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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR ERIC ADAMS DELIVERS VIRTUAL REMARKS AT C40  
WORLD MAYORS SUMMIT**

**Mayor Eric Adams:** Hi, I am New York City Mayor Eric Adams. Thank you to C40, London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, and Buenos Aires Mayor Horacio Rodríguez Larreta for inviting me to speak today. And thank you to my fellow mayors from around the world who are doing so much to lower emissions and build resiliency, not just in the future, but right now. 55 percent of the world's population is already living in urban areas. A proportion that is expected to increase to 68 percent by 2050. And the decisions our municipal governments are making are opening the green door to a world of abundance and equality. That's the world I want to talk to you about today. This is a world where clean energy costs less and helps our kids breathe easier. A world with more transit options and safer streets. A world where people are eating healthier, feeling better, and living longer. That's the world we are building right here in New York City.

Let's start with the facts and the food. Thanks to our public transit system and our density, New Yorkers already emit fewer carbon emissions per person than virtually any other city in America. But when we dug into the data, we found that food is among the largest sources of our household and lifestyle emissions in the city, and one that is easy to control and change. I know because I've made those changes in my own life. One morning in 2016, I woke up and couldn't see the numbers on my alarm clock. I went to the doctor who diagnosed me with Type 2 diabetes. He told me I might have my driver's license revoked due to vision loss, and I might have permanent nerve damage in my fingers and toes. I'm not the only person who has had this conversation with their doctor. More than 37 million Americans have diabetes. Over one in ten of us, 37 million.

When a number is that high, you can't blame it on the individual. A number that high means there's something wrong with the system. And when I looked at our food system, I saw that it wasn't just unhealthy, it was unsustainable. Americans are suffering from skyrocketing levels of obesity and chronic diseases, and nearly one in five of our children are already overweight, putting them at risk of life long health issues. The American way of eating today is focused on profit, not progress. On empty calories, fast food, not on health. We can't live like this. The human body was built to run on plants, not processed food, and the planet was built that way too. Almost half the fresh water used in the United States goes towards raising animals for food. One calorie from animal protein requires 11 times as much fossil fuel energy to produce as a calorie of plant protein.

13 percent of the world's landmass is devoted to raising animals for slaughter. Reducing meat and dairy consumption in favor of fresh produce and grains isn't just about improving your own life and your own health. It's about transforming an entire system that exploits our natural resources, drives up our carbon emissions, and incentivizes poor nutrition. And it starts with what's on our plate. When I switched to a plant-based diet, I saw an immediate difference in my health. Within three months, I lost weight, lowered my cholesterol, restored my vision, and reversed my diabetes. But when those changes are scaled up across the city, they are not just creating better health, but lowering our emissions and improving our lives. As mayor of America's largest city, my job is to lead the way on these kinds of big systemic transformations. Our city is taking action to make food that is good for our people and good for the planet available to all.

We have already introduced Meatless Mondays and Plant-Powered Fridays in schools and made plant forward meals the default in New York City Health + Hospital facilities. Making the right choice easier has been a great success. The majority, 60 percent of our hospital patients are already choosing plant-based meals. And these changes didn't just improve health outcomes. They lowered the carbon emission of the food we purchased as a city by 37 percent. We're making choices like this all over the city. From serving plant-based menus at official mayoral events, to supporting an emerging urban agriculture industry that includes locally grown produce, grains, and beans. And we're not just growing tomatoes, we're growing the economy. Urban agriculture is creating jobs and building resiliency at the same time. We're increasing access to healthy food and reducing emissions from the transportation of our food. From rooftops to classrooms, I have supported the funding of urban agriculture education, training and businesses.

We established the city's first ever Office of Urban Agriculture and we're working with our private sector partners to reduce waste, lower emissions, and increase sustainability. And we're doing all of this even as we promote new ways of building, living, and generating energy. New ways of protecting our city from rising seas and strongest storms. New York City has never been afraid of trying something new, and that is more important than ever. Fighting climate change isn't about trying to keep everything the same, and it's not about giving up our way of life. It's about transforming it. It's about making everything better and creating momentum for a new and innovative way of living and eating. Change is in the air and on the menu. Today is just the appetizer.

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