



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

August 2014 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Month	EBT Transactions	Debit/Credit Transactions	Total Transactions	EBT Sales	Debit/Credit Sales	Total Sales
January	58	395	453	\$1,399.49	\$14,822.50	\$16,221.99
February	28	348	376	\$1,007.88	\$12,511.22	\$13,519.10
March	29	570	599	\$1,226.89	\$17,365.99	\$18,592.88
April	63	991	1054	\$2,186.23	\$36,659.12	\$38,845.35
May	363	6218	6581	\$5,199.16	\$221,846.59	\$227,045.75
June	597	5881	6478	\$6,841.93	\$147,377.30	\$154,219.23
July	951	4831	5782	\$9,884.85	\$82,912.95	\$92,797.80
Total for Year	2089	19,234	21,323	\$27,746.43	\$533,495.67	\$561,242.10

July 2014 Facts:

Total sales for July this year were lower than June 2013 (\$92,797.80 compared to \$113,504.68). The number of EBT transactions were also lower in 2014 than in 2013 (951 compared to 1,399). For June 2014, there were a total of 5,782 wireless transactions compared to 6,945 in 2013.

In July 2014, there were 189,665 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$43,560,711 in benefits were issued in July to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding July sales:

There were 111 farmers who were active in July and 96 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Country Market (231) Sioux City
- ❖ Scavo's Market (63) Des Moines
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (38) Bennett
- ❖ Hensley's Farm (25) Winterset
- ❖ Grubby's Kettle Korn (24) Oskaloosa
- ❖ Westrum Produce (24) Stratford
- ❖ Penick's Sweet Corn (21) Carlisle
- ❖ A Family Market Place (18) Waterloo
- ❖ Yoder's Natural Farm (18) Bloomfield
- ❖ Hoffman Produce Farm (17) Waterloo
- ❖ Litteaus Garden Produce (17) Waterloo
- ❖ Wilber's Northside Market (17) Boone
- ❖ Circle W Acres (16) Belle Plaine
- ❖ DeMoss Pumpkin Farm (16) Ames
- ❖ Rinehart's Family Farm (16) Boone
- ❖ Lloyd & Elaine Nolt (15) Charles City
- ❖ Musil Gardens (15) Shellsburg

Congratulations go out to Country Market for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and the highest amount in EBT sales. Awesome job!

Visiting Farmers Markets

I had the opportunity to travel and visit some farmers markets on August 22 & 23. I started out in Eagle Grove but it was raining so hard that the vendors were not able to set up so I headed on to the Hampton farmers market and then to the Mason City market. On Saturday, I had the opportunity to visit the Cedar Falls market, Waterloo Kimball Ridge market and the Downtown Waterloo market. Even though the weather didn't cooperate it was wonderful to see everyone.

Just a reminder to everyone to please make sure your signs are up and visible. If you need another sign, please let me know.

Hampton Market



Tony Hershey
Hershey Family Nursery

Mason City Market



Janette & Jamie Huang
North Iowa Berries & More

Cedar Falls Market



Travis & Lindsay Kaiser
Kaiser Farm

Waterloo – Kimball Ridge



Devin Mattingly
Mattingly Farms Plants & Produce

Waterloo - Downtown



Chad Thomas
A Family Market Place

Total Merchant Services Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ)

Total Merchant Services (TMS) now requires all farmers to annually complete a Self-Assessment Questionnaire (SAQ) attesting to your compliance. Several of the farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project were charged \$19.95 on their July statement because of not completing the SAQ. It takes less than 5 minutes to complete this questionnaire and if not completed you will continue to be charged the \$19.95 each month. If you haven't completed the SAQ, please let Tracy know as soon as possible so that she can send you the form to complete.

Tip for the Equinox M4230 Machine

A majority of the farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project are using the Equinox M4230 wireless machine. Just a tip Tracy wanted to pass along to you. Please make sure that you are charging your machine using the provided docking station. Just plug the power cord into the docking station where it says **Power** then settle the machine into the station to charge. This saves on power cords as you are not constantly pulling the cord in and out of your machine.

Care of your wireless machine

Below are a couple of reminders on how to care for your wireless machine.

- Keep your wireless machine out of the elements. It is important not to get the machine wet and to protect it from the heat in the summer and the cold in the winter. The machine is similar to a computer 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 rolls away from the elements.

Changes to your contact information?

It is very important that DHS has your current e-mail addresses and your correct phone numbers. Tracy sends out a lot of important information and if DHS does not have your current information you could be missing out on important information. Please make sure that if you change your e-mail address or you drop or pick up a new phone number that you share that information with Tracy.

Paper for your wireless machine

Just a reminder that DHS supplies the paper rolls for your wireless machines. It is imperative that you use thermal paper or it could ruin your machine. Please do not use any other type of paper in your wireless machine other than the paper that DHS supplies. If you are running low on paper, please give Tracy a call.

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 402-574-7086 or Chris Shanahan at 402-574-7016. If you can't get the problem solved, please give Tracy a call.**
7. **Call Tracy 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 Tracy for a replacement.**

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 877-823-4369.
- Food Assistance eligibility? Call Kari Lind at 515-281-7000.
- Supplies – call Tracy Penick at (515) 281-4935.