

# The Library's Role in Combating Food Insecurity on Campus

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# Food insecurity is a problem on campus



30% of college students experience food insecurity and it affects their academic performance.

In the last decade, awareness has grown about students' basic needs, including food security.

**CUFBA**  
COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY  
FOOD BANK ALLIANCE



[Getting Started Pantry Toolkit](#)



[Running a Campus Pantry](#)



## A note on terminology

**Food banks** store food to be distributed to local food programs.

**Food pantries** are distribution centers where people are served.

**Cub pantries** – affiliates or branches of the Penn State food pantry

# Libraries have many advantages for food banks

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Libraries tend to be:

- located in areas accessible to many people
- open more hours than Monday-Friday 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
- open to a broad spectrum of people
- experienced with running programs



# Libraries support student learning

Libraries support student success by providing:

- access to textbooks and course readings.
- safe spaces for studying and learning.
- open educational resources, to aid students with limited means.
- open hours on evenings and weekends.



Libraries also provide free power, light, warmth, water and facilities.

*(Some provide free internet and wi-fi.)*

# Academic Libraries and Food Pantries

Our campus has a food pantry – so why does the library need to step in?

- Location of campus food pantry was far from most students
- Hours of campus food pantry were limited
- Cub pantries existed but were inside offices only open 8-5, M-F

**Cub pantries extend the geographic reach and hours of access to food pantry resources.**

<b>Saturday</b>	<b>4–6PM</b>
Sunday	11AM–2PM, 4–6PM
Monday	4–6PM
Tuesday	4–6PM
Wednesday	Closed
Thursday	11AM–2PM, 4–6PM
Friday	Closed



