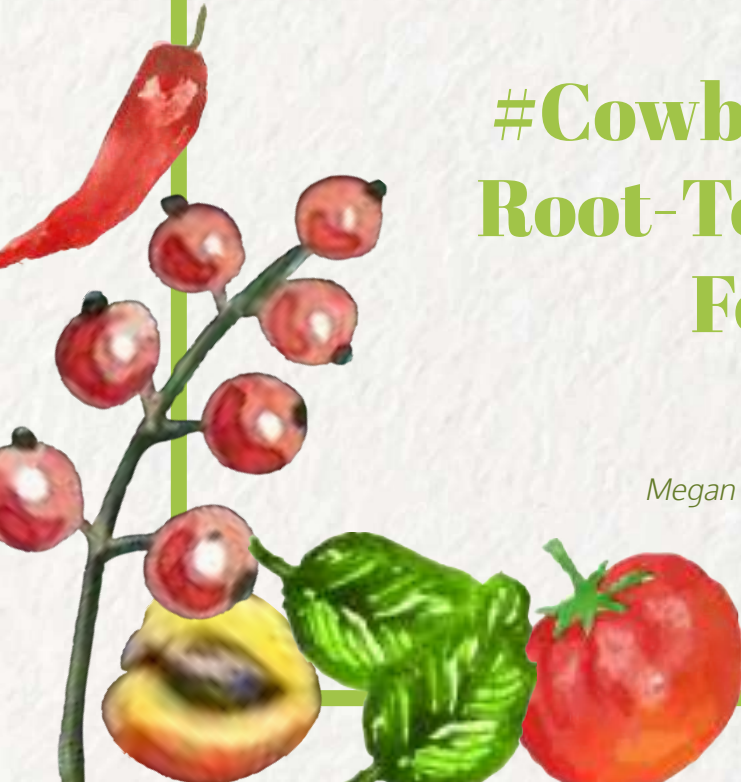




*Oklahoma State University Presents:*

# #CowboyCrates: A 4 Phase Root-To-Table Approach to Food Insecurity

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# Overview



- Slides 1-10:
  - Awareness Presentation that will be presented to departmental faculty and staff per Dean Sloane and the President's request. The presentation will review the following:
    - Definition of food insecurity
    - Food insecurity on college campus
    - Affected populations of food insecurity
    - Contributing factors to food insecurity
- Slides 12-29
  - Presentation of Campus Program per Dean Sloane and the President's request. The presentation will review the following:
    - Overview of the program, #CowboyCrates
    - Strategies, Tactics, and Timeline of each phase
    - Financial, Sustainable, and Legal/Political Considerations





# Defining Food Insecurity

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“**Food security**, as defined by the Economic Research Service, means all people have **access** to enough food for an active, **healthy** life. This also includes having **limited access** to adequate high quality and diverse foods due to **insufficient** resources” (United States Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service, 2019).

Characteristics of Food Insecurity:

- **Reduced** caloric intake
- No access to **healthy food**
- **Lack** of variety in diet
- Hunger without eating
- **Reduced** weight due to lack of calories

(Henry, 2017, p. 7).

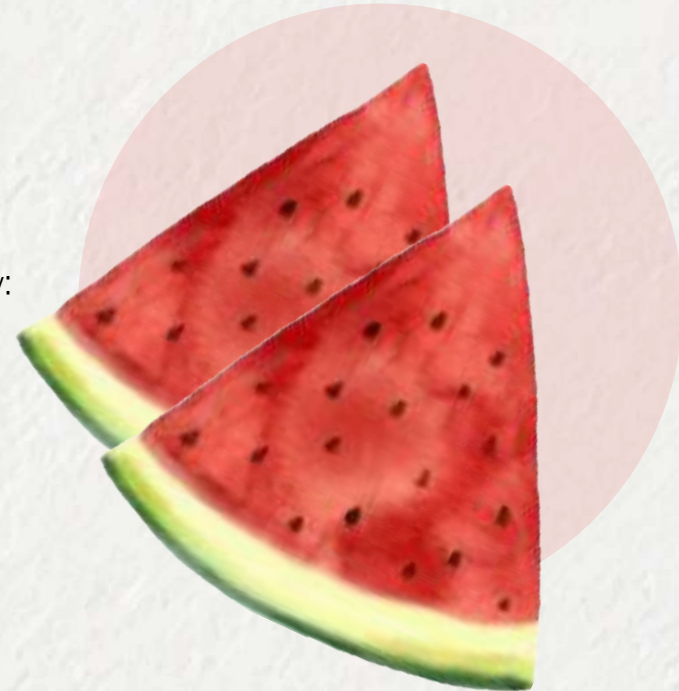
“Even if someone consumes calories every day, they can still be **food insecure** if those calories are **nutrient poor**” (Henry, 2017, p. 7).





