



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

October 2011 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Total Transactions	EBT Transactions	Total Sales on Wireless
2010 Total: 37,440	6,474 (17.3%)	\$869,401
2011 Totals:		
January 362	46 (12.7%)	\$ 17,346
February 493	57 (11.6%)	\$ 25,173
March 604	67 (11.1%)	\$ 20,259
April 830	73 (8.8%)	\$ 29,252
May 4,553	581 (12.7%)	\$158,440
June 4,214	787 (18.7%)	\$ 92,677
July 5,535	1321 (23.9%)	\$ 87,807
August 6,877	1742 (25.3%)	\$118,892
September 5,911	1365 (23.1%)	\$109,445
YTD		
2011 Total 29,379	6,039 (20.6%)	\$659,291

September 2011 Facts:

Total sales for September this year were much higher than September 2010 (\$109,445 compared to \$96,344). The number of EBT transactions were also higher in 2011 (1,365 compared to 1,156) than a year ago. For this September, there was a total of 5,911 wireless transactions. A year ago, there were 5,043.

In September 2011, there were 183,734 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$49,018,814 in benefits were issued in September to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding September sales:

There were 132 farmers who were active in September and 110 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest number of EBT transactions were:

- Country Market (209) Sioux City
- Hoffman Produce Farm (67) Waterloo
- Stillwater Greenhouse (48) Orchard
- Scavo's Market (44) Des Moines
- Westrum Produce (43) Stratford
- Iowa Orchard (40) Urbandale
- Mast Family Farm (37) Leon
- Cortez Gardens (35) Colfax
- Allen's Grove Greenhouse (32) Donahue
- Circle W Acres (30) Belle Plaine
- Nostalgia Farms (30) Walcott

Congratulations to Country Market for having the highest number of EBT transactions and for having the highest amount in EBT sales. Great Job!

New IRS Law (IMPORTANT)

Back in February, you should have received a letter from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) about a new law. The new law requires third party processors to report to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) what your gross sales are from your wireless machine. The first report will take place in January, 2012 for your sales in 2011. What this means is you will receive a 1099-K from Total Merchant Services (TMS) if you have a Nurit 8000/8020 wireless machine or from TSYS if you have a VeriFone VX610 wireless machine. It is very important that your wireless machine provider have the correct Federal Tax ID or social security number on file for you. Please respond immediately to any official requests for this information. Failure to do so will result in an automatic withholding from your daily settlement, beginning January 2012.



Nurit 8000



Nurit 8020



VeriFone VX610

TOTAL MERCHANT SERVICES (TMS)

TSYS

Shutting down machines for the winter 2011/2012

Thanks to many of you for your quick response as to what your plans are for your wireless machine during the winter months. If you haven't contacted us, please do so as soon as possible.

If you are attending winter markets or selling from your farm during the winter months we definitely want to keep your machine live. Please contact us and let us know what your intentions are.

Machines & Signs – are you taking yours to the market?

Tracy has had the opportunity to visit several farmers markets over the summer months. It is always surprising when I get to the markets and farmers don't have their machines or signs. It is very **important** to remember to have your machine charged and at the market as well as your signs! Food Assistance families look for the signs so they know which farmers can accept their EBT cards.

Traveling to visit farmers markets

On Saturday, September 18th, Tracy had the opportunity to visit the North Grand Mall market and the Main Street market in Ames. North Grand Mall market was very busy as usual with a great selection of fresh produce, eggs, and lots of pumpkins. The Main Street market is a brand new market this year and doing quite well. This market has multiple vendors and a great location.

NORTH GRAND MALL MARKET



Lisa Brasche
R & B Farms



Dick & Letha DeMoss
DeMoss Pumpkin Farm



Dick Martin
Martin's Garden

AMES MAIN STREET MARKET



Barbara Ohlund
Heavy Horses Farm



Elizabeth Kemp
Jumping Bean Farm

Supplies

Just a reminder - if you are running low on paper for your wireless machine to please give Kim or Tracy a call. DHS supplies the paper rolls for your wireless machines. It is very important that you do not use any other kind of paper as it could do damage to your machine. You always want to make sure to have plenty of paper on hand before you head to the market.

Upcoming Events

Des Moines Downtown Winter Season Markets – Des Moines is holding their indoor/outdoor markets at Capital Square/Nollen Plaza; the same as previous years. The dates are November 18th & 19th and December 16th & 17th. The Friday lunch market will be from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and on Saturday the hours will be 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. If you would like to sign up to be a vendor at the winter market please e-mail Kelly Foss at KFoss@downtowndesmoines.com.

IA Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference – January 27 & 28 at the FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny.

IA Farmers Market Association Conference - Saturday, February 11th in Des Moines. The speaker will be Mercedes Taylor-Puckett.

Reminders:

1. Remember that you cannot ring up a sale for another vendor. You could lose your Food Stamp certification and be terminated from the Wireless Project.

2. Since you are paying for the commercial transaction fees, be sure to keep track of what you are paying so you can use those expenses as a tax deduction.
3. You cannot set a minimum purchase amount. If an EBT household wishes to purchase \$.50 in onions, you do need to process the transaction. Same for any debit or credit transaction.
4. Hot foods and hot drinks (cocoa, coffee, and tea) cannot be purchased with SNAP EBT benefits.
5. If your Nurit machine quits working, you need to call TMS Tech Support at 1-888-848-6825. This is the phone number on the side of your machine. If you can't get the problem solved, please give Tracy a call.
6. If your VeriFone machine quits working, you will need to call Jason Butts at 402-602-4086 or Chris Shanahan at 402-602-4275. If you can't get the problem solved, please give Tracy a call.
7. Call Kim if you need any supplies such as paper rolls, power cords, or battery.
8. The second battery that we provide to you was purchased by DHS. If you ever need to return your wireless machine, be sure to keep one battery, carrying case and signs.
9. **Charge your batteries before market.** You should always have a charged battery, ready to go for market. If a battery is not holding a charge, contact Kim for a replacement.
10. Please make sure to keep the original box that your machine came in as it contains the Sim card, which is needed to identify your machine if you have to call TMS.

Help Desk

We are here to help you!

When you have questions about:

- **Participating in the Wireless project or reimbursement questions? Call Tracy Penick at 515-281-4935.**
- **What you can sell to EBT customers, or being authorized to accept EBT? Call USDA/FNS at 515-284-4035.**
- **Food Assistance eligibility? Call Tom Wakefield at 515-281-6820.**
- **Supplies – call Kim Jones at (515) 281-5410**