



# Press Release

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For immediate release

## Writing the future in circles

***Fourteen companies showcase how zero waste and regenerative practices are creating the food companies of the future***

**Mississauga, Ont., April 14, 2021** – On April 14, 2021, fourteen Ontario-based Sobeys Inc. suppliers showcased how they grow and make food sustainably in a virtual pitch competition, in front of over 50 food industry leaders from across Canada including local politicians, government representatives, investors, and distributors.

This event marked the graduation of these companies from the first cohort of Sobeys [R-Purpose MICRO](#), a 12-week intensive program to help early-stage food and beverage companies accelerate their growth by becoming more purpose-driven, sustainable and circular.

All participating businesses are part of Sobeys Inc.'s Ontario Local program led by Sheri Evans, which supports the development of small local suppliers on their retail journey, from home kitchens and markets to Sobeys and Foodland shelves. The Sobeys R-Purpose MICRO training is developed and delivered by [Provision Coalition](#), Canada's source for food and beverage sustainability expertise.

Cher Mereweather, the CEO of Provision Coalition said, "We recognize that one way to help accelerate a circular food economy is to work with large companies, but we also recognize the disruptive power of the start-up. We are proud to enable smaller, micro-sized food companies to embed purpose, sustainability and circularity at the heart of their business models when they are still small, so that they can grow faster and make more of an impact, with zero waste and a regenerative mindset already in their DNA".

The panel of expert judges commended all companies for the quality of their pitches and for the innovative ways they were each using circularity to fast-track their growth. The judging panel was comprised of Evan Clark, Vice Chair, Golden Triangle Angel Network (GTAN); Jim Estill, President and CEO, Danby; Craig Wilson, National Director Local Development and Director Grocery Merchandising, Sobeys; Gary Hughes, Local Development Manager - AB/SMO, Sobeys; and Lynda Stewart, Local Development Manager – ATL, Sobeys.

"Sobeys Inc. has a continued commitment to increasing sustainability across our operations," said Jana Sobey, VP Merchandising – Thrifty Foods, Community & Field. "We are proud that our valued local suppliers share this same goal of making meaningful change by innovating to increase circularity within their businesses."

Please join us in congratulating the first cohort of Sobeys R-Purpose MICRO businesses who have seen first-hand the power of purpose and circularity as a mechanism for resiliency and business growth. This graduating cohort of Sobeys R-Purpose MICRO includes [Abokichi](#), [Cherry Lane](#), [Coppa di Gelato](#),

[Culture Shock Kombucha](#), [Eat My Shortbread](#), [Everreal](#), [Goodums Food](#), [Happy Pops](#), [Louise Prete Food](#), [Mayon Fine Foods](#), [Nature Knows Inc.](#), [One Chocolate Corp.](#), [Saugeen Country Dairy](#), [The Sweet Shop](#), and [Tunnel BBQ](#).

If you are a Sobeys supplier and are interested in unlocking the impact from the program that these companies have seen, registration is now open for the Sobeys R-Purpose MICRO Spring cohort starting May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Register [here](#) today.

\*A circular food business is a for-profit, not-for-profit, or social enterprise whose actions contribute to systemic change towards a circular food economy through the development of new business models, technologies, products or services that design waste out of our food system, reduce emissions, expand access to affordable and nutritious food, and regenerate natural systems.

### **About Provision Coalition Inc and R-Purpose MICRO**

Provision Coalition is a network of food and beverage industry sustainability experts. Their team works across North America helping food and beverage companies grow their businesses in a way that generates more profit while benefiting people and the planet. Provision is led by Cher Mereweather, who has two decades of experience in food and beverage industry sustainability. R-Purpose MICRO is a fast-growing initiative led by Provision Coalition that is empowering and enabling small food and beverage companies from across Canada to embrace the opportunities of purpose, sustainability and circularity.

### **About Sobeys Inc.**

Proudly Canadian, with headquarters in Stellarton, Nova Scotia, Sobeys has been serving the food shopping needs of Canadians since 1907. Sobeys Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Empire Company Limited (TSX: EMP.A), owns, affiliates or franchises more than 1,500 stores in all 10 provinces under retail banners that include Sobeys, Safeway, IGA, Foodland, FreshCo, Thrifty Foods and Lawtons Drugs as well as more than 350 retail fuel locations. Sobeys, its franchisees and affiliates employ approximately 127,000 people. More information on Sobeys Inc. can be found at [www.sobeyscorporate.com](http://www.sobeyscorporate.com).

### **Media contacts**

Jaime Leger, Manager of Marketing and Communications  
Provision Coalition Inc  
519.362.9508  
[jleger@provisioncoalition.com](mailto:jleger@provisioncoalition.com)

Zakiah Lalani, External Communications Specialist  
Sobeys Inc.  
403-827-8217  
media@sobeys.com

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