# Who Experiences Food Insecurity?

- It was reported in the 1960s that the “**starving college student**” had become a cliché due to frequent light-hearted jokes on the subject, which in turn had caused many to perceive student hunger as a **myth** (Henry, 2017).
- However, “research indicates that food insecurity among college students is a greater **problem** than it is for the general population” (Henry, 2017, p. 6).
- Student groups that **frequently** face a **higher risk** of food insecurity:
  - Students at two-year institutions
  - African American students
  - LGBTQ+ students
  - Students with prior military service
  - Foster alumni
  - Students with prior criminal convictions
  - Students that are listed as independent from their parents on FAFSA forms (AACU.org - connects to Hope4college report).





# What Does Food Insecurity Look Like for Students?

“Reported rates of student food insecurity ranged from **14.8%** at an urban university in Alabama to **59.0%** at a rural university in Oregon” (McArthur, Ball, Danek, & Holbert, 2018, p. 564).

- One first-generation student began **skipping meals** after running out of grocery money. They would stretch a can of SpaghettiOs over the span of an entire day (Dewey, 2018).
- One student chose to **transfer** from their two-year Santa Ana College to a four-year school, University of California-Irvine, specifically because they have a food pantry for students with needs like hers (Williams, 2019).
- A student at Stony Brook University takes **poverty naps**, where they would go to sleep rather than stay awake through their hunger pangs (Laterman, 2019).
- A senior at Lehman College had to take out a **\$5,000 loan**, works two part-time jobs, lives in a homeless shelter, and only budgets **\$15 per week** for food. They also use the campus food pantry to get most of their groceries and skips breakfast in order to ensure their 4-year-old son is eating regularly (Laterman, 2019).





# How Food Insecurity Affects Students

Generally, food insecurity has been found to negatively affect student performance.

- “Negatively impacts student **[academic] performance**, mental and social health, dietary choices, and overall health status among adolescents and adults” (Henry, 2017, p. 8).
- According to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, food is considered to be **essential** to academic, social, and intellectual wellness (McLeod, 2018).
- A correlation has been found between food insecure students and **lower GPAs** (2.0-2.49) (Henry, 2017, p. 8; McArthur et al., 2018).
- Reports have shown that “poverty and financial stress can lead to increased anxiety and **detrimental** impacts on mental health and suicidal ideation” (Henry, 2017).
- Due to a lack of financial resources, students may feel compelled to **choose** between going to class and working to make money to buy food (Henry, 2017; Dewey, 2018; Laterman, 2019).





# Contributing Factors to Food Insecurity

- Decreased state funding, **increasing** tuition costs, and higher **costs** of goods and services, including healthy food options (Henry, 2017, p. 8).
- **Inability** to receive federal student aid (Henry, 2017, p. 8).
- **Lack** of knowledge or skills for basic food preparation (Gaines et al, 2014, p. 375).
- Eligibility requirements for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and subsidized housing are **confusing**, and many students do not typically consider these federal programs when struggling to secure enough food month to month (Henry, 2017, p. 8).
- Many authors find a correlation between food insecurity and attending college including: **low GPA**, living on campus, living off-campus with roommates, and being employed while in school (McArthur et al., 2018, p. 564).



# Misconceptions about Students and Food



- “It's hard to determine how many student-athletes actually go hungry, let alone how many students overall go hungry. Since many students on scholarship come from low-income families who would otherwise not be able to pay for college, and the NCAA **restricts** a student-athlete's ability to get a job, it's a safe bet that there are some gaps” (Fulton, 2014).
  - A student from University of Connecticut does not believe that student-athletes should receive hundreds of thousands of dollars but some nights he does go to bed **starving** (Bravo, 2014).
- A common perception of the college experience is that freshmen will gain 15 pounds within their freshman year, coined the “**Freshman 15.**” This is important to note as some could say this is due to the **inaccessibility** of healthy food options.
  - Due to this perception, some may overestimate food stability on college campuses (Mihalopoulos, Auinger, Klein, 2008).
- Some may perceive that students with campus meal plans are food secure, however, food offered in a campus setting can often **cost significantly more** than food purchases off campus, resulting in students either opting out of meal plans due to cost, or students running out of their meal plan funds more rapidly than anticipated (Garcia Mathewson, 2017).

