



# WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

## October 2015 Newsletter



### From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Month	EBT Transactions	Debit/Credit Transactions	Total Transactions	EBT Sales	Debit/Credit Sales	Total Sales
January	31	299	330	\$1,340.73	\$14,917.92	\$16,258.65
February	30	276	306	\$803.02	\$18,751.58	\$19,554.60
March	50	626	676	\$988.73	\$18,657.83	\$19,646.56
April	55	718	773	\$1,488.58	\$26,719.09	\$28,207.67
May	318	5570	5888	\$5,769.39	\$193,112.69	\$198,882.08
June	442	6027	6469	\$4,674.89	\$152,319.94	\$156,994.83
July	821	5239	6060	\$8,337.80	\$94,212.18	\$102,549.98
August	993	5969	6962	\$10,880.99	\$111,654.60	\$122,535.59
September	786	7902	8688	\$9,818.27	\$180,869.01	\$190,687.28
Total for Year	3,526	32,626	36,152	\$44,102.40	\$811,214.84	\$855,317.24

**September 2015 Facts:**

Total sales for September this year were higher than September 2014 (\$190,687.28 compared to \$173,394.10). The number of EBT transactions were lower in 2015 than in 2014 (786 compared to 936). For September 2015, there were a total of 8,688 wireless transactions compared to 7,887 in 2014.

In September 2015, there were 179,712 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$42,039,769 in benefits were issued in September to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding September sales:

There were 106 farmers who were active in September and 87 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Country Market (128) Sioux City
- ❖ Hoffman Produce Farm (113) Waterloo
- ❖ Scavo’s Vegetable Market (33) Des Moines
- ❖ Rinehart’s Family Farm (28) Boone
- ❖ The Produce Store (28) Waterloo
- ❖ Stillwater Greenhouse (25) Orchard
- ❖ Westrum Produce (23) Stratford
- ❖ Story Book Orchard (21) Story City
- ❖ Litteaus Garden (19) Waterloo
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (18) Bennett
- ❖ The Harvest Barn (16) Weldon
- ❖ Farmer Ken’s Produce (15) Long Grove
- ❖ Allen’s Grove Greenhouse (14) Donahue
- ❖ Palm Tree Pat/Garden Fresh Produce (11) Davenport

Congratulations go out to Country Market for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and to Hoffman Produce Farm for having the highest amount in EBT sales. Congratulations to both!

## Visiting Farmers Markets

I had the opportunity to head out on Monday, September 28<sup>th</sup> to visit the Creston farmers market. This market had live music and a nice variety of fall produce, baked goods and pumpkins. This was my first time visiting this market and I was impressed by the amount of shoppers that attend this market.



Matt Brummett & Lauri Long  
Lauri Long's Home Bakery



Kimberley Lappe  
Lappe's Farm Products

On Wednesday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, I had the opportunity to head to Marshalltown and visit the Appleberry Farm and the Cartwright Pavilion market. It was great to see everyone!



Margaret Hala  
Hala's Honey  
Cartwright Pavilion market



Bob & Donna Atha  
Appleberry Farm

## EMV Update

I wanted to provide an update on Europay, MasterCard and Visa (EMV). EMV was to be implemented October, 2015 but there are no wireless machines in the industry that are ready for EMV. The FD410 wireless machines have the capability but the software is not ready. Once the software is ready, all of the farmers will need to complete a partial download on your wireless machine.

## Assessment/Access Fees

I thought it was important to update you on a fee that is showing up on your monthly statements. It is under Pending Financial Charges and Fees; under Transaction Type listed as Interchange fees; under the Description listed as Assessment or Access Fees. These are the fees that MasterCard, Visa and Discover regulate and access to you. There is no way to avoid these fees as they are set by the credit card companies and all retailers are charged these fees.

I know that it has been a bit confusing with learning how to read the new statements so I wanted to point this out to you. These fees were also charged with the previous companies that provided our wireless machines. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

## Update information with the USDA

Just a reminder that it is extremely important to report any changes to the USDA. The USDA is who authorized you to accept EBT. If you have a name change or an address change it needs to be reported so that your authorization is up to date. If you have a change, please call 312-353-6609 to report the change.

## Changes to your contact information?

It is very important that DHS has your current e-mail addresses and your correct phone numbers. I send 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 me.

## Upcoming Events

**Des Moines Downtown Winter Season Markets** – Des Moines is holding their indoor/outdoor markets at Capital Square/Nollen Plaza on November 20 & 21 and December 18 & 19. If you would like to sign up to be a vendor at the winter market, please e-mail Lydia Van Der Beek at [lvanderbeek@downtowndesmoines.com](mailto:lvanderbeek@downtowndesmoines.com)

**Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Conference** – January 28 & 29 at the FFA Enrichment Center on the DMACC Campus in Ankeny.

**Sustaining Our Iowa Land (2015 SOIL Conference)** – November 19 & 20 at the Olmsted Center at Drake University.

## 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 me 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 you experience issues with your FD 410 machine, please call Technical Support at 1-877-274-7915. You will need to supply your Merchant Identification number. If you can't get the problem solved, please call Tracy.
6. Call Tracy if you need any supplies such as paper rolls, power cords, or battery.
7. **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.