

In Focus: Sustainability



Stella McCartney
Infinite Hoodie.

WWD: What are your thoughts on the simultaneous growth of fast fashion and sustainability in the market?

S.F.: I was coming of age in my career during the emergence of fast fashion. I understand this business model well, as it is based on the consumer's appetite to purchase. Like many consumable product categories, consumers are starting to ask questions they haven't asked in the past (how was this product made, how do I recycle it, etc). I do not believe we should charge less than the true cost of product, however, "externalities" or impact to the environment are not factored into the unit cost of the product. I think that is a real mistake as resources are finite and must be invested in if we want them to be around for the next generation.

WWD: What does that say about consumers?

S.F.: We've got to create "give and take models" and that's where I believe our industry needs to go. Regenerative technologies like NuCycl are great and are a great step in the right direction, but if we continue to hold the concept that low price is all that matters to the business and consumer, I think we are missing a bigger opportunity. Consumers do not necessarily want a connection with more stuff, rather they want a connection with each other, their communities and with the earth. I believe they are looking for products that align with these values.

WWD: What's next for Evrnu?

S.F.: We are proceeding with a great sense of urgency. On Day One of commercialization, our technology began to draw down negative environmental impacts to global air, water, soil and trees. We will be highlighting the good work already being done to keep textiles and apparel in circulation. There are many things we can do to reuse or recycle our clothing, and we want to promote the work being done, while collaborating with communities to make sure anything that cannot be resold or re-worn gets back into the supply chain.

Finally, our industry has come a long way in the last 10 years, and for the next 10 years, I believe we will see a suite of technologies designed to keep resources in circulation for multiple incarnations. Evrnu will continue to work with forward-thinking partners across the entire textile industry ecosystem, with the common goal of significantly reducing negative environmental impacts while [simultaneously] building better performing products – we want people to wear the solution.

BUSINESS

Sustainable Fiber Firm Evrnu Debuts NuCycl Technology

- Evrnu's NuCycl is the firm's first commercially available technology that converts old cotton garments into new high-quality materials.

BY TRACEY GREENSTEIN

Textile innovation company Evrnu is breathing new life into textiles through its debut of NuCycl, the firm's first commercially available technology that converts old cotton garments into high-quality materials that can be used for sustainable apparel. Garments made with its NuCycl technology can be disassembled at the molecular level, regenerated multiple times, and reused to make new materials, helping brands reduce impacts related to the creation and disposal of garments, the company said.

NuCycl enables designers, brands and retailers to significantly cut footprints regarding water, soil, trees and air by keeping materials in circulation, allowing for a truly circular process, in lieu of growing or locating new materials, Evrnu noted. The company has partnered with international fiber producers to scale its technology through a licensing model for the market, which will be available by 2020, ultimately enabling the fashion industry to modernize and streamline sustainably and cost-effectively, according to the firm.

Evrnu is focused on utilitarian performance, style and function – and that's why it partnered with Adidas by Stella McCartney to create the first item made with NuCycl, a limited-edition run of 50 hoodies, to showcase the possibility of this innovation, the company explained. Its Adidas by Stella McCartney Infinite

Hoodie is a unisex item and the designer's first garment made for both genders, made with 60 percent NuCycl and 40 percent organic cotton.

Here, Stacy Flynn, cofounder and chief executive officer of Evrnu, sat down with WWD to discuss NuCycl and its partnership with Adidas by Stella McCartney.

WWD: NuCycl is a revolutionary product. Can you share more about how you conceived the idea for this technology?

Stacy Flynn: Christopher Stanev and I have been making textiles and apparel commercially for the last 20 to 25 years. We decided much more needed to be done and chose to step out of the corporate world to focus on transformative technologies. After studying the issue, we decided that the size of the problem was directly proportional to the size of the opportunity, and pinpointed garment-to-garment recycling as our first innovation challenge. We had to look at things differently and we knew that our technologies must significantly reduce impacts to natural resources, provide consumers with a better experience and by design keep our industry healthy into the future. Globally we dispose of about 50 million tons of textiles every year. Fashion, like food, is a product that consumers care about – including how it is made, where it comes from, and what happens when they recycle it.

NuCycl is designed to inspire a shift in behavior giving consumers confidence that their textiles are being diverted from waste streams and turned back into things they want to wear against their skin because the product looks, feels and performs on par or better than the original.

WWD: Tell me more about collaborating with Adidas and Stella McCartney. How did that partnership begin?

S.F.: Adidas is an incredible partner to Evrnu. We work with their futures team, who work three to five years ahead of their in-line teams. The product they asked us to build has gone through several iterations and they have extensively tested the fabric and garment; a high bar has been set from a performance perspective and we want NuCycl to exceed their expectations and push the technology from a performance perspective. Stella McCartney is always on the cutting edge of design and suitability. She has a strong voice in our industry and is a dream collaborator. We are thrilled that the first commercially produced product was designed by Adidas by Stella McCartney. They pushed the design and use of our technology and made the first commercially produced NuCycl-ed garment!



Evrnu's NuCycl yarn.