



# UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century

Producer: Bingying Liu  
Script version: Final  
Duration: 7'45

### SURE WE CAN – RECYCLING IN NEW YORK CITY

#### INTRO

Recycling plastics and tin cans is now commonplace around the world – but one group in New York has taken it to a new level. Doing what they can to save the planet.

#### VIDEO

VARIOUS SHOTS OF  
PEOPLE WORKING WITH  
CANS AND BOTTLES

#### AUDIO

SHOTS OF BAGS OF  
BOTTLES FLYING

ANA: MARTINEZ DE LUCO. (In English)

"Last year we almost reached 10 million cans and bottles, and this year I think we will surpass the 10 million or we will at least be at the level of 10 million yearly." (13")

ANA ON CAMERA

ANA:

SUPER  
ANA MARTINEZ DE LUCO  
Co-Founder, SURE WE CAN

"My name is Ana Martinez de Luco.  
Since 10 years ago...very much involved in first starting Sure We Can and bringing it to what it is now." (14")

## SHOTS OF SURE WE CAN

### TEXT ON SCREEN:

SURE WE CAN is the only nonprofit recycling center in New York City.

It helps canners make a living by redeeming bottles and cans for 5 cents each. (8")

### ANA ON CAMERA

#### ANA:

*"In 2004, October 2004 the first year I was here in the city, I felt called to share my life with the people living on the street, so I decided to live with them in the street, and one of the activities they were doing was picking up cans. So after a few months...I was working during the day in civil society in the UN, but in the evening I started to pick up cans with them especially with Eugene. He was the one teaching me how to do it, where to go because it's something which I have never done so I needed to learn." (38")*

### EUGENE ON CAMERA

#### EUGENE: GADSDEN (In English)

SUPER  
EUGENE GADSDEN  
Co-Founder, SURE WE CAN

*"My name is Eugene Gadsden - better known as the King of Cans. They call me the King of Cans because I don't like anybody to pick up more bottles than me. But now I'm doing the compos project (at Sure We Can). I still enjoy canning every chance that I get. " (24")*

### EUGENE CANNING ON STREET

#### EUGENE:

*"We are right across the street from*

*Penn Station on 31<sup>st</sup> street and 8th Ave, and there's a lot of people that come through this area during the course of the day, and then there's a lot of cans during the course of the day." (19")*

EUGENE DIG THROUGH  
GARBAGE

*"I got into canning through a friend of mine called Terri...because I wasn't working at the time, couldn't find a new job, then he showed me how to do cans. Back when I was canning on an everyday basis, my personal goal was to get 2000 cans at least." (23")*

EUGENE ON CAMERA

ELLIOTT HARRIS ON  
CAMERA  
SUPER  
ELLIOTT HARRIS  
Director, UNEP, New York

ELLIOTT HARRIS (In English)

*"The waste we generate very often ends up as pollution unless we make an effort first to reduce the waste and secondly to recycle the waste product that results from our consumption. Recycling is really important particularly the recycling of plastics.*

*No act of recycling is too small*

*If you recycle one plastic bottle that is one plastic bottle less that winds up in the landfill or that ends up as marine debris out at sea." (26")*

EUGENE ON CAMERA

EUGENE:

*"Canning gives me peace of mind because I'm free to dig through the garbage where nobody bothers me*

*Sometimes you get a little...people who are not too good, but I try not to let people's negativity get the better of me." (22")*

EUGENE ON CAMERA

EUGENE:

EUGENE GOING  
THROUGH VARIOUS  
GARBAGE BINS

*"Right now we've got about 3 dollars worth of cans and that isn't bad when we're just getting started." (9")*

*"My rent - 600 dollars a month -*

*Thank God but I was able to pay the rent." (9")*

ANA ON CAMERA

ANA:

VARIOUS SHOTS OF  
CANNERS PICKING AND  
SORTING

*"I think most of them if not all -  
the first reason they went to the street is financial.  
But after... they also discover other values. (12")*

JOSE AND ANA TALKING

EUGENE:

EUGENE ON CAMERA

*"Canning is a job...like any other job.*

SHOTS OF SURE WE CAN

*A lot of us want to be respected at the job we do  
and Sure We Can fits that perfectly." (12")*

ANA INTRODUCING  
CANNERS' WORKFLOW

ANA:

*"This is like their square to work, and those who  
come in the morning -*

ANA ON CAMERA

*most of them spend a lot of hours sorting,  
separating their products because it adds value  
like 20, 25 percent." (15")*

EUGENE:

EUGENE ON CAMERA

*"Canning is one thing, and to have a place to turn  
them in is another thing.*

SHOTS OF SURE WE CAN

*For me being a canner, I know how it feels to  
have a place like Sure We Can where you can be  
nice and respected and be talked to nicely." (21")*

SUZANA ON CAMERA

ANA:

*"...and truly most of the time if you come to Sure We Can there is an atmosphere of peace and joy, joking, singing; very rarely you see a very heavy mood." (12")*

EUGENE WALKING ON STREET

EUGENE:

*"Sometime it's not about the money- it's about the respect, which my grandma always said "the respect can carry you a lot further than money would" and she isn't lying...which I appreciate." (21")*

STROLLER FULL OF BOTTLES

TEXT ON SCREEN:

Today 400 canners store and redeem bottles at SURE WE CAN

TEXT ON SCREEN:

The organization plans to work with young people in local schools to spread environmental awareness. (11")

ANA ON CAMERA

ANA:

SHOTS OF PLASTIC BOTTLE MOUNTAINS  
TIMELAPSE OF LOADING BOTTLES INTO PICKUP TRUCK

*" Ideally, for example, we would like that all these beer companies don't crush these bottles, but clean up and refill them which would be a much better way of using the containers. They don't do this... so we suffer. I mean we return these to them but we know it's useless because they would crush them and they will keep making*

*new." (23")*

*"The same with any kind of plastic bottle, but especially the water plastic bottle – it's rampant... and yet when we have student groups come here, you are surprised how little is being done in schools to teach them just to drink from the faucet, to drink tap water." (23")*

*"We're dealing with but it knowing that this is not a solution. But we're doing this, we're trying to use these activities precisely to show children that we can't continue like this." (15")*

*ELLIOTT:*

*"We need to get people aware of the consequences and the impact of our consumption. And as we become aware of that, then we will find that by changing the way we consume, changing the amount of waste we generate, we will certainly make a difference." (15")*