

Company: Precylce NYC

UN Global Goal: 12- Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

1. Can you tell us a bit about your business and how it relates to the UN global goal?

- Our business is a zero waste grocery store. That means that we try to mitigate waste at every step possible. We do not have any plastic in our store; produce is always locally sourced & “naked” or unwrapped, we have bulk goods available that our customers put in reusable cotton bags, glass jars, or compostable paper bags, and we also have household goods that are plastic free & sustainable. Our business aids in several of the UN global goals, including but not limited to:  
  
#2: Zero Hunger - We donate to community fridges every week to help provide food to individuals and families in need.  
  
#8: Decent Work & Economic Growth - We only carry products that are local & sustainable, and encourage our customers to be more conscious about the sources of products they are buying in our store and outside of our store. We are very transparent about where our goods are sourced from.  
  
#12: Responsible Consumption & Production: We do our best to prevent food waste by donating excess food and composting food that has gone bad. We also prevent waste in general by eliminating unnecessary packaging waste & implementing a system that encourages reusing, upcycling, & preventing unnecessary waste from the start as opposed to relying on recycling.

2. How did the company get started and who was involved?

- Our store opened in December 2018. The owner, Katerina Bogatireva, was determined to open a store similar to the ones she remembers in her childhood growing up in Riga, Latvia. Plastic was rare, and bulk goods were available to be filled up in reusable glass jars. She grew up with strong values of not wasting

food and getting the most out of resources. When she moved to NYC, she was surprised by the amount of waste created for the sake of convenience and wanted to do something about it.

3. Does your company's innovation relate to a sense of mission, purpose, or meaning?

- Yes. Precycle exists to empower customers to reduce their environmental impact by reducing food and packaging waste. We believe that every customer has the right to know where their food originates & deserves the option to choose reusable over disposable.

4. How did the original idea come about?

- Katerina was inspired by the stores she remembers in her childhood. A turning point in her life was when she started to be more conscious of the waste that she was producing. Little by little she started to replace disposable with reusable and challenged herself to find solutions to avoid as much waste as possible. One day her son came home from school and asked her if she knew how long plastic would remain in a landfill. This is when she started to think of the idea to open Precycle back in 2015.

5. What was the initial motivation to start a business like Precycle?

- To reduce waste from the start and provide customers with local, sustainable options.

6. Do you see this idea expanding, will other businesses possibly consider your innovation for their own company?

- Yes, this idea is already expanding across the country and world, but in small steps. There are several more sustainable refillery businesses opening, but they are typically in the household/beauty category. Precycle is unique in that it offers a wide variety of products, like a typical grocery store does, just without the

waste! Hopefully our business model becomes more widespread and accessible over the next few years.

7. Is Precycle looking to implement any further innovations to the company?

- We are adding new products often, and in the process we are convincing fellow local vendors to adopt reusable systems. For example, we offer many locally made products such as yogurt, kimchi, pasta sauces, pickles, etc. that are all sold in glass jars that can be returned and then sent back to the vendor to be reused. We are also about to launch a new plastic-free local delivery service next week that allows customers to receive bulk goods, produce, and home goods in glass jars and cotton bags that are then returned at the next delivery to be sanitized and reused. The goods are delivered in an electric van.

8. How does Precycle want to impact the environment and/or society?

- We aim to educate our community on the importance of reducing waste from the start by making conscious choices. We would love for business models like ours to become more popular, so that choosing to eliminate single use plastic and choosing locally sourced products and produce can be more accessible for everyone.