

ChicoBag™

Helping Humanity Kick the Single-Use Bag Habit



By Peter Melton

In early 2004, Chico resident Andy Keller took a trip to his local landfill after spending the day landscaping his backyard. He was horrified by what he saw. Single-use bags were blanketing the landfill and later, as he drove home, he



noticed that discarded plastic bags were literally everywhere. That day, Keller vowed to stop using single-use bags; he dropped a few bucks on a second-hand sewing machine and began sewing what would ultimately become the first ChicoBag-brand

reusable bag.

The first ChicoBag sold in 2005 on Earth Day here in Chico at the Farmers' Market. Initially available only in white, the original bag has evolved and grown into a full line of reusable bags. The mission of the company has never changed; ChicoBag is in business to "Help humanity kick the single-use bag habit.

The reusable-bag industry, led by the ChicoBag Company, has grown steadily in the past six years, as has our cultural awareness about the way we treat our planet. In 2008, ChicoBag introduced trademarked rePETe products as part of an evolving effort to reduce its environmental impact. The term "rePETe" is used to identify bags that are made with recycled content.

ChicoBag is also striving to help create a new model for the way business is done. It has put in place programs designed to reduce waste throughout the entire supply chain. "From manufacturing to office administration, our waste-reduction goals lessen our impact

on the planet," says Keller. "We must shift away from the business-as-usual linear model to a circular



rePETe™

model where the amount of waste is greatly diminished. The concept of waste does not exist in nature. In nature what we call waste is food for some other aspect of the sustainable circular system."

The company takes active steps daily with these and other

sustainability programs, such as zero-waste materials, businesswide waste diversion, fund-raising, and ongoing educational programs for young people, featuring the Bag Monster blog.

The ChicoBag Company is now an industry leader in the compact reusable-bag movement and an innovator of fashionable, lightweight bags and packs that can be easily stuffed into an integrated pouch. The line of reusable bags has recently increased to include a single-strap cross-body sling, a messenger bag, and daypack, along with the ever-popular Vita design in both nature and karma prints.

Chico Bags are available at retailers throughout the North State and around the world. There is much more to know about this local treasure; check it out at www.ChicoBag.com.