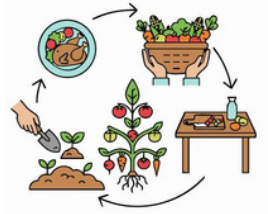
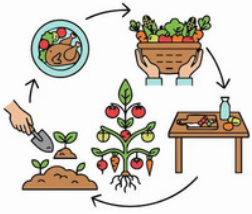


THE DIALOGUE

The Kentucky Hunger Dialogue Newsletter



College Hunger Doesn't Take a Summer Break

When people think about hunger during the summer months, they often think of children losing access to school meals. What is less visible is the growing number of college students who struggle to access adequate food when classes are not in session.

For many college students, summer brings a unique set of challenges. Campus dining facilities may operate on limited schedules, financial aid refunds are often exhausted, and many students lose access to campus-based support services. Students who rely on campus food pantries during the academic year may find fewer resources available during the summer months. Others face reduced work hours, increased housing costs, or the challenge of balancing summer classes with employment.

Research continues to show that food insecurity affects a significant number of college students nationwide. In Kentucky, recent data from the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS) found that nearly half of responding students reported experiencing food insecurity.¹ Many also reported housing instability and other financial hardships.

The consequences extend beyond empty stomachs. Students experiencing food insecurity

are more likely to struggle academically, experience increased stress, and delay graduation. For student parents, veterans, first-generation students, and those attending community colleges, the summer months can be especially difficult.

Fortunately, Kentucky colleges and universities are working to address these challenges. Campus food pantries, emergency assistance funds, SNAP outreach efforts, and community partnerships help bridge gaps when students need support most. Programs such as FUEL NKU at Northern Kentucky University provide food, hygiene products, and other necessities while promoting student success and well-being.

Community members can also make a difference. Donations to campus food pantries, volunteer efforts, advocacy for student basic needs programs, and increased awareness of student hunger all help ensure students can focus on learning rather than wondering where their next meal will come from.

As Kentucky works to strengthen its workforce and educational outcomes, addressing college student hunger must remain a year-round priority. Hunger does not take a summer break, and neither should our commitment to supporting students.

¹ <https://kctcs.edu/newsroom/news/2026/20260402-kctcs-feeding-ky-address-food-insecurity.aspx>

College Hunger - Test your Knowledge

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