CHEW ON THIS:
Food Insecurity at Westminster
What is Food Insecurity?

Food insecurity is the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food for any length of time.

How to identify Food Insecurity

You or someone you know may be experiencing food insecurity if you ever find yourself:
- Skipping meals because of financial concerns
- Eating less than you otherwise would in order to save money
- Eating less nutritious food than you otherwise would because of cost
- Thinking or feeling anxious about where your next meal will come from, even if you don’t have to skip it

Impacts of food insecurity on college students:

In a time where college tuition rates are at an all time high, wages and financial aid have not kept up with the rising costs. Students must sometimes make the decision to prioritize paying tuition over more immediate costs of living.

An unstable food situation creates all sorts of barriers to learning. Falling asleep in class, trouble focusing, and stress about food are factors that are not conducive to succeeding in school.
In a survey last year 32.5% of Westminster students surveyed said they were hungry because there was not enough money for food. This is above the national average rate of food insecurity on college campuses, which is 30%.

More than half of the Westminster students surveyed said they sometimes or often could not afford to eat balanced meals. This is also above the average from the Hope lab survey.

10.8% of Westminster students surveyed said they did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food.

How does going without food for an entire day affect your performance in school?

This suggests that 1 out of 10 students on campus sometimes do not eat for a whole day.
Students in our own community experience food insecurity at surprisingly high rates. But with all of the costs associated with college, we can ask, why are these rates surprising? We know that students are financially burdened, yet we don’t talk about the challenges of financial burden. Instead, conversations about food in college have normalized patterns of food-insecurity by reinforcing patterns like eating packaged ramen for every meal. We can’t care for our communities without talking about the issues we face.

What is Food Justice?

“[Food justice is] The right of communities everywhere to produce, process, distribute, access, and eat good food regardless of race, class, gender, ethnicity, citizenship, ability, religion, or community.” - Institute of Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP)

In other words, food justice means that all people have equal access to healthy, nutritious, sustainable, and culturally-appropriate food. Within this vision, a community should be a place where everyone takes care of one another and the planet. Within the Westminster community, food justice looks like making sure every member of our community has consistent access to nourishing and affordable food options. It is providing opportunities to learn about regional food systems, cooking, and nutrition. Food justice creates a culture of care and resource sharing where people feel comfortable expressing their needs without stigma.
What is Food Sustainability? (Is food justice an environmental issue?)

Food justice is directly related to sustainability; the health of the planet determines our ability to grow nutritious food into the future. Food is an ecological resource, and as a result, the equitable distribution of food is an environmental justice issue. In our current food systems, food is inequitably distributed across urban and rural communities of color and low income communities while corporations profit from agricultural practices that exploit laborers and ecosystems. A sustainable food system pushes back against these harmful norms. A sustainable food system must be a just food system.

For more information about food justice and the environment follow the links below.

https://tinyurl.com/ycu2cfbf
https://tinyurl.com/y8s4z5zc

If you have an iPhone, scan the QR with your camera. Androids and other phones without a built in QR reader will need the URL.
Tips for eating sustainably on a budget

With these tips, you’ll be better equipped to work our capitalist food system, eat sustainably, and mitigate insecurity for yourself and your community.

1. Develop food networks with your friends.
   a. If you can afford it, host a communal meal with your friends
   b. Carpool to HelloBulk or Winco to buy bulk foods, which will yield multiple meals
   c. Share bulk foods like rice, pasta, and beans with your roommates

2. Meal prep at the beginning of the week.
   a. Making a big dish with a grain, vegetables, and protein will get you through the school week with energy
   b. Learn to make Fried Quinoa and other nutritious meals in the recipe section (QR code on page 17)
In the growing season, go to work days, take home free produce, and learn how to grow food.

4. Get involved with a food co-op.
A food co-op is a food distribution source organized cooperatively, rather than privately. The decisions regarding the production and distribution of its food are decided by members. They focus on high quality food sourcing, and distribute sustainable food for less money than privately owned stores.

5. Replace meat protein with vegetable protein.
Beans, legumes, nuts, grains, and many types of seeds are high in protein, versatile for many recipes, and low in cost relative to meat.

6. Check the discount rack in the grocery store.
Oftentimes there is high quality, low cost food.

Utah food Co-op
https://tinyurl.com/tczjuoq

Bountiful Baskets
https://tinyurl.com/wxbyeme
7. Dumpster diving!
Many grocery stores and restaurants have to get rid of food that expired but is safe to eat. Just be a little cautious. While it’s technically legal, most dumpsters are on private property. Tips: Look out for No Trespassing signs and cameras around the dumpster, and check if the dumpster is on private property or against the side of a building. Bakeries, pizza joints, and grocery stores are good places to go.

8. Enroll in SNAP (more info on pages 18-21).

9. Use your meal plan to purchase pantry staples at Shaw. (more on page 22).

10. Get involved with the Westminster Student Union (more on page 24).
**Budget Shopping List**
Go back to the basics and the basics will provide! We have compiled a shopping list that takes into account price, nutrition, and accessibility. To view our shopping list with price comparisons from local grocery stores, follow the link or scan the QR.

https://tinyurl.com/r2avfho

**Recipes**
Scan the QR or follow the URL to learn how to make 8 delicious low cost meals!

https://tinyurl.com/ya3pkmqj
Resources:

Know your food rights.

As a student, you can get up to $192 every month from the supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP).

- Do you work (even part time) and go to school or participate in a work study program?
- Are you enrolled part time?
- Do you have a disability, receive FEP or WIA funds, or physically care for a child?

If you said yes to any of those questions you may qualify for SNAP.

You can use SNAP (almost) anywhere you buy food. That includes farmers markets, whole food markets, even the 7/11 and CVS.

To find places that accept SNAP go to this link: SNAP locator.

https://jobs.utah.gov/mycase/
or call (866) 435-7414.

To apply for benefits visit https://tinyurl.com/ybgmmodh

Everyone has a right to eat enough. Do you eat enough? Do your friends eat enough?
“Can I still apply for SNAP if I am not a U.S. citizen?”

Even if you are not a U.S. citizen you may still qualify, non-citizens of particular legal status still qualify. Follow the link below to see the SNAP criteria for folks without citizenship.

Nevertheless, SNAP is not available to undocumented people and applying for SNAP may affect your eligibility for citizenship under the new rules from the current administration. If that affects you, it may be better to use some of the non-government resources available to you, like the Westminster food shelf.

https://tinyurl.com/y6wq82xm
How to get groceries on your meal plan:

If you ask the cashiers at Shaw, or give them a list, they can go into the kitchen and generally get most of what you’ve asked for, although they may not have everything. Usually, they can get what you need by the next day or so. It’s a great way to get basics like eggs and vegetables. It is more expensive than the grocery store, but if you already have a meal plan (or someone is willing to share theirs) it’s a good way to go.

Tips:

1. Go when it’s less busy, so the cashiers can work with you.
2. Make sure that there are at least two cashiers when you ask--- if there’s just one they won’t be able to leave their position.
3. Always bring a list
One of the goals of the Westminster Student Union is mutual aid.

“What’s that?”

Mutual aid is a voluntary and reciprocal exchange of resources that does not con-note moral superiority of the giver over the receiver.

Here are the programs the union is running as of Spring Semester 2020:

1. **Meal swipes group chat**
   The union maintains an Instagram group chat where students can offer or request to share meal plans at Shaw and Bassis. To be added, contact the union! (Contact info on following page.)

2. **Westminster Food Pantry**
   The union stocks the existing on-campus food pantry on a weekly basis. It’s located in Bassis. Turn left immediately after walking in the front doors. Open to all! Take what you need.

3. **Weekly trips to food pantry**
   The union stocks the food pantry by sending weekly volunteers to a local food bank. If you volunteer for four hours, you can take a box of food. If you’re interested in joining, either to help stock the pantry or to take a box home, get in contact or come to the next meeting!
4. Food at all meetings

The union provides fresh-made meals at each meeting. They meet every other week, alternating Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There are usually leftovers in the Bassis kitchen the day afterwards also. If you’re able, they ask for a few dollars ($1-2 each covers the meal) towards repaying the meal coordinators.
Student Union Update for Covid-19

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Westminster Student Union has adapted to the changing needs of students. Instead of maintaining an on-campus food pantry, we are working for food justice through sharing resources and facilitating a campus-wide mutual aid network.

To see an updated list expanding on Westminter’s Covid-19 relief, as well as Covid-19 resources in the Salt Lake City area follow this link:

https://tinyurl.com/ybmvwaly
Revolutions can’t run on empty stomachs.

Creators: Jo Englert, Paul Nasca, Halsey Congleton, Faith Staley, Anthony Giorgio

Layout and Images: Harris Wright

Partners: Environmental Center, Student Union, ASW, Student Diversity and Inclusion Center, Fitness, Wellness, and Recreation Department, and the Dumke Center for Civic Engagement