Consumer Innovation Shout Out: Rens is Making Sneakers from Coffee Beans

by Sudarshan Nagaraj

It is no secret that the fashion industry is one of the top polluting industries, plagued with unsustainable practices in its supply chain. According to the sustainable fashion industry body Common Objective, 57% of all discarded clothing ends up going to landfill, while “35% of all materials in the supply chain end up as waste before a garment or product reaches the consumer.”

There are several innovators in the industry who are showing how to adopt sustainable and eco-friendly practices. Two entrepreneurs in Helsinki have started making sneakers from used coffee grounds! Their startup, Rens, combines fabric made from coffee grounds with recycled plastic waste to create a material light and durable enough to be used for footwear. This sneaker material has several benefits. The natural properties of coffee grounds help eliminate odors. Given that coffee is consumed in vast amounts, its production results in a lot of food waste in the form of coffee beans. Using plant-derived and recycled materials in fashion provides sustainable and regenerative benefits the industry badly needs.

Rens, recently launched a fundraising campaign on Kickstarter, securing funding and generating buzz, reinforcing the message that next-generation shoppers are inclined towards sustainable alternatives.

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