



Increasing Capacity of Food Access Programs

Dana Ng, UC Davis Student Farm Community Table Project Global Food Initiative Fellowship 2017-2018

Introduction

Despite holding the title of one of the nation's top agricultural schools, the UC Davis student community continues to face food security on their own campus.

For the scope of this fellowship project, increasing the accessibility of food distribution programs to address this need were implemented in two ways:

- 1) Increasing the capacity of the Fresh Focus Program
- 2) Facilitating and promoting CalFresh "Super Clinics"

The *Fresh Focus Program* is a pivotal leg of the Community Table project, a food access and inclusion project based at the UC Davis Student Farm. The program aims to facilitate the harvest, processing, and delivery of free, organic produce from the Student Farm to the UC Davis campus community through the ASUCD Pantry, Fruit & Veggie Up!, and at the Educational Opportunity Program Cottage. Internships for the program are also offered on a quarterly basis where students gain experiential knowledge on post-harvest processing of produce and engaging with the campus community in increasing food literacy.

CalFresh, a SNAP-based program, is a highly beneficial financial aid program that helps students buy food and eat healthier. Many students at UC Davis are not aware of their potential qualifications for the program and miss out on the opportunity to receive assistance on food purchases.

Project Goals

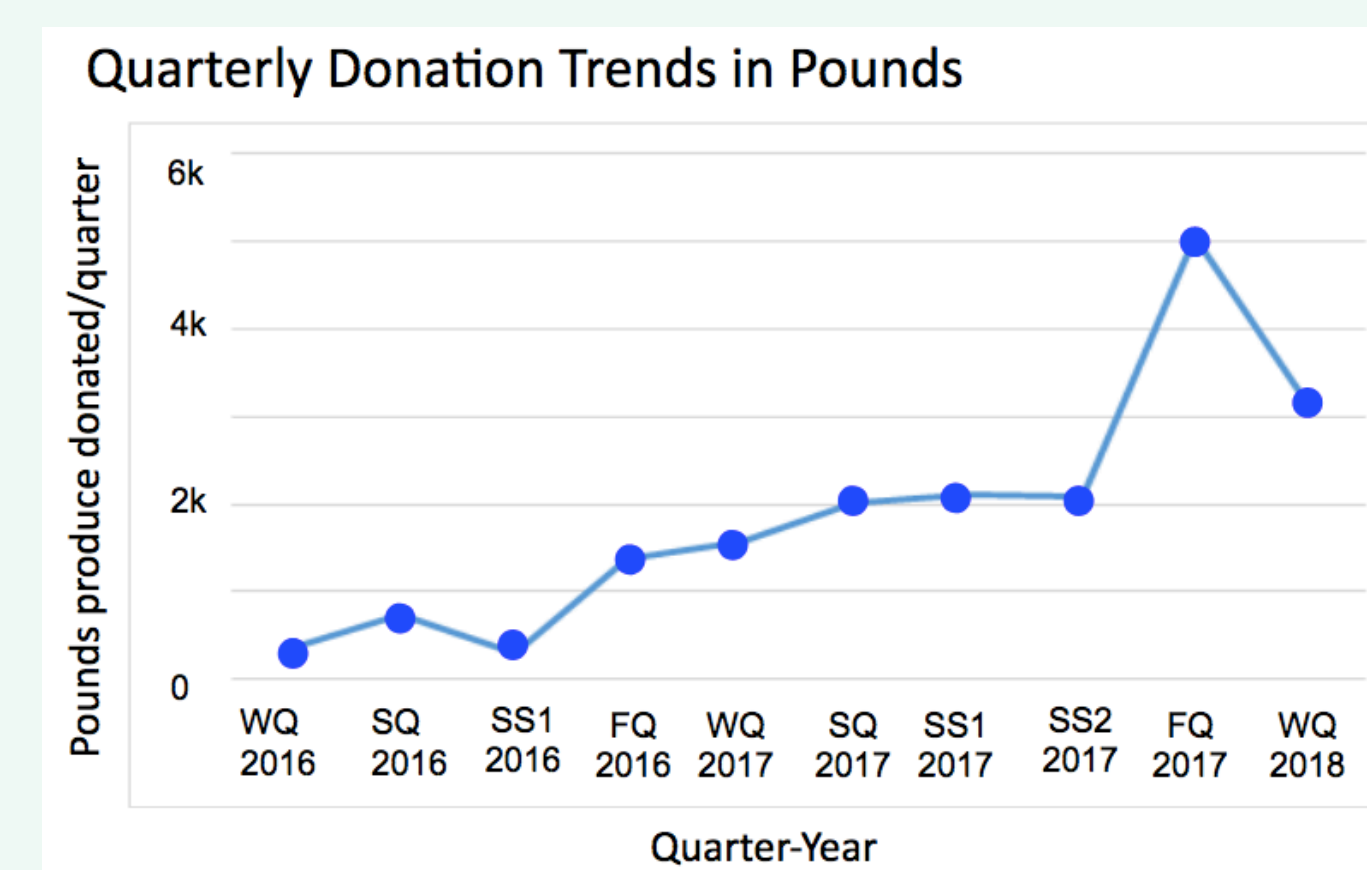
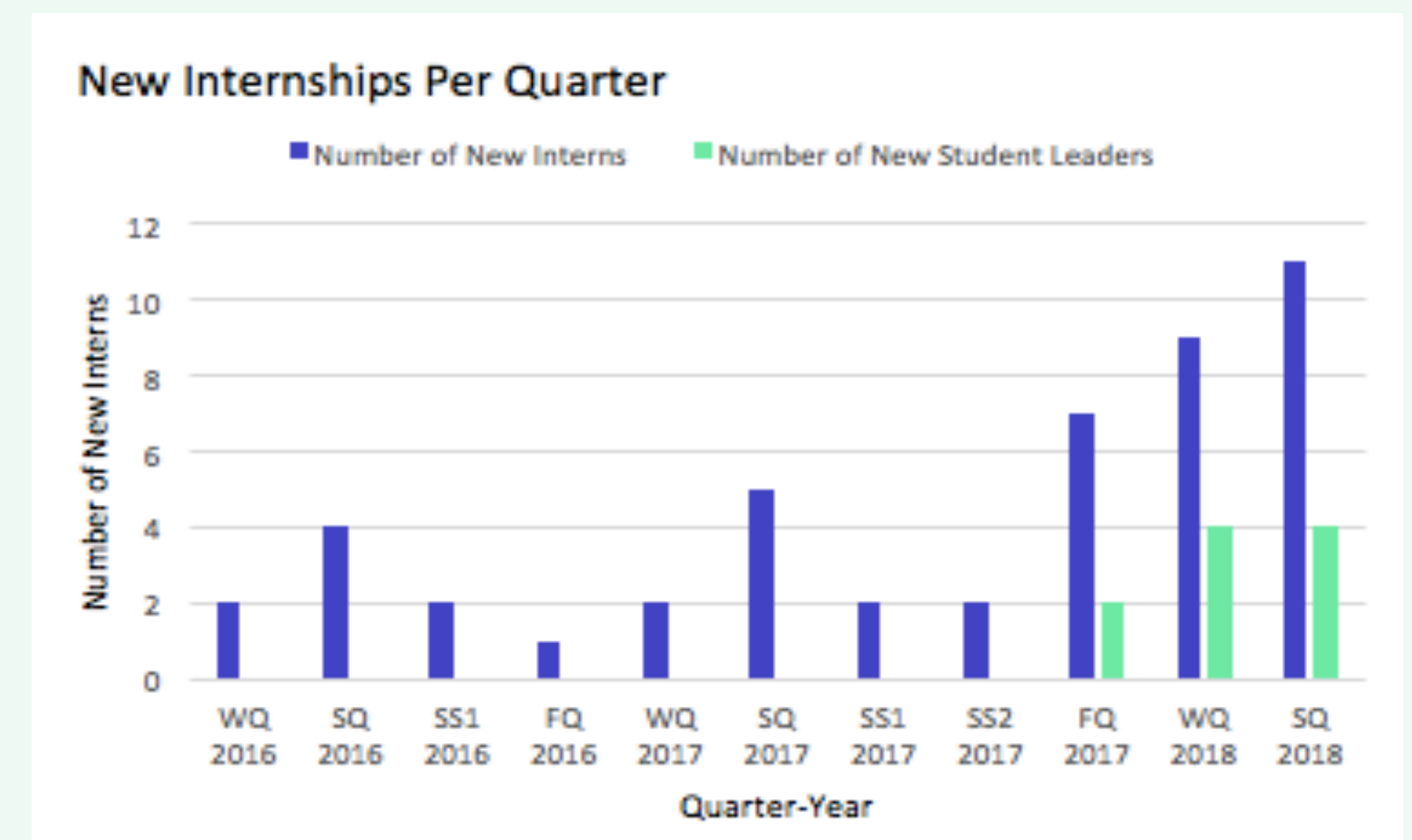
- Increase produce production for increased produce donation
- Increase labor force at the Student Farm necessary to facilitate harvest, processing, and distribution of produce to the campus community
- Make new connections with resource centers as potential food distribution sites
- Refine and modify structure of the Fresh Focus Program for maximum efficiency in eliminating waste of over-harvested produce for donations
- Host and facilitate CalFresh "Super Clinics" to amplify the benefits of the program and educate students on how to apply/the qualification process

