



# WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

## July 2012 Newsletter



### From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Total Transactions	EBT Transactions	Total Sales on Wireless
<b>2011 Total: 42,748</b>	<b>7,286 (17.0%)</b>	<b>\$1,002,550</b>
<b>2012 Totals:</b>		
January 471	88 (18.7%)	\$ 14,977
February 639	75 (11.7%)	\$ 14,733
March 1,300	94 ( 7.2%)	\$ 26,134
April 1,848	74 ( 4.0%)	\$ 67,561
May 6,226	637 (10.2%)	\$192,253
June 5,227	1032 (19.7%)	\$ 96,219
YTD		
<b>2012 Total 15,711</b>	<b>2000 (12.7%)</b>	<b>\$411,877</b>

#### **June 2012 Facts:**

Total sales for June this year were higher than June 2011 (\$96,219 compared to \$92,677). The number of EBT transactions were also higher in 2012 than in 2011 (1,032 compared to 787). For June 2012, there were a total of 5,227 wireless transactions compared to 4,214 in 2011.

In June 2012, there were 193,588 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$49,897,289 in benefits were issued in June to these families.

#### Here are other interesting facts regarding June sales:

There were 139 farmers who were active in June and 114 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest number of EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Scavo's Market (116) Des Moines
- ❖ Story Book Orchard (53) Story City
- ❖ Iowa Orchard (52) Urbandale
- ❖ SNAX (44) North Liberty
- ❖ Mast Family Farm (43) Leon
- ❖ Shutt's Garden Center (35) St. Charles
- ❖ The Harvest Barn (32) Weldon
- ❖ Barb's Garden & Pantry (29) Long Grove
- ❖ Westrum Produce (24) Stratford
- ❖ Circle W Acres (23) Belle Plaine
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (20) Bennett

For the second month in a row, Scavo's Market had the highest number of EBT transactions and the highest amount in EBT sales. Congratulations!

## Total Merchant Services (TMS)

Following my visit to Total Merchant Services (TMS) in June I wanted to alert you of some new procedures.

- If you have a question concerning billing, please either contact Tracy or Kim Jones or send an e-mail to [support@merchantserviceshq.com](mailto:support@merchantserviceshq.com) Please do not call into the Call Center for assistance with your billing questions.
- When you experience an issue with your machine, please call TMS Tech Support at 1-888-848-6825 and request a Tier 2 representative. We have now flagged all of Iowa's accounts so that you should be referred to a Tier 2 representative but if not, please request one.

Iowa is a very unique project and we are trying to streamline all of our procedures to provide you with the best possible service from TMS.

*The above information only pertains to farmers that have a Nurit wireless machine.*

## Shutting down machines for the winter

DHS normally sends a letter out to all of the farmers in the Wireless EBT Project in September concerning whether or not you will be shutting down your machine for the winter months. With the drought conditions in Iowa, we thought there might be a possibility that there may be some of you that will be ready to shut down earlier. When you are finished with your wireless machine for this season, please get in contact with either Tracy or Kim so that we can get your machine shut down promptly.

## Care of your wireless machine

Below are a couple of reminders on how to take care of your wireless machines.

- ✓ Keep your wireless machine out of the elements. It is important not to get the machine wet and protect it from the heat in the summer and the cold in the winter. The machines are similar to computers so it has to be taken care of or the machine will cease to function.
- ✓ Always charge your wireless machine with a surge protector. If the machine is charging during a power surge it can blow the pin encryption in the machine.
- ✓ The paper that is used in the machine is thermal paper. The paper rolls will expire if they are exposed to extreme heat or cold. Please store your extra paper away from the elements.

## 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.

## 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.