**SNAP CHALLENGE:** GUIDELINES AND TIPS

The SNAP Challenge is a 5 day experience simulating the SNAP budget. The average SNAP benefits for an individual college student in North Carolina is $160 per month.

1. Spend no more than $5.33per day or $26.65 for the full 5 days.
2. Avoid accepting free food from family, friends, and events. These opportunities are not always available for everyone.
3. You may not eat any pre-purchased foods before you started the challenge (including spices, condiments, drinks!).
4. Blog/post, share on social media or comment about your experiences at least once a day. We encourage you to post to FACEBOOK (NC State SNAP Challenge), TWITTER, INSTAGRAM using #NCSUSnapChallenge

Use the SNAP tracker sheet to record your thoughts and track the money you have spent. Please email a pdf of your handwritten track sheet to [snapchallenge@ncsu.edu](mailto:snapchallenge@ncsu.edu" \t "_blank) by March 12th.

**FAQ:**

*Q: What if food is brought into my office, dorm or classroom? What about free coffee at work?*

A: Unfortunately, a person on SNAP would not likely have those free food opportunities. Bring in a packed lunch or saying no to the food/drink would be a great opportunity to discuss the SNAP challenge.

*Q: What about bottled water, spices or condiments?*

A: You cannot count pre-bought spices, drinks or condiments. If you do not want to rebuy the spice or condiment, record the price of the item in your tracker and count it in your running total as if you purchased it.

*Q: How do I incorporate food I already have at home/dining plan?*

A: At the grocery store record the price of the item as if you were buying it with your budget. Also, you must budget in meal plans you have previously purchased. Check the University rates for each meal, Breakfast being $5.25, etc.

*Q: If I only spend $3 one day, can I spend $7 the next day – or does it always have to be $5.33 per day?*

A: You do not have to spend the same amount every day. The weekly total can’t be more than $26.65.

*Q: What if I am invited to someone’s house for a meal?*

A: Eat before the event, or take your own food. Maybe suggest the snacks or meal be based off a SNAP budget. If could be a great conversation piece!

*Q: Are there foods that can’t be purchased with SNAP benefits?*

A: Yes. If possible avoid consuming foods that cannot be purchased with SNAP benefits.

* “Hot” prepared foods such as rotisserie chickens and other entrees.
* Alcohol
* Cigarettes
* Fast food, restaurants, to-go food, delivery pizza
* Medicines and vitamins.

We encourage you to ask on campus vendors (C-Stores, Dining Halls, Food Trucks) that you normally frequent if they accept EBT cards. You will quickly learn where you will be able to purchase food for the week.

**TIPS:**

* You may need to cut coupons or search grocery paper ad on days that times are discounted.
* Use your grocery discount cards
* Meal planning when you go to the grocery store will help you budget and spend wisely.
* Try to eat as healthy as possible but not that organic food may be more expensive and out of your budget.
* Also checkout other people who have completed the SNAP Challenge
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H2IlaoJ95dY>
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RKun5bNmlPQ>
  + <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIFPuS4D9Qk>

For more information and support, please check out the official website of the SNAP Challenge at NCSU: [www.NCSUSnapChallenge.weebly.com](http://www.NCSUSnapChallenge.weebly.com) or email [snapchallenge@ncsu.edu](mailto:snapchallenge@ncsu.edu).

We STRONGLY ENCOURAGE you to share your experiences and reflections by blogging on BLOGGER (“your name” SNAP Challenge at NCSU is the suggested title), Facebook, Twitter and Instagram by using #NCSUSnapChallenge

Please email [snapchallenge@ncsu.edu](mailto:snapchallenge@ncsu.edu) with any questions/concerns.