhand Sunday from similar events that happen in New Zealand. The model in Toronto is a community sharing event to take place once in September after the summer and once in April when people are doing their spring cleaning.

Prior to each event, local volunteers engage with their neighbourhoods to get the word out about when the event is happening and how to participate. During the event, volunteers post available items and locations online so that people know what’s available and where.

In addition, organizers reach out to community not-for-profit organizations to find out what items they need, so that volunteers can collect and deliver these items to the organizations if they become available on Secondhand Sunday.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto’s Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



**SECOND  
HAND  
SUNDAY**

## Our Circular Economy Future

Caroline and Colin hope to continue to increase household participation in the neighbourhoods where the event is currently held and hope to expand the number of neighbourhoods participating in the event as more volunteers come forward.

To generate awareness about the event and when it occurs around the city, they also intend to continue to leverage their partnership with the City of Toronto.

[secondhandsunday.ca](https://secondhandsunday.ca)





# THE SPENT GOODS COMPANY

## Reusing Spent Grain from Breweries to Make Nutritious Food



### Reusing Grain

The Spent Goods Company is a food transformer that reduces food waste by taking spent grain from the craft brewing industry and using it as an ingredient for bread and crackers. The Spent Goods Company advances Toronto's circular economy by:

- 0 offering healthier food options locally (barley has twice the fibre of wheat)
- 0 reducing greenhouse gases by keeping spent grains out of landfill
- 0 collaborating with local businesses to improve their bottom line
- 0 decreasing the risk associated with relying on external sources of raw materials (e.g. crop production).

100%

of products made in  
Toronto

1,000

loaves of bread  
sold per month

331

kilograms of spent grain  
diverted from disposal in  
first 7 months

12

businesses selling  
the company's  
products

### Collaborators

The Spent Good Company's key collaborators are Henderson Brewing Company and the Drake Commissary. The company has also received in-kind funding and support from the Centre for Social Innovation's (CSI's) Agent of Change program as well as business mentoring through Ryerson University's Social Zone. The company was also the recipient of a \$5,000 grant from Carrot Commons and won \$6,000 in a business pitch competition event, which helped to cover some of its start-up costs.



“An estimated 185 million pounds of spent grains are disposed of in Ontario each year. That’s enough to feed every Ontarian two loaves of bread per week for a year.”

- Dihan Chandra, Managing Director  
The Spent Goods Company

The Spent Goods Company started when Dihan Chandra, who was interested in identifying pro-environment business opportunities, researched alternative disposal options for the spent grains generated by the brewing process at the Henderson Brewing Company. Dihan suggested that they reuse the grain as an ingredient for bread because it remains high in fibre and protein. Dihan then partnered with the Drake Commissary, located next door to the brewery, to come up with the bread recipes and to produce the bread for him under a private label. The Spent Goods Company currently sells their Beer Bread Sourdough through select grocery stores.

In collaboration with the Spent Goods Company, the Henderson Brewing Company recently made a limited edition Sourdough IPA Beer by replacing up to one third of the barley grains used in the brewing process with bread crumbs from unsold bread that would have otherwise been disposed of. They are currently looking for funding to bring this brew into full production.

This case study was produced by the City of  
Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation  
unit in July of 2019.



## The *Spent Goods* Company

MADE IN TORONTO

### Our Circular Economy Future

Spent Goods is growing by building its brand, testing new products with longer shelf life, such as spent grain pasta and juice-pulp-based dog biscuits, and collaborating with like-minded local businesses. It hopes to expand its distribution channels and will be selling products at farmers markets this summer.

[spentgoods.ca](https://spentgoods.ca)



**Eat, drink and reduce climate change**



# TINY TOY CO.

Small Toy Rescue and Reuse



## Repurposing Toy Debris as Educational Material

Tiny Toy Co. is a social enterprise with a mission to divert toy waste from the landfill by repurposing small toys and parts of toys that are no longer wanted into activities for play-based learning. Tiny Toy Co. supports the circular economy by:

- 0 extending the useful life of unwanted small toys and toy debris by creating games that are as valuable as those made of new materials
- 0 engaging children and educators while promoting a cultural shift towards creative solution-seeking to address junk-drawer garbage.

100+

educational games and activities developed

7,000

shares of initial post on Facebook

5

local businesses hosting collection bins

1000's

of toy pieces returned to the economy

## Collaborators

Tiny Toy Co. collaborates with some small businesses in Toronto where the toy debris collection bins are placed, including local environmental stores like EcoExistence and Pretty Clean Shop. It also has the support of a handful of volunteer toy debris sorters that categorize based on phonetics, and other language skill-building concepts.





- Rebecca Saha, Founder  
Tiny Toy Co.

Tiny Toy Co. has also developed original board games that use the toy debris as game pieces. These are produced using recycled or recyclable paper as well as environmentally responsible inks and dyes. Games and activities are sold on the company's website.

This case study was produced by the City of Toronto's Circular Economy & Innovation unit in July of 2019.



Rebecca would like to scale up her business venture in order to repurpose more used toys. She is also seeking collaborators to help her open and operate a free toy store, where gently used toys can be donated or swapped in order to further reduce toy waste.

[illegible]

Call **3 1 1**