Fresh Focus Program

Methods

- Secured a dedicated portion of the Student Farm to grow crops specifically for donation purposes
- Advertised the Fresh Focus internship widely across campus to increase pool of applicants
- Formalized connections with various campus resource centers to open as a food distribution site, serving the population that utilizes the services at the centers
- Applied for the TGIF Grant to fund two paid student positions to assist program development
- Participated and assisted in developing the Aggie Food Connection Coalition, a group connecting food-centered student organizations to collaborate on food access efforts

Impact



Increase of produce donations (in lbs.) since GFI-funding. Dip in WQ 2018 is likely attributed to distribution of more, lighter-weight, leafy greens. FQ 2017 had more heavy crops due to the seasonality of production.

CalFresh Super Clinics

Methods

- Organized 6 total workshops throughout the academic year, 1 in Fall Qtr, 2 in Winter Qtr, and 3 in Spring Qtr
- Coordinated marketing of the workshops with various resource centers, including the Educational Opportunity Program, and major peer advisors
- Collaborated with CalFresh representatives with the county to ensure up-to-date and expert information for qualification or the application process



Flyer for the workshop series

Impact

- 50+ attendees in total throughout the workshop series
- 85% of attendees were able to sign-up for CalFresh at the time of workshop
- Overall, on-campus CalFresh enrollment, supplemented with the CalFresh representative's office hours have increased by 52%.



Workshop attendees with CalFresh rep, Max Vaca

Conclusion/Future Goals

Though the labor force increased by nearly 6 times, the Fresh Focus program had to overcome challenges of having to train new interns every quarter, which slowed down harvest and processing of produce at the beginning of each quarter. This can be mitigated by encouraging students to continue the internship for multiple quarters to refine their skills and improve the efficiency of the program.

The CalFresh Super Clinics ultimately faced challenges with marketing as each of the workshops had the capacity to include more students. With the new Basic Needs Center, these workshops can be made to reoccur, where students can learn about CalFresh at anytime without being confined to a few workshop dates.

Student Testimony

"I just wanted to say thank you for all of the support the Pantry has provided for me over the last few months. Me and my son are eating much more healthy as a result of the fresh vegetables and all of the pantry items we have received.

I don't know if I would have survived my first quarter at UC Davis without it, and it has become a huge lifeline for me."

- Eddie Bell, transfer student

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