

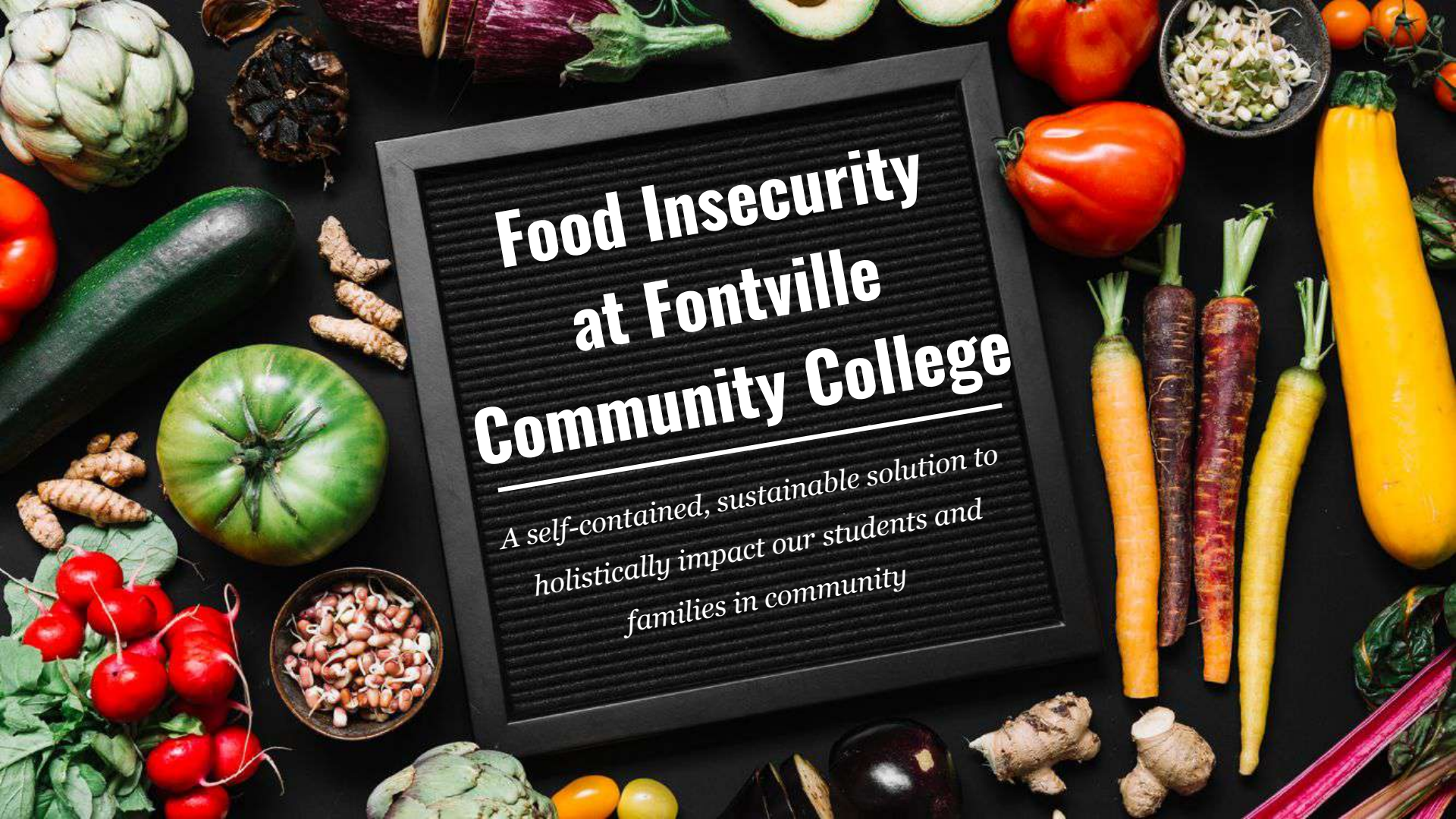
**University of North
Carolina at Greensboro**

Team Leader

Emily Brown

Team Members

Caroline Forrest, Nick Vitalone,
Hannah Wiebke



Food Insecurity at Fontville Community College





*A self-contained, sustainable solution to
holistically impact our students and
families in community*

A top-down view of various fresh ingredients including garlic, tomatoes, olives, herbs, and pasta. The ingredients are arranged in a circular pattern around a central white text box. The ingredients include a whole head of garlic, a bowl of green olives, a bowl of red tomatoes, a bowl of yellow penne pasta, a bowl of white spaghetti, a bowl of mushrooms, a bowl of yellow liquid, a bowl of red chili peppers, and a bowl of green herbs. The background is a light-colored surface, possibly a countertop or table.