*the*  
**LION'S  
PANTRY**

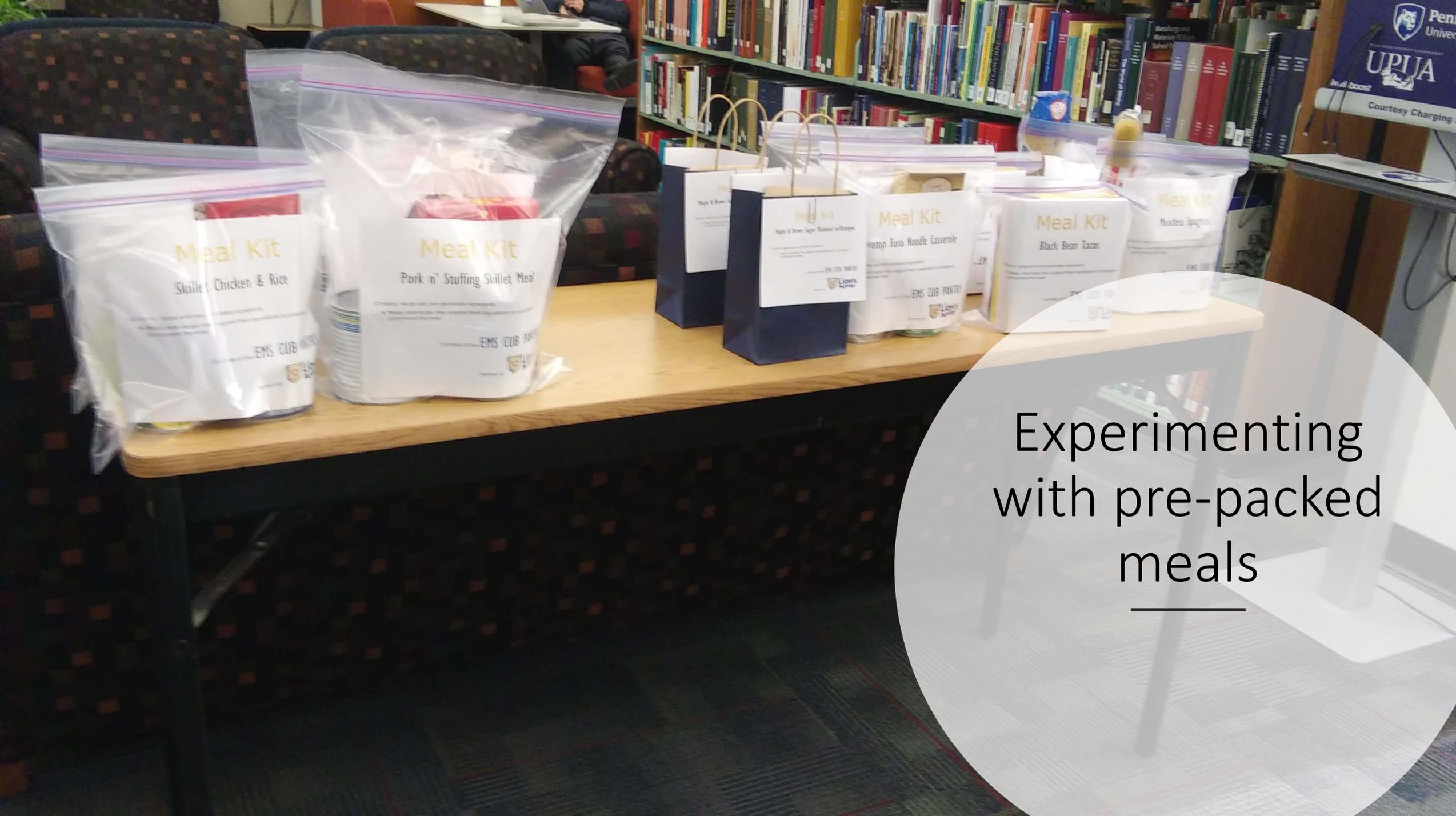


# The beginning – October 2021



# November-December 2021





Experimenting  
with pre-packed  
meals

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Experimenting with non-food items

# Processes and Measures

- Pick up some items from campus food pantry once per week
- Weigh any donations received directly



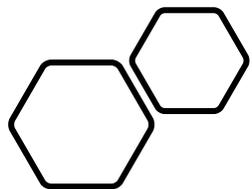
## Anecdotally...

- Grab & go is popular
  - Granola bars
  - Snacks
  - Energy drinks
- Students appreciate pre-packaged meals
- Faculty/staff are eager to contribute

Management of area takes some time and effort.

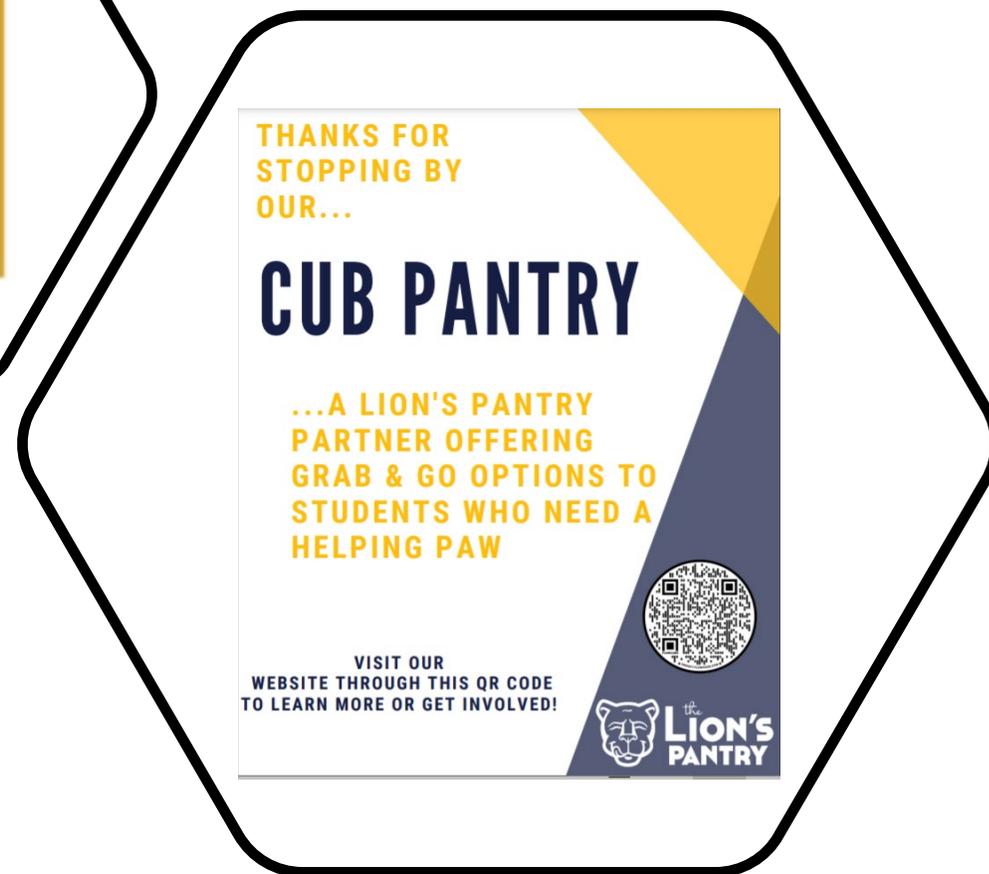
Kudos to EMSL staff Liz Long and Megan Fletcher, who are leading the food pantry initiative.





## Other opportunities

- Food drives
- Sponsorship
- Improve profile of the library
- Support for university/college-wide initiatives
- Support for UN SDGs



New Cub Pantry in 105 Deike.



**Earth and Mineral  
Sciences Library**

Cub Pantries serve as Lion's  
Pantry partners across Penn  
State's campus to ensure food is  
even more accessible to students.

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ZERO  
HUNGER



Contact us:  
<https://libraries.psu.edu/ems> or 814-865-9517

## Take aways

- There is a need to address food insecurity on campus.
- Libraries can play a valuable role.
- Reach out to your local food pantry to learn how your library can help.

## Any questions?

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