



Company Focused on reducing its environmental 'beer print'

By Amy Fitzpatrick

If you visit the Molson Coors Beverage Company's website, you might see some beer brands that don't look all that familiar, but you'll also see some staples of Newfoundland and Labrador culture — beers that have been prominent on store shelves, bar fridges, and kitchen tables for decades and generations.

Brands such as Black Horse, India, Coors Light, Molson Canadian, and Miller Lite are made right here at the Molson Coors Brewery in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador (N.L.), and 99 per cent of those locally produced products stay here.

Molson Coors has been part of the fabric of Canada since 1786, and the St. John's brewery has been on its current site since 1893; originally it was the Newfoundland Brewing Company, owned by the O'Dea Family.

Sean Kennedy, Molson Coors' General Manager - Atlantic Canada Operations, explains that the brewery had more separation from city homes when it was first built. But, as the city grew, it became land-locked by residential houses. He says being in the middle of a residential neighbourhood requires them to be very conscious of always being good neighbours.

"Unlike most breweries that are located in industrial parks, we don't ship products after 5 p.m. due to noise and traffic concerns — 15 feet from my office window is someone's home, so we keep a good neighbour policy in effect 24/7," says Kennedy.

That local good-neighbour policy extends to the company's global efforts to be corporately responsible for product manufacturing and its environmental impact.

Through a \$2-million investment in September of this year, the company is replacing well-known "hi-cone" beer can packaging with recyclable cardboard cartons. It's a significant change — the new packaging more closely resembles what consumers have always purchased in closed cardboard bottle packages. However, the plastic rings we're used to seeing holding cans together will now be a thing of the past as the brewer will offer 6, 8, 12 and 24-pack cases in various combinations of 355 ml and 473 ml cans. It's just one step Molson Coors has taken to reduce the amount of waste that ends up in landfills.

Kennedy explains N.L. is still a bit of an outlier in the North American beer industry, with 70 per cent of the beer manufactured and sold here packaged in bottles. In contrast, numbers are reversed across North America, with 70 per cent of the beer sold in cans.

Unlike glass waste which is sent to landfills, aluminum and cardboard waste is sent to recyclers.

In the past five years, Molson Coors St. John's has reduced its total waste by almost 70 per cent, from 627 tonnes to less than 200 tonnes ending up in landfills in 2021.

The packaging shift is a big step forward in its long-term strategy to minimize its environmental footprint, or as they call it, their "beer print," but it also includes a new look for some of Molson Coors' products. New packages are launching for most brands in over 30 different package sizes. Kennedy explains that the new packaging is more environmentally friendly, giving consumers more variety to choose from.

Kennedy and Molson Coors saw a continued opportunity to promote the local manufacturing history that dates back more than a century in N.L with the visual rebranding. The company has added the Manufactured Right Here (MRH) logo to Molson Coors' locally produced products. Kennedy says the idea started over the last couple of package rebrands and has most recently resurfaced with these new can packages in addition to the newly revived India IPA cans and cartons, which hit store shelves in Fall 2021.

The MRH logo was created in 1990 by Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters Newfoundland and Labrador (CME NL) to promote locally manufactured products in

N.L. Manufacturers that meet the criteria can use the logo on their packaging and promotional materials for a small fee.

"We are proud to see the Manufactured Right Here logo on Molson Coors products across N.L. This is what the logo was designed for - to give credit to companies that support local families and producers in the manufacturing industry, right here in Newfoundland and Labrador," says David Haire, Vice President of CME NL.

Kennedy has been a CME NL board member for 12 years, so he's very familiar with their work in the manufacturing industry. He credits CME NL and their LEAN manufacturing facilitators for helping Molson Coors move toward its goal of zero loss and waste. And he believes locally made Molson Coors' products paired perfectly with the MRH logo and the standards and ideals it represents.

"I've been a big proponent for everything manufacturing, and Newfoundland and Labrador focused," says Kennedy, "and I've always wanted to make the Manufactured Right Here logo more visible and prominent because Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are allegiant to their own. And we've been very successful over the past few years in adopting that mindset as we rebrand and develop new graphics."

Kennedy says that Molson Coors is the first big brewer in Newfoundland and Labrador to switch to packaging cans in the recyclable cartons and add the MRH logo to their products. As a second-generation Molson employee (by marriage) and proud NLER, he's very proud of it.

"It's nice to say that it's manufactured right here because it is," says Kennedy, "it's made by Newfoundlanders and Labradorians, for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians."

To find out more about the Manufactured Right Here Program and logo usage, contact Jackie Field @ CME NL: 709-237-8711 | email jackie.field@cme-mec.ca