Framing *the* **Context**

Our Institution

Fontville Community College

	Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Fontville, Mississippi*
	Carnegie Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2 year; associates' degree; public; high in vocational, career, & technical programs
	Student Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 6, 000 students
	Students Facing Food Insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● 2, 000 students

**Denotes fictional location*

A collage of fresh ingredients including garlic, tomatoes, olives, herbs, and pasta. The background is a light-colored surface with various food items arranged around a central white text box. The items include a whole head of garlic, a bowl of green olives, a bowl of red tomatoes (one sliced), a bowl of yellow penne pasta, a bowl of white spaghetti, a bowl of mushrooms, a bowl of bread, a bowl of olive oil, and a bowl of herbs. A red chili pepper is also visible.

What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is defined as, “ ‘limited or uncertain availability of *nutritionally adequate* and *safe food* or *limited ability to acquire acceptable foods* [*sic*] in socially acceptable ways’ due to a lack of money or other resources”

Payne-Sturges et al., 2018

What are the levels of food insecurity?

High Food Security

No issues regarding quantity or quality of food consumed or accessibility of food

Marginal Food Security

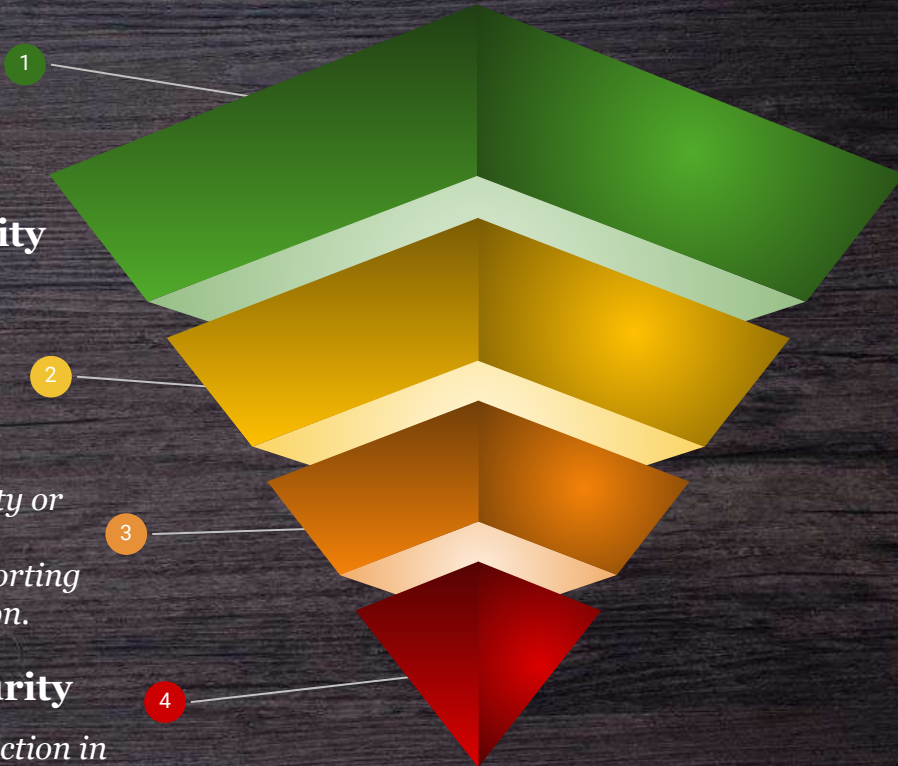
Some indicators of concerns over food availability but minimal changes to diet