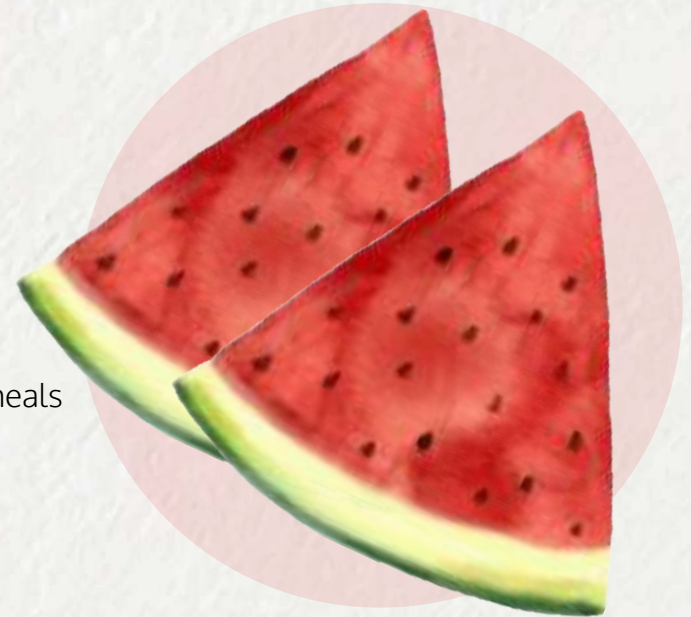




# Other Correlations to Consider

Other characteristics associated with college student food insecurity included:

- **Poor or fair** self-rated health status
- Having an annual income **<\$15,000**
- **Older** age
- Receiving food assistance
- Having **lower self-efficacy** for cooking cost-effective, nutritious meals
- Having less money and time to purchase and prepare food
- Identifying with a **minority** race/ethnic group
- Having an **increased risk** for depression and anxiety





# Coping with Financial Struggles

90% of students surveyed stated that they were upset or worried about **not having enough money** to pay for the things that they needed to attend college (Brotton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016, p. 18).

78% of students surveyed stated that they were having **difficulty paying their bills**, to make ends meet, students:

- 80% cut back on social activities
- **71% changed their food shopping or eating habits**
- 48% cut back or stopped driving
- **39% borrowed money or used credit cards**
- **38% increased the amount of time spent working**
- 24% postponed medical or dental care
- **24% put off paying bills**
- 23% reduced utility usage
- 19% went without a computer
- **15% did not buy all required books or supplies**

(Brotton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016, p. 18)





# Why Should We Intervene?

Many college leaders state that meeting students “basic needs is not only the **right** thing to do **morally** but also has instrumental purposes by helping colleges **retain** and graduate more students” (Brnton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016, p. 23).

Accordingly, granting more students with a **college** degree **enhances** “their economic **prospects**, which is **good** for the community and society” (Brnton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016, p. 23).

“**Retaining** a student is **fundamental** to the ability of an institution to carry out its mission. A high rate of **attrition**...is not only a fiscal problem for schools, but a symbolic **failure** of an institution to achieve its purpose” (College Student Retention, 2020).





# TRANSITION SLIDE



# Our University

## Cowboy State University

### Location:

- Stillwater, OK

### Student Body:

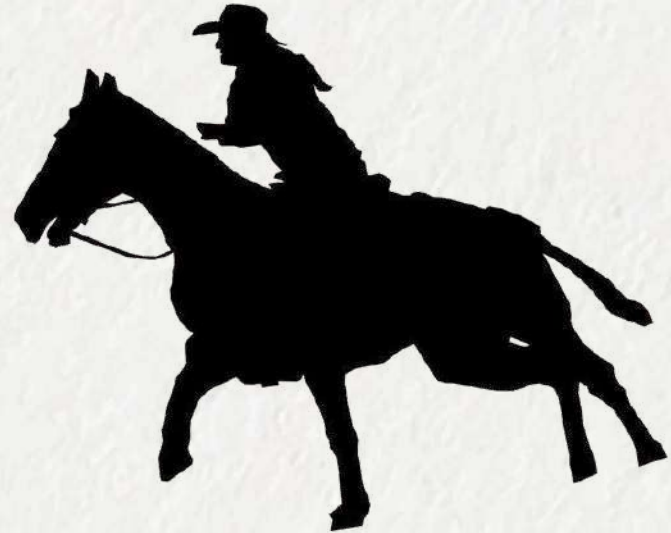
- 24,000 Students
  - 20,000 Undergraduates
  - 3,500 Graduate
  - 500 Veterinary Medicine
- 50.02% Male
- 49.98% Female

