

Creating a Budget Friendly Cookbook for College Students

Garrett Adams, Environmental Studies, Campus Sustainability, Central Washington University

Project Goals

- Increase access to affordable and nutritious meals for CWU students
- Reduce food insecurity on campus
- Encourage students to use resources available on campus through the farm, pantry, and the Multicultural Center

Cookbook Features

- Step by step cooking instructions
- Quick-prep recipes for students who have limited time
- Recipes using ingredients commonly available on campus to minimize costs
- Recipes contain breakfasts, entrees, snacks, and treats with dietary options in mind
- Recipes use common kitchenware and ovens
- Physical copies are distributed throughout the wildcat pantry and the MCC
- To continue this project, cookbooks will be on a checkout basis, and a few permanent cookbooks will stay at the Wildcat Pantry, and the MCC

SIMPLE Beef Bowl



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. ground beef
- Half a yellow onion (roughly chopped)
- 3 garlic cloves (minced)
- 1 cup of rice
- 1 can of corn
- 1 can of green beans
- Salt, pepper, garlic and onion powder to taste (chili flakes are optional)

3-4 Yield **15 MIN Prep time** **20 MIN Total time**

DIRECTIONS

Place ground beef in pan on medium heat. Cook ground beef until fully browned, then add your chopped onion and garlic. Once onions are translucent, add your can of corn and green beans. Season as you please, serve with a bed of rice or mix it all together!

CHANGE IT UP!

Don't like ground beef? Change it out for some chicken or tofu. Use lettuce to make beef lettuce boats.

Figure 2: Photo of sample recipe included in cookbook

Figure 1: Photo of Wildcat Pantry's commonly accessible products



Key Deliverables

- Collaborated with the Wildcat Farm and Wildcat Pantry to assess commonly accessible products
- Developed and tested 14 recipes using mainly resources found on campus
- Created both a physical and digital cookbook accessible through a QR code



Figure 3 : Student - prepared dish produced during recipe testing

Summary

Food insecurity remains a significant sustainability challenge on campus where many students face limited access to affordable, nutritious meals. Central Washington University data indicates that ~2,060 students (~25%) are currently on a meal plan while more than three-quarters of the students are not. This prohibits students to get free meals and instead must rely on low cost, nutrient -poor food options due to financial or time constraints. To address this issue, a student and budget -friendly cookbook was developed to promote accessible, healthy eating using ingredients that are commonly available through Wildcat Pantry and Farm. The project involved collaborating with stakeholders to identify frequently available pantry items and seasonal produce found on the farm. The resulting cookbook included 14 recipes designed to be affordable, beginner friendly, and simple while supporting multiple diets. In addition to physical copies distributed through the Wildcat Pantry, a digital version accessible via QR code was created to increase accessibility and usability.

Conclusion

The student budget -friendly cookbook contributes to sustainability at CWU by improving access to affordable and nutritious meals while encouraging the use of local campus food resources. By providing simple recipes using ingredients available through the Wildcat Pantry and Farm, the project helps reduce food insecurity and supports healthier eating habits among students. The addition of a digital cookbook also increases accessibility and long-term usability. Future efforts could expand the cookbook with additional recipes, student -submitted meals, and culturally diverse food options while continuing partnerships with campus sustainability programs.

This Project Supports UN Sustainable Development Goals:



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