



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

July 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
April 1,239	97 (8.0%)	\$ 35,334
May 5,147	439 (9.0%)	\$178,006
June 6,177	772 (12.0%)	\$146,906
YTD		
2013 Total 13,879	1,469 (11.0%)	\$ 395,852

June 2013 Facts:

Total sales for June this year were much higher than June 2012 (\$146,906 compared to \$96,219). The number of EBT transactions were lower in 2013 than 2012 (772 compared to 1,032). For June 2013, there were a total of 6,177 wireless transactions compared to 5,227 in 2012.

In June 2013, there were 199,538 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$49,187,072 in benefits were issued in June to these families.

Here are other interesting facts regarding June sales:

There were 114 farmers who were active in June and 94 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest number of EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Scavo's Market (90) Des Moines
- ❖ Barb's Garden & Pantry (39) Long Grove
- ❖ Mast Family Farm (39) Leon
- ❖ Story Book Orchard (35) Story City
- ❖ Westrum Produce (29) Stratford
- ❖ Rinehart's Family Farm (26) Boone
- ❖ The Harvest Barn (25) Weldon
- ❖ Iowa Orchard (23) Urbandale
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (21) Bennett
- ❖ Allen's Grove Greenhouse (20) Donahue
- ❖ Heartland Farms (20) Waterloo

Congratulations go out to Scavo's Market for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and the highest amount in EBT sales. Congratulations!

Important

Just a reminder that it is extremely important that you alert DHS when either Total Merchant Services (TMS) or TSYS advises you that you need to swap out your machine because it is no longer working. The Wireless EBT Project is a very specialized project and you have to make sure that DHS knows what is going on so we can assure that everything operates correctly. If DHS is not made aware, you could be charged incorrectly for the swap out of your machine.

Farm Bureau Farmers Market

Farm Bureau launched a new weekly farmers market at the Farm Bureau Home Office located on University Avenue. The market is held on Wednesday from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m. There are approximately 1,000 employees that work at the Farm Bureau headquarters. A few farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project are attending this new market.



Hensley's Farm – Jennifer Hensley



Orale! Salsa – Rebecca Dunbar

Monthly Statements

There have been a lot of questions this market season concerning your monthly statements. Just a few reminders:

1. Make sure to go online and pull off your monthly statements if you are processing with TSYS.
2. Make sure to open the e-mail that I send you each month with your statement attached if you are processing with Total Merchant Services (TMS).
3. Look over your