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Youth Innovation Challenge Success Story by Monique Chan of Bruized



Monique Chan

Monique Chan is a 27-year-old creative from Toronto who founded Bruized in 2019. Inspired by the natural world, she found there was always a chance to learn and discover new innovations that allow humans to live more symbiotically with the environment. With over nine years of working in the food industry under her belt, she realized how much good food is thrown out unnecessarily across our food systems. When studying food waste in university and discovering that 58% of all food produced never gets eaten, she became insistent on proving there **MUST** be a better way. This led her to envision a business model that served both our community and the planet by eliminating unnecessary waste, changing perspectives, and inspiring others to live more healthy and sustainable lifestyles. Bruized was born.

Briefing Note on Bruized

Bruized is on a mission to fight food waste through education and healthy eats. We rescue perfectly good food and upcycle it into sustainable snacks, while inspiring healthy discussions about how we can fight food waste together. We're a team of two passionate women of colour, driven to make a difference in the world: young, scrappy, and hungry for change, we're taking what we've got and making the best of it.

Our motto is *Embracing Imperfect*. We're proud to rescue ingredients commonly wasted throughout the supply chain (including organic juicer's pulp and imperfect or surplus produce) and find them a renewed purpose as star ingredients in our plant-based treats. We believe in making food that fuels and tastes as good as it makes you feel!

Our first year of sales started in June 2019. Since then, we've saved over 5,000 lbs. of produce from going to waste—and we're just getting started!



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We've celebrated many successes to date, including winning the 2022 COIL Activate Circular accelerator program, the 2021 Earth's Own Plant Project, the 2020 Youth Innovation Challenge of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), the 2020 CAP Agri-Food grant from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs, and the 2020 Vaughan Starter Company grant.

We've been guest speakers at COP15, the Food Loss and Waste webinar hosted by the United Nations FAO and the CEC, and the *Environment* and Urban Sustainability Students' Association Environmental Panel of Toronto Metropolitan University. We've also been featured in the Toronto Star, The Globe and Mail, NOW Magazine, BlogTO, Sustain Magazine, Food in Canada, and on Breakfast Television.

We're lit up by collaboration and fuelled by the changes we can make together. We work with local farmers, small businesses, non-profit organizations, and our audience to help support them in reducing their food waste footprint and are always open to building new relationships with local makers or companies.

We are still a small team of two and are always searching to gain new support and knowledge that can drive Bruized to continue growing and making a bigger impact.