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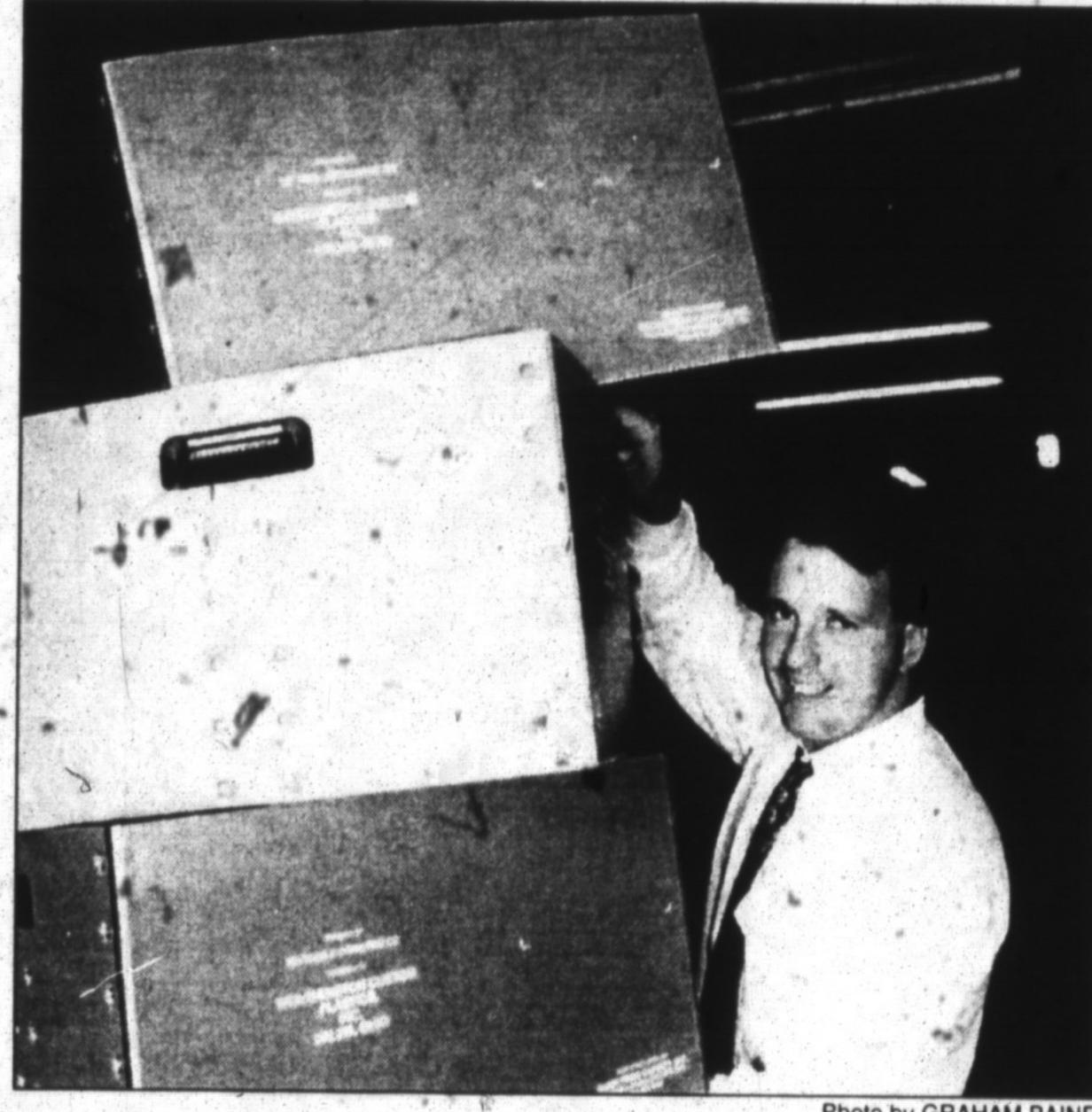


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Numatech president Brent Vickery shows the reusable packaging that helped him win an award from Canadian Airlines.

A winning package for this 'green' Milton firm

By KAREN SMITH

*The Champion

A Milton-based company that converts corrugated plastic into reusable packaging — a valuable environment saver — was one of 20 firms from across the country selected for an award.

Among 200 finalists, Numatech - specialists in reusable packaging - won the Canadian Airlines International Expansion Award.

"It was rather surprising," said company president Brent Vickery of the award for expanding businesses. "I was pleased."

The Alliance Road company's reusable packaging materials are slowly replacing more traditional cardboard containers especially in businesses where non-recycleable waxed cardboard containers are used, Mr. Vickery said.

For instance, Numatech recently designed a unique container for Canadian flower growers and wholesalers. The creation is expected to replace more than a million cardboard boxes, he said.

"After flowers are packed and shipped, the boxes are packed up and shipped back to their source, ready to be used again and again - saying hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs."

The innovation inspired company officials to take the design to South America - one of the largest sources of cut flowers in the world, Mr. Vickery said.

"In short, in this one industry alone, Numatech's containers are expected to add valuable shelf life and reduce transport damage to the millions of fresh cut flowers distributed around the world annu-

Overall, the firm converts corrugated plastic polypropylene into a large variety of reusable packaging and material handling products.

Thinking "there's got to be another way" for businesses with closed distribution loops to transport products, Mr. Vickery, of Acton, started the company four years ago.

"As part of its service, Numatech can provide a program to return packaging for reuse," the company president said.

The 20 award winners were chosen from five regions - Atlantic Canada, Ontario, Pacific Canada, Quebec and" western Canada. Companies with annual gross sales from \$1 to 10 million were invited to submit proposals. Numatech was one of them.

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