Low Food Security

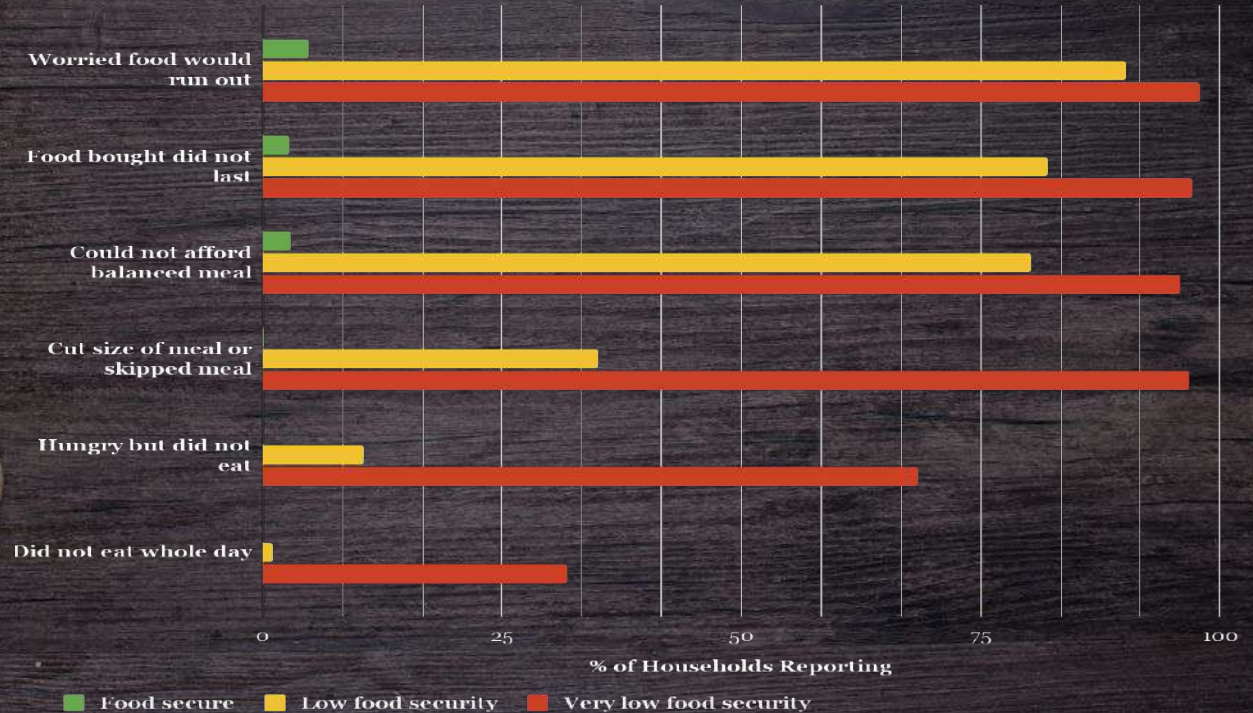
Indicators of reduced quality or desirability of food being consumed but minimal reporting of reduced food consumption.

Very Low Food Security

Multiple indicators of reduction in the quality and quantity of food being reported.



Indicators of Adult Food Insecurity





By the Numbers: People Living with Food Insecurity

11.1%

Households in the US reporting a level of food insecurity

- 37.2 million people
- 13.9% of households with children
- 27.8% of single female parent households
- 21.2% of Black households
- 16.2% of Hispanic households

29.1%

Households w/ income below 185% of the poverty threshold

- 29% of households above 185% of the poverty threshold
- 47% of SNAP eligible households
 - ◆ 51% of these don't receive SNAP benefits
- \$3.02 is the average cost of a meal

13.2%

Households living in principle metropolitan areas

- 12.7% of households in nonmetropolitan areas
- 8.9% of suburban households.
- 13.9% of households in the South
 - ◆ 15.9% of Mississippi households



How does food insecurity affect higher education?

