

Environment

Consumers urged to shop with environment in mind

By MIKE HALSALL
"Green Can Be A Sign of Danger"

Over the past 40 years, Canadians have managed to shop themselves into an environmental nightmare.

Everything was disposable, cheap and easy. However, due to the growing environmental consciousness in today's consumer, a growing list of "green" products have invaded the modern marketplace. These products, made of recycled or recyclable material, or designed for multiple usage, all say one thing: we can shop our way out of this mess. Many consumers are ready to pay top dollar to help out the environment.

Many marketers are very sincere in their efforts to reduce our pollution problem. Nonetheless, there are a growing number of "hypesters" within their ranks which you, the consumer, must be made aware of. The following list of "green" products has been identified by the Financial Post Magazine as suspect.

Recyclable Disposable Diapers - These are what they say, but no facilities exist at present to recycle them and they still end up in our landfills.

Environmentally Safer Batteries - Despite reducing the amount of mercury in the batteries, the other materials which make up a battery are still toxic and batteries are not recyclable. Invest in a battery recharger and rechargeable batteries; it can save money in the long run.

President's Choice "Green" Garbage Bags - These are biodegradable and photodegradable (broken down by sunlight). However, these qualities are not as good as they sound. Many such products contain additives to help them break down, which, once combined with



the other materials, are toxic. President's Choice "Green" Cooking Spray - Loblaw's rightly claims that this product does not contain Chloroflourocarbons (CFC's). However, CFC's as a propellant in aerosols has been banned for over 10 years; they are "beating a dead horse." Bottled Water - As the Perrier

Company experienced showed, even "pure" spring waters can be contaminated. Buy a water filter and use your own tap water, for this will save you money once again. Bottled water frequently runs at around \$2-\$3 per litre, compared to mere cents for the same amount here.

There are more products available than can be listed within this short space. All con-

sumers are urged to be more critical of anything labelled "environmentally friendly." Most of these green products are "green" and are usually better than their counterparts. Merely be wary of those who would use your environmental enthusiasm for their own ends. Remember, you can make a difference and not be "taken to the cleaners" in doing so.

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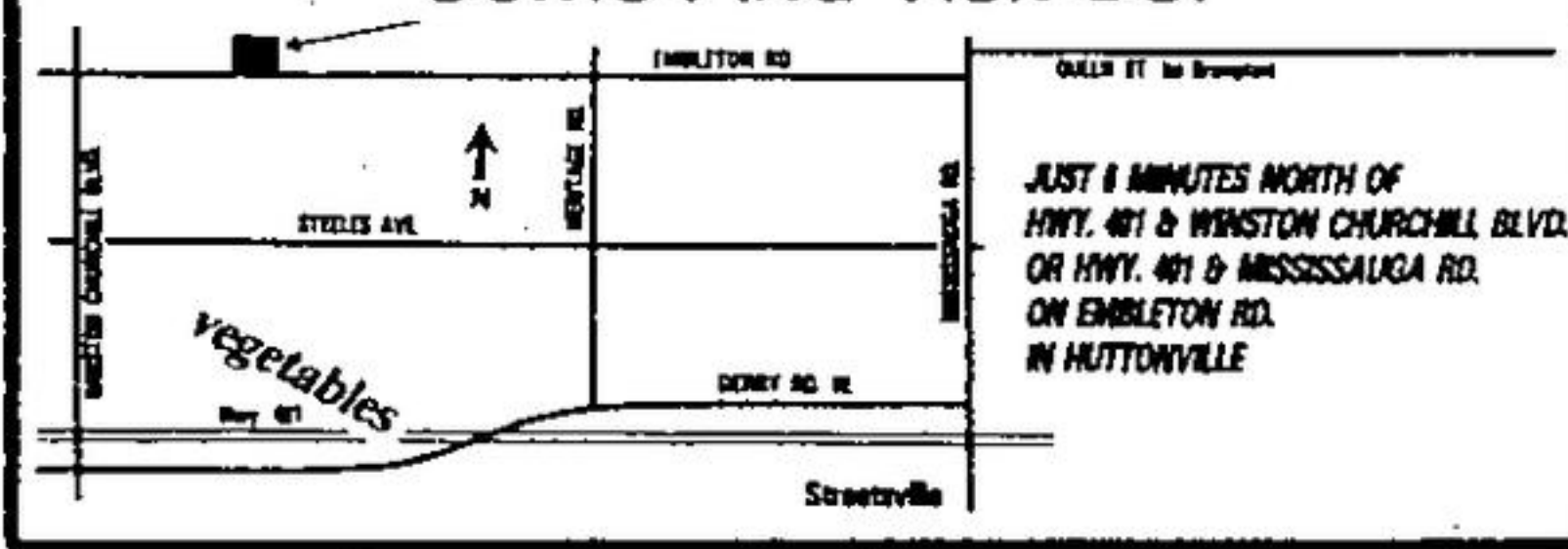
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