### Demographics:

- 64.5% White

### Housing:

- 45% Live in on-campus housing
- 55% Live in off-campus housing





# #CowboyCrates: A 4 Phase Root-To-Table Approach to Food Insecurity



**Phase 1:  
Awareness**



**Phase 2:  
Fundraising**



**Phase 3:  
Community  
Service**



**Phase 4: Outreach**



# #CowboyCrates Overview

#CowboyCrates is an innovative and inclusive approach to tackling food insecurity. This 4-phase program (Awareness, Fundraising, Community Service, and Outreach) aims to provide services for ANYONE experiencing food insecurity here at Cowboy State University. According to numerous studies (Snelling, A. & Linck, H., 2014; McArthur, Ball, Danek, & Holbert, 2018, Henry, 2017), student, faculty, and staff who are food insecure are more likely to experience homelessness, lower Grade Point Averages (GPAs), and financial insecurity. At Cowboy State University, we understand that this is a national issue that must be addressed at the higher-education level. #CowboyCrates are distributed at the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month and include 4 full meals in each box. Our program aims to provide healthy and sustainable options for participants, so all food included in each #CowboyCrate is organic and free of preservatives. What makes our program especially unique is that we \*deliver all #CowboyCrates for anyone living on campus to provide the the utmost anonymity for participants.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

- **Who can participate?**
  - ANYONE, this includes faculty and staff
- **What are the requirements?**
  - All you have to do is fill out a short online form and show your Cowboy ID upon delivery.
- **Do I have to explain why I need a #CowboyCrate?**
  - Nope! We take pride in our program being as anonymous as possible
- **Does this service cost money?**
  - Nope! All you need is your Cowboy ID

*\*Due to the nature of our program, we only deliver to participants that live on campus*





# Phase 1: Awareness

## Overview

- The purpose of this phase is to increase awareness of the definition, prevalence, and effect of food insecurity on college campuses. This phase will include presentations to faculty and staff, educational workshops on food preparation and basic food education, and a large social media campaign (1st part of President's 2-pronged plan)

## Strategies and Tactics

- Assign one graduate student per department to present informational presentation about food insecurity (Presentation will be the presentation from slides 1-16) to desired departmental faculty and staff
- In this campaign, we will conduct monthly workshops on a myriad of topics (food preparation, cooking 101, highlighting cheapest options on campus and ways to make meal plans stretch)
- Begin social media campaign utilizing Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tik Tok to promote #CowboyCrates and provide further education in a digital format
  - Set up a "photo challenge" on social media and give away stickers/small prizes to participants
  - Have a "like/share this photo/post for a free button" campaign post
- Create buttons with the #CowboyCrates and distribute to campus partners and give away at Welcome Week events







# Phase 1: Awareness Timeline

## June

- Create logo, social media handles, and other marketing and submit to campus branding for approval
- Research sustainable and reusable crate options
- Start presenting Awareness Presentation (presentation from slides 1-10) to faculty and staff

## August

- Present Awareness presentation to faculty and staff
- Conduct first educational workshop during Welcome Week
- Launch social media campaign
  - Host booths in the student union and have people follow the page for a button or sticker

## July

- Continue presenting Awareness Presentation (presentation from slides 1-10) to faculty and staff
- Start presenting #CowboyCrates program to students and families at New Student Orientation
- Prep for educational workshops
- Present Awareness presentation to faculty and staff

## September

- Conduct second educational workshop
- Continue social media campaign
  - Do a September photo challenge on Instagram
- Start brainstorming ways to implement Phase 2: Fundraising
- Meet with campus partners to begin discussions of the campus garden





## Phase 2: Fundraising

### Overview

- The purpose of this phase is to raise funds for the packing and distribution of the #CowboyCrates, workshops, and all marketing and campaign materials.

