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WASTE MANAGEMENT: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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Nowadays, more and more people are concerned with environmental issues and waste management in particular. Zero waste movement is an eco-trend in favor of a society without waste which calls for conscious and responsible consumption. According to the philosophy of «life without waste» people can change the world by making it cleaner and safer, creating less waste. The philosophy offers us to become a part of a huge eco-team and get free from the world of things.

Zero waste approach is based on a set of principles aimed at reducing to a minimum the amount of waste by reusing products or utilizing alternative materials that can be recycled.

The founder of the zero-waste lifestyle movement, Bea Johnson, described the five principles of the zero waste lifestyle, the five Rs, in her book «Zero Waste Home»: «refuse, reduce, reuse, recycle and rot».

The «refuse» principle involves refusing to use things that we do not need, e.g. single-use plastics or unnecessary packaging. The second principle, «to reduce», is aimed at reducing things we do not need and adopting minimalistic habits, e.g. choosing products with less packaging. The third principle is to reuse products or materials as much as possible, e.g. cloth shopping bags instead of plastic ones. The fourth principle means that people should recycle things that they cannot refuse or reduce. The «rot» principle means composting, putting food and natural organic matter back into the ground.

Both businesses and consumers should make choices that benefit the environment.

Companies can reduce their impact on the environment by implementing zero waste principles in product design and manufacturing. Manufacturers can create environmentally friendly products, choose «green» materials or the materials that can be reused or recycled.

Consumers should change their consumption habits and prioritize purchasing zero-waste products, buying products that last longer or consider reusable packaging, e. g. packaging products in materials like glass, wood, paper or compostable plastic bags. Eco-friendly products not only reduce our negative effect on the environment, they contain fewer chemicals and can provide health benefits for consumers.

In Belarus the principles of zero waste movement have gained popularity among environmentally conscious citizens. So far, some measures have been taken to reduce plastic items in catering establishments.

Zero-waste lifestyle can minimize harmful environmental impacts by generating less waste. It contributes to reducing pollution, enhancing food quality and improving human health.