FY1100 Food Sustainability
Food Security/Food Costs
Part A
(For a class on Food Sustainability)

Purpose: By the end of the assignment you will know several people in the class, a bit more about Worcester and you will have a broader awareness of the constraints on food choices imposed by budgets, geographic location and cultural preferences, as well as the impact on nutrition. (Plus you might have a greater appreciation for whomever it was in your family that did the shopping and meal prep in your household!)

Learning Outcomes Involved: Teamwork, Problem solving, cultural awareness

Part 1: 40 pts
You have been divided into groups and assigned 2 amounts of money, either $80 and $100, or $80 and $150. Each group has also been assigned a local market. Go to your assigned market and determine what you would buy to feed a family of four for a week if you only had $80. Then decide what you would do differently if you could spend the larger amount of money (either $100 or $150 depending on your group). Assume your cupboards and fridge are empty. You must buy everything they are going to eat or drink (except water) for that entire week and you may spend no more than the amounts of money that you were assigned. Your primary consideration is to keep your family from being hungry; this means meeting the caloric needs of the family for the week. Do the best you can to include a variety of foods; an all ice cream diet is not acceptable.

1. Make a list of each item that you would buy, the amount and the price. Try to keep this on one page.

2. Write a one page (max) description of the process, answering the following questions. How did you decide what to select?

Nutrition/Biochemistry related questions
Calculate for both shopping lists (either from labels or your other resources) the totals for the number of calories and % calories from each category: fat, protein and carbohydrates. Create a summary table that compares the daily per person averages of these for both the lesser and greater amounts of money. Only turn in the summary table! Use the layout below:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>$80 Budget</th>
<th>Bigger Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carbohydrates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How well did you do in meeting the family’s caloric needs? How nutritious is this diet?
2. What effect did the larger budget have on the nutritional value of the foods you selected?
3. How did the diets vary with increasing money to spend?
4. Why do you think obesity is frequently a problem for lower income families?

**Examples of economics-related questions:**

1. How did the diets vary with increasing money to spend? Are the low income and higher income diets equally healthy?
2. Relate your change in food choices between the two budgets to the concept of elasticity. Which choices were inelastic? Why?
3. How much of a difference did pricing make? Did you always choose the cheapest version of the item you were selecting? Why or why not?

**Cultural differences-related questions:**

1. Were the diets very different for groups that had the same amount of money but shopped in different markets? If so, what are those differences?
2. In the market you shopped in, did you see foods that you were unfamiliar with? If you had to shop there regularly, how would you feel?

Other possible types of questions – Marketing (shelf placement, color of packaging), psychology (stress in keeping to budget)