### Strategies and Tactics

- Promote community service by planting a garden and utilizing recycling efforts
- Partner with the Ferguson College of Agriculture, College of Education and Human Sciences, and sustainable campus partners for volunteers, facility spaces, and fundraising efforts
- Organize and implement 3-4 fundraising events during November – January
  - Fundraising Event Ideas:
    - Ask students to donate \$1 – \$5 dollars of their meal plan
    - Ask restaurants in the community to donate X% of funds to the #CowboyCrate Campaign
    - Have a Pie the President in the face contest and charge \$1 per person
    - Have strategic meetings with directors and deans of departments and divisions asking for money to spearhead #CowboyCrates, subsidizing the \$3,000 already allocated
- Reach out to alumni and donors and submit grants for additional funds





## Phase 2: Fundraising Timeline

### October

- Conduct first fundraising event (Asking students to donate money from their meal plan)
- Continue discussions with campus partners about implementing campus garden
- Meet with departments to ask for funds and volunteers for #CowboyCrate committee

### December

- Conduct third fundraising event (Ask a local restaurant to donate X% of profit to #CowboyCrate program)
- Continue discussions with campus partners about implementing campus garden
- Continue to meet with departments to ask for funds and volunteers for #CowboyCrate committee

### November

- Conduct second fundraising event (Pie the President contest charging participants \$1)
- Continue discussions with campus partners about implementing campus garden
- Continue to meet with departments to ask for funds and volunteers for #CowboyCrate committee

### January

- Conduct fourth fundraising event (Asking students again to donate money from their meal plan)
- Continue to meet with departments to ask for funds and volunteers for #CowboyCrate committee





## Phase 3: Community Service



### Overview

- The purpose of this phase is to encourage sustainability, garner support from the community, and bringing the “root-to-table” uniqueness of our program.

### Strategies and Tactics

- Formalize a #CowboyCrates committee that will include students, faculty, staff, and members of the community
- Host two community service days to learn more about the role of partnering with the community outside of Cowboy State University
- Design and implement a campus garden using land already owned by the university where the crops planted will be used in the #CowboyCrates





# Phase 3: Community Service Timeline

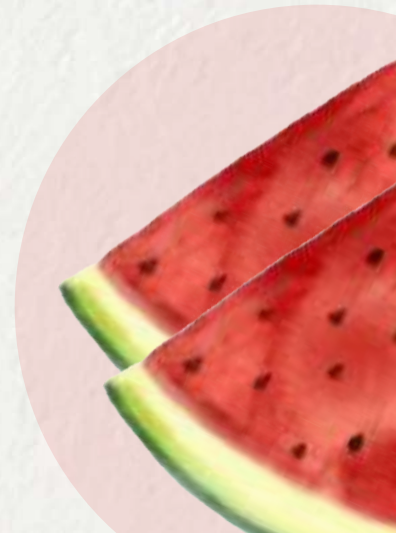


## January

- Research sustainable ways to implement #CowboyCrates
- Have first meeting with the #CowboyCrates committee to discuss expectations, purpose, and role of committee members
- Have first community service day
- Have a grand opening for campus garden and plant winter crops

## February

- Create a 5-year and 10-year plan for the #CowboyCrate program
- Meet with the #CowboyCrate committee to discuss the March 15 launch date
- Have second community service day
- Stop by local restaurants, grocery stores, and food pantries gathering supplies for #CowboyCrates





## Phase 4: Outreach



### Overview

- The purpose of this phase is package and distribute the #CowboyCrates to students in need or who are food insecure (2nd part of President's 2-pronged plan).

### Strategies and Tactics

- The #CowboyCrates committee will meet twice a month to package and deliver healthy, sustainable boxes for students who are food insecure
- To receive a #CowboyCrate, students will need to fill out a small form that states their name, classification, housing status, and box preference
  - Participants will be able to choose either an ingredient #CowboyCrate or microwave-ready #CowboyCrate to be inclusive to participants who do not have access to cooking resources
  - If participants live on-campus, they will be able to have their #CowboyCrate delivered by a committee member
  - If a participants lives off-campus, they will need to show up to the office and show their Cowboy ID
- Reorganize program underneath one department with the hopes of creating full-time staff positions to run #CowboyCrates





## Phase 4: Outreach Timeline



### March

- Meet with #CowboyCrates committee to gather and finalize supplies
- Harvest winter crops from campus garden
- Launch #CowboyCrates on March 15

### May

- Meet with #CowboyCrates committee to discuss strategies and tactics for the next year
- Assess efforts by creating evaluation forms for #CowboyCrates program
- Plant summer crops in campus garden
- Continue to distribute #CowboyCrates

### April

- Distribute #CowboyCrates
- Launch applications for future #CowboyCrates committee members
- Maintain campus garden
- Continue to promote #CowboyCrates on social media





# Financial Considerations

DATE	DESCRIPTION	CREDITS	CHARGES	ACCOUNT BALANCE
8/1/19	Balance brought forward			\$ 3,000.00
	2 Educational Workshops (\$100 per workshop)		\$200.00	\$ 2,800.00
	4 Fundraising Events (\$50 per event)		\$200.00	\$ 2,600.00
	Marketing Materials (printing, buttons, stickers)		\$1,000.00	\$ 1,600.00
	Startup Materials (food, crates, etc)		\$1,000.00	\$ 600.00
	Other		\$600.00	\$ -

The #CowboyCrates program will utilize the following budget above to jump start the program; however, we hope that the fundraising phase will garner additional financial support from departments across campus to subsidize the cost of running the #CowboyCrates program.

Furthermore, we recognize the realities of implementing a large-scale program with such limited funds. Depending on campus size, additional financial support, and campus climate, some parts of the #CowboyCrates program may need to be scaled down or eliminated to fit the needs of the institution.







## Legal/Political Considerations

We have implemented this program with the lens of a large, public institution that is federally funded.

Departments that are auxiliary or not can change the effectiveness of this program.

We have also worked under the assumption of students being able to transfer funding from their meal plans into this program. Because of this possible stipulation there would need to be a new avenue in order for #CowboyCrates to be successful.

In order to keep the order of #CowboyCrates anonymous the program would need to follow various regulations that food insecurity falls under. Committee members would follow OSHA regulations when packing the #CowboyCrates.

Furthermore, students with food allergies, religious dietary restrictions, and lifestyle preferences would need to be registered.





# Climate Considerations

## Campus Climate

We also recognize climate would have an effect on an inst.'s ability to provide year round growing timelines. As there are crops which grow in different times of year we understand, availability of stewards would be pertinent in the development of the community garden.

## Geographical Climate

Building off of this community garden would need additional funding in order to sustain it. Supplies such as fertilizer, gardening tools, a proper water source, and an accessible plot of land would all need to be considered for this part of the program to be successful.

This community garden would created with the intention of eventually providing food for other parts of our proposed idea such as providing food for out food prep classes and for the #CowboyCrates. Scaps and unused cuttings would be used in a compost for the garden.

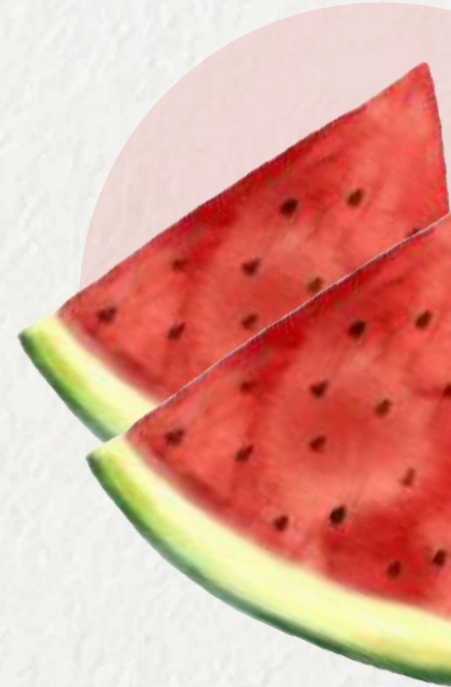




# Sustainable Considerations

We do recognize the sustainability implications of our proposed plan.

- For the #CowboyCrates we recognize that cardboard boxes would not be the best environmental option for sustainability purposes. However as we would have a limited budget for now this would have to work for the time being. If some food items needed additional packaging we also would recognize the implications of using those food items.
- We also recognize that our #CowboyCrates would need to be returned in order to not only stay in the budget but keep our environmental footprint low. The #CowboyCrates committee later the next year to analyze the effectiveness of this crate retrieval system. In the 5 to 10 year plan a new method of packaging would be implemented and created.
- With this program started we would partner with the college of Agriculture and Natural Science and receive funding from the Vice President of Student Affairs in order to fund a full time staff member to head this program. They would also receive enough funding in order to hire a Graduate Assistant along with potential student workers





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