Proposed Initiative: Student Enterprise Gardens – A student-run fruit and vegetable production enterprise system that sells fresh produce into university dining services for use in daily food retail operations, all the while acting as an educational venue for sustainable food production and localized food self-sufficiency.

Proposed by: The Student Alliance for Local and Sustainable Agriculture (SALSA)

What strategic goal does this initiative support?
Distinctive Academic Excellence; Innovation and Partnerships

Describe how the initiative supports the goal(s).
The initiative creates a niche educational experience at URF by offering unique, relevant student learning opportunities with a focus on hands-on entrepreneurial applications in sustainable food systems. Further, the initiative would display exceptional leadership on behalf of the University in sustainable community development, which includes economic vitality, by exemplifying a functional real-life model of a localized, partially self-sufficient, sustainable food system. This leadership would certainly help to distinguish the university as a truly innovative and relevant institute of higher education.

Based on the definition of university-wide initiative, indicate how the proposed initiative has a university-wide impact.
The positive effects of the initiative are available to all members of the URF campus, including students, faculty, and staff, as well as community members. The opportunities of being impacted by the initiative range widely from the students who are directly involved in food production to the thousands of students, faculty, and guests who enjoy on-campus dining.

Please provide a set of benchmarks and/or indicators of success to support your initiative.
The establishment of predictable production yields that are satisfactory to the receiving entities as well as the students, and the University. The integration of the garden operation into educational outlets on campus to serve as an educational model of a fully functional sustainable food system.

What elements are involved in the initiative?
Sustainability, Inclusiveness, Human Capital, Technology, Facilities, Finance

Indicate how each element would be/would not be affected by the initiative.
- **Sustainability:** This initiative is fundamentally rooted in the triple-bottom line of sustainability. Some key ways through which the advancement of sustainability on the URF campus would occur include: Economic: -Enrichment of the economic vitality of rural communities and beginning farmers alike through the incentivization and fortification of niche markets and value-added agriculture. Ecologic: -Reduced carbon footprint, together with decreased dependency on fossil fuels, as a direct and immediate result of reduced transportation of a portion of the food served on campus. -The ecological benefits of sustainability based production of fruits and vegetables such as, but not limited to: organic practices and other low-input practices, permaculture operations, cover cropping, no-till and conservation tillage systems, and composting operations. Social: -Enhancing food security as a result of partially self-sufficient localized production. -Ensuring universal access to affordable, fresh, healthy food.

- **Inclusiveness:** The opportunity to be involved in the production process will be available to all students. Further, the fresh and healthy produce from the garden will be available to all
students, faculty, staff, community members and guests though dining services operations on campus.

- **Human Capital:** Much of the human capital involved would be in the form of student involvement primarily through garden labor, planning, organizational, and logistical work. The Student Alliance for Local and Sustainable Agriculture (SALSA), a new UWRF student organization, is prepared to spearhead student involvement coordination. Faculty and/or staff supervision of the garden operation will be necessary to some extent, but emphasis should be placed on students’ operational roles as much as possible. Faculty/Staff supervision should be approached as advisory positions to the group of students, similar to advisers of student organizations on campus. Some human capital will need to be put forth by University Dining Services and Sodexo staff, as they will both have critical roles in the logistics of purchasing produce from the student enterprise garden.

- **Technology:** Virtually no new technology will be required by the initiative. The only potential technological demand will be establishing some sort of web presence on the UWRF website to provide information about the garden operation to the campus and public.

- **Facilities:** Required by the initiative is land allocation for the garden. The location would ideally be as geographically near to campus as possible, in order to reduce or even eliminate the use of fossil fuels in transportation of both people and produce to and from the garden. Also advantageous would be a garden site geographically near to the future site of the food waste composting facility, in order to foster the integration of the two operations, as well as potentially utilize shared storage space.

- **Finance:** Financing required for the initiative includes some start-up costs for site preparation, tools, and other equipment for garden use. It is possible that grants may be available to cover some start-up costs. There is opportunity for financial savings if the garden site were strategically located to share storage space and reduce transportation-related costs. Through the sale of produce to dining services, revenue will be accrued for reinvestment in operational costs and furthering garden projects.

- **Other:**