- ❖ **43.5%** of all college students experience food insecurity at some point in their collegiate career.
- ❖ **50.8%** of community college students experience food insecurity at some point in their collegiate career.
- ❖ **Food insecurity is more prevalent at the end of a semester** compared to the start of the term.
- ❖ Despite low food security, many students are not SNAP eligible and must rely on their institution for support. To be eligible for SNAP students must:
 - Work 20hrs per week
 - Participate in work study
 - Care for a child under the age of 6 or have a child between 5-12 and lack adequate child care
 - Receive Social Security Benefits



Student Perspectives on Food Insecurity

Causes of Food Insecurity:

- ❖ Lack of time influences dietary intake
 - Due to work, class, and studying students are left with little time to go grocery shopping and prepare food, and what they do buy is easy to prepare such as rice, noodles, or PB&J
- ❖ Lack of proper cooking spaces
 - Students in residence halls often lack access to stoves or full size fridges which impact the ability to buy/store unprocessed or natural foods

Student Recommended Solutions:

- ❖ Campus Food Pantries (although there are concerns over discretion)
- ❖ Reduced meal plans or meal voucher systems
- ❖ Allowing students to work for food (i.e. work in dining hall for free food). Some students report that working for food minimizes the feelings of a “handout”, makes the food feel earned, and lifts mood.
- ❖ Educating students on food literacy, specifically creating low-budget meals, which has been proven to improve food security



How does food insecurity affect community colleges?

Research on food insecurity within the community college setting is scant; however several factors converge to make food insecurity a pressing dilemma at community colleges.

- ❖ **Demographics** of people experiencing food insecurity and those who attend community colleges overlap along the following dimensions:
 - Racially minoritized groups, particularly Black, Asian, Hispanic, multi- or biracial individuals;
 - low-income;
 - not living with a parent.



How does food insecurity affect community colleges?

- ❖ Community college students facing food insecurity are **more likely to have lower GPAs** in the 2.0-2.49 range, rather than 3.5-4.0 range.

Maroto, Snelling, & Linck (2015)

- ❖ **Housing insecurity** often co-occurs alongside food insecurity, due to young adults often lacking rental history, enough funds for a security deposit, and/or guarantor.
- ❖ The combined pressures of lacking access to safe, nutritional food; financial insecurity; and other systemic barriers pose a **risk to students' academic motivation, retention, and program and degree completion.**

Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016



Maroto, Snelling, & Linck (2015); Payne-Sturges et al. (2017)



What are some nationwide trends addressing food insecurity?

University-sponsored initiatives

- ❖ Food pantries
- ❖ Meal vouchers, subsidized from university/college or dining services
- ❖ On-campus vendors who accept SNAP
- ❖ Outreach efforts via social media, fliers, blast emails
- ❖ Additional dining dollars or swipes added to ID card
- ❖ Short-term, interest-free loan programs
- ❖ Interest-free book loan program
- ❖ Later date of cancellation for non-payment
- ❖ Later due date of fees
- ❖ Food rescue programs, like Food Recovery Network



What are some nationwide trends addressing food insecurity?

Local Initiatives	Federal or Nation-Wide Initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Food rescue programs like Food Recovery Network❖ <u>Free, on-campus tax preparation services</u> like Single Stop or Volunteer Income Tax Assistance❖ Social enterprises like Everytable	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ <u>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program</u> (SNAP)❖ College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA)

F2T:

the

Farm to Table Initiative

A top-down view of various fresh ingredients including garlic, tomatoes, olives, herbs, and pasta. The ingredients are arranged on a light-colored surface, possibly a table or countertop. There are wooden bowls containing olives and tomatoes, a small bowl of herbs, a red chili pepper, and a bunch of fresh herbs. The overall scene is bright and fresh, suggesting a focus on healthy, natural food.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Farm to Table (F2T) Initiative is to address the ramifications of food insecurity in higher education through a co-curricular, learner-centered, experiential approach in a *suburban community college*.



Program Outline

Learning Objective:

The Farm to Table (F2T) initiative will utilize current academic and intellectual capital of faculty, staff, and students to source and distribute food sustainably through an on-campus produce garden. The F2T initiative will incorporate the greater Fontville community in order to bring awareness to food insecurity and provide support for our students facing food insecurity.

This objective will be accomplished in three ways:

- Utilizing a co-curricular approach through *technical education courses*;
- Creating a *produce garden*;
- Providing accessible resources for students experiencing food insecurity through an *on-campus food pantry*.
- Implementing a *strategic five year plan* in order to develop and grow our program

The infographic features a central grey circle with the text 'F2T Components' in black. This central circle is surrounded by a green ring. Three white circles with black numbers '01', '02', and '03' are positioned at the top, bottom-left, and bottom-right of the green ring, respectively. Three lines extend from these numbered circles to three text boxes: a yellow box for '02', a light green box for '01', and a light orange box for '03'. The background is a top-down view of various fresh ingredients including garlic, tomatoes, olives, herbs, and bread.

F2T Components

Produce Garden

The produce garden, which will eventually grow into a greenhouse space, will be the physical area where the food is grown. This allows our pantry to be self-sufficient.

01

Technical Courses

Students enrolled in agriculture courses will manage the campus produce garden by raising and harvesting the crops.

02

Open Pantry

The pantry will be a small, discrete yet accessible space to house food in a climate-controlled environment. Students will have card-swipe access and inventory will be tracked daily.

03



What is our Co-Curricular Model?

This program will utilize an integrated, co-curricular approach to combating food insecurity.

In the classroom, the F2T Initiative would utilize agriculture, horticulture, and eventually culinary arts courses to teach students about the importance of farming and growing food. This would be done through:

- Learning about seeds and best practices associated with planting,
- Learning about soil and garden maintenance, and
- Learning how produce is properly harvested.

Outside the classroom, students would be charged with taking care of different aspects of gardening:

- Taking care of the soil and garden beds,
- Planting seeds and managing care of them, and
- Harvesting produce and bringing it to the food pantry.



How will the food be accessible to students?

In the first years of operation, food will be distributed primarily through the food pantry.

- **The pantry** will be physically accessible to the general student body. However, it will not be in an open area to protect the privacy of our students and their needs that they may or may not wish to disclose.
- **Outreach**: In addition to information postings, all faculty and staff will be made aware of the protocol for accessing the pantry to help educate students who show indicators facing food insecurity. All faculty will be required to include a section in their syllabus on the pantry as a resource for students. Fontville Community College websites will also be required to do the same on their homepages.

As the program gains traction, the co-curricular approach will expand to allow students to serve in culinary courses and work in the dining facilities to earn meals as part of their compensation.



How do students utilize the pantry?

Considering accessibility and desired privacy, we have created the following process:

- **Code Name:** Students will schedule a meeting with a staff member that has a set code name. Students will schedule through an online Student Success Platform.
- **Community Engagement Office:** Students would then go to the Community Engagement Office and would say they are there to meet with the code-named staff member. This would alert the receiving staff member to discreetly walk them to their “office,” which is the pantry.
- **Rationale:** Our intention with this scheduling system and the alias is to allow students to blend in and not draw unwanted attention from other students who are in the office. This can create safety and security for students facing food insecurity.

Volunteers or student workers would be responsible for conducting inventory checks throughout the week.

Key Stakeholders





Fostering Community Support

To include the greater Fontville community, and maximize resources, this initiative will rely heavily on community relationships and donations:

- **Fontville High School** will construct the raised bed gardens in agriculture/mechanical courses;
- **Local grocery stores** will donate spare dry goods and other shelf-stable products;
- F2T will obtain a **corporate partnership** to obtain meat and protein-dense products.

**Donations from community will allow the program to keep the costs below the \$3,000 threshold*



Strategic Plan

Year 1

Fundraising & Planning

- Create a faculty, staff, and student coalition with co-chairs from each respective body to reinforce a co-curricular approach
- Apply for grants and build community partnerships for financial support

Year 2

Creation & Implementation

- Create a physical space and transform the land into everything needed for a produce garden
- Craft an online appointment scheduling system
- Integrate the garden-tending into the curriculum
- Implement assessment of program through student surveys

Year 5

Expansion & Solidification

- Grow the produce garden into a greenhouse or farm
- Utilize assessment to identify points of improvement and needs for growth
- Move pantry to larger physical location as necessary
- Begin workshops on financial planning and culinary sessions

Year 10

Independent & Comprehensive

- Serve as a reliable source of supplemental goods
- Utilize an automated assessment capability
- Explore additional co-curricular approaches for financial management, planning, etc.



Similar Initiatives

The F2T initiative offers a unique approach to addressing students facing food insecurity at Fontville Community College. Similar programs have been implemented across the nation:

- [Kingsborough Community College's Urban Farm](#)
- Sampson Community College's [Building Construction Program](#)
- [Everytable](#) near California State University - Los Angeles
- [Swipe Out Hunger's Swipe Drive](#)
- UNC Greensboro's [Clean Plate Project](#)
- Campus [Food Pantries](#)

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