



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

April 2013 Newsletter



From the Editor – Tracy Penick

Total Transactions	EBT Transactions	Total Sales on Wireless
2012 Total: 43,754	7,016 (16.0%)	\$958,564
2013 Totals:		
January 376	44 (12.0%)	\$ 9,916
February 446	58 (13.0%)	\$ 11,723
March 494	59 (12.0%)	\$ 13,967
YTD		
2013 Total 1,316	161 (12.2%)	\$ 35,606

March 2013 Facts:

Total sales for March this year were lower than March 2012 (\$13,966 compared to \$26,133). The number of EBT transactions were also lower in 2013 than 2012 (59 compared to 94). For March 2013, there were a total of 553 wireless transactions compared to 1,300 in 2012.

In March 2013, there were 198,796 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$48,824,862 in benefits were issued in March to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding March sales:

There were 24 farmers who were active in March and 15 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with EBT transactions were:

- ❖ DeMoss Pumpkin Farm (17) Ames
- ❖ Yoder's Natural Farm (13) Bloomfield
- ❖ Blooming Acres Farm (6) Fairfield
- ❖ Oak Hill Acres (5) Atalissa
- ❖ Allen's Grove Greenhouse (3) Donahue
- ❖ Iowa Food Cooperative (3) Des Moines

Congratulations go out to DeMoss Pumpkin Farm for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and to Yoder's Natural Farm for having the highest amount in EBT sales. Great job to both!

New Machines – Hypercom M4230

Total Merchant Services (TMS) are deploying new Hypercom M4230 wireless machines to the farmers that are under the 'Free' or 'Rental' program when your accounts are re-activated this year. Tracy had the opportunity to demo this new technology last year for TMS during the farmer's market season. We really liked this machine as it was faster and very easy to use. One big difference about this machine is it charges on a docking station.

So if you are on the 'Free' or 'Rental' program with TMS, you will receive one of these types of machines when your account is re-activated for the market season. TMS is also offering training on this new machine. You will need to call 1-888-579-4787 and tell TMS that you would need to be trained on the Hypercom M4230 wireless machine.



Hypercom M4230

Are you ready for the 2013 Farmers Market season?

DHS is working on bringing up the May 1st wireless machines. Below are some things that you will need to do before your first market day:

- Charge your batteries before your first market.
- Run a credit and a debit transaction.
- Call Kim or Tracy to run an EBT transaction.
- Check your paper supply. Farmers with lower volume of sales should have 1-2 rolls of paper. The farmers with large volume of sales should have 3-5 rolls of paper.
- Make sure you know where your charger cord and your download cords are.

Every year it seems like we have some machines that have don't have EBT loaded on them. That is why it is extremely important to run a test EBT transaction before you go to market as this gives us time to troubleshoot your machine.

Important information concerning your Nurit machines

1. If your machine is going to sleep, please follow the below instructions to turn off the Battery Saver:
 - Go to Credit Sale Screen
 - Push the red colored 'Menu Cancel' key
 - Screen will say 'Enter Password'. Remember the password is always the current date mm/dd/yyyy or 04282011, hit the 'Enter' button after entering the date
 - You will now see 'Menu Screen'. Press 3 'Merch. Options'
 - Now push 5 for 'Battery Saver'
 - Now push 1 for 'Off'
 - The machine will ask 'Are you Sure?' Push the green enter button for Yes.
 - You are finished! The machine will now stay on until you turn it off. Hit the Menu Cancel button until you see the Credit Sale Screen
2. If your machine is not printing a second receipt for EBT and debit, please follow the below instructions:
 - Go to Credit Sale Screen
 - Push the red colored 'Menu Cancel' key
 - Screen will say 'Enter Password'. Remember the password is always the current date mm/dd/yyyy or 04282011, hit the 'Enter' button entering the date
 - You will now see 'Menu Screen'. Press 3 'Merch. Options'
 - Now push 1 for 'Receipt Print'

- Now push 1 for 'Receipt Copy'
- Now push 4 for 'EBT'
- Now push 3 for 'Always Two Copies'

If your machine is not printing a second receipt for Debit, then follow the above instructions but choose option 3 for Debit.

It is very important that you are providing your EBT customers a receipt as that is a federal regulation!

None of the above information affects our farmers that use the Hypercom M4230 or the VeriFone machines.

Seeds & Vegetable Plants can be purchased with EBT

Many greenhouses and markets will be opening soon, so we wanted to remind everyone about allowable food items for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) EBT. Seeds that grow eligible food items can be purchased with an EBT card. This includes herbs, tomato, cucumber seeds, etc. EBT cards can also be used to purchase plants that produce food, such as pepper plants, herbs and tomato plants. If you have any questions about what is an eligible food items, you can call Rich Coker at the USDA. Rich's phone number is 515-421-3248.

Note: EBT cannot be used for hot drinks such as hot coffee, tea, cocoa or any hot prepared foods such as a burger or brat off the grill.

New Signage for the Wireless EBT Project

The new signs for the Wireless EBT Project have been mailed to all farmers. If you did not receive your signs please let either Tracy or Kim know. Please make sure to use the new signs when you head to your farmers markets. We are very excited about the new signage and think that they will attract attention as they are very bright and colorful!

Farmer Spotlight – Scavo's Market – Rose & Ann Scavo

This month we are spotlighting Rose & Ann Scavo of Scavo's Market.

Rose and Ann Scavo are sisters and have been vending at farmers markets for the last 25 years. It is a family business as their brother Jim Scavo, sister Mary Ann Catrone, niece Lou Ann Gorche and nephew Sam Riccelli all help them out.

Scavo's Market attend the Downtown Des Moines, Valley Junction and the Southridge Mall Farmers Markets. Rose and Ann made the choice last year to rent a second wireless machine so that they could have a machine at both of their spots at the Downtown Des Moines farmers market. This has been a great asset to their business and their EBT sales have really grown.

Scavo's Market sells all kinds of vegetables, watermelons and cantaloupe from 20 acres of land. The way that they promote EBT is to put up their signs on their tables and show customers their beautiful vegetables.

Scavo's Market has been a part of the Wireless EBT Project since 2007.



Rose Scavo – Scavo's Market

Work Hours for Tracy & Kim

Tracy and Kim work Monday – Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Any phone calls received after 3:30 p.m. will be returned the next morning.

Help Us Recruit New Farmers!

It is that time of year where we need to be 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 Tracy or Kim know so that we can reach out to them.

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 either Tracy or Kim 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 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 515-421-3248.**
- **Food Assistance eligibility? Call Kari Lind at 515-281-7000.**
- **Supplies – call Kim Jones at (515) 281-5410.**