



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

March 2016 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Month	EBT Transactions	Debit/Credit Transactions	Total Transactions	EBT Sales	Debit/Credit Sales	Total Sales
January	22	355	377	\$617.64	\$16,680.16	\$17,297.80
February	12	304	316	\$741.80	\$16,890.55	\$17,632.35
Total for Year	34	659	693	\$1,359.44	\$33,570.71	\$34,930.15

February 2016 Facts:

Total sales for February this year were lower than February 2015 (\$17,632.35 compared to \$19,554.60). The number of EBT transactions were lower in 2016 than in 2015 (12 compared to 30). For February 2016, there were a total of 316 wireless transactions compared to 306 in 2015.

In February 2016, there were 179,443 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$42,528,029 in benefits were issued in February to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding February sales:

There were 24 farmers who were active in February and 6 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Oak Hill Acres – Atalissa
- ❖ Sawyer Beef - Princeton
- ❖ Iowa Food Coop – Des Moines
- ❖ Grossman Meats – Preston
- ❖ Hodge Greenhouse - Logan
- ❖ JoKir’s Wild – Gilmore City

Iowa’s first “One Stop Shop” event

The Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) are hosting a “one stop shop” event to certify farmers to accept SNAP/Food Assistance. Farmers will be able to complete the entire sign up process at this event. There will be representative’s onsite from the USDA to approve applications.

The event will be held on Friday, April 1st from 8:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the United Way of Central Iowa located on 1111 9th Street, Des Moines. If you know of farmers that would like to become certified to accept EBT, please have them give Tracy a call to reserve a spot for this event.

Iowa's EBT Farmers Market Brochure

Important – Just a reminder that I need your 2016 Farmers Market information by **March 28th** if you want to be included in this year's brochure. It is important to get this brochure printed before the farmers markets season begins. Thanks so much!

Seed & Vegetable Plants can be purchased with EBT

Many greenhouses will soon be opening, so I wanted to remind everyone about allowable food items for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP/Food Assistance) EBT. Seeds that grow eligible food items can be purchased with an EBT card. This includes tomato, cucumber seeds, etc. EBT cards can also be used to purchase plants that produce food, such as pepper plants and tomato plants.

Monthly fees

Just a reminder that if your wireless machine was left active during the winter months, the monthly fees will continue to be debited from your bank account around the 2nd of every month. It is important that you keep enough money in your account so that you are not charged non-sufficient fees by Ignite Payments and possibly your bank.

Time to Recruit New Farmers!

It is that time of year where we need to begin recruiting new farmers for the Wireless EBT Project. Do you know of any farmers in your farmers market that would benefit by being a part of the Wireless EBT Project? If so, please let me know so I can reach out to them.

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.

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.