

FIRST YEAR EATS



The reason: 24% of TAMU freshmen are food insecure, with higher rates among under-served students. Food insecurity correlates with poorer grades.

The target: Freshmen living in Clements Hall and participating in Learning Communities composed mostly of first generation, low income, and/or under-served students.

The goal: Can we increase student success by addressing food insecurity.

How: FYE crockpot meals with recipes and a bag of ingredients and a stocked larder help alleviate food insecurity while we teach freshmen how to cook. Everybody Eats and TUFU provide gardening skills and fresh produce to create healthy meals like salad-in-a-jar. Industry giving provides eggs and grocery support. The Stats Team gives us a better understanding of what is happening and whether we are reaching our goals.



Pandemic Response: Pandemic restrictions forced us to switch to contactless and socially distanced programming. Stocking a larder became customized grocery bags and cooking classes became Monday meals for pick up. Crockpot ingredients/recipes were available every week and video cooking lessons were posted on Instagram.



FIRST YEAR EATS



Everybody Eats

Created container gardens around Clements residence hall for freshmen to learn how to garden and ran workshops on how to make healthy salad-in-a-jar portable meals.



TAMU Urban Farm United (TUFU)

Produced 670 lbs of fruit and vegetables.
551 heads of greens
610 heads of lettuce.



Stats Team

Students in FYE last year (pre-COVID) significantly improved their average mid-term grades from 2.45 in Fall 19 to 2.70 in Spring 20!

Those same students returned as sophomores and finished their Fall 20 semester with almost 5% higher retention than the control group, significant at the 90% level.

Conclusion:

Participation in First Year Eats increases freshman GPRs and their retention through the first semester of sophomore year while teaching healthy eating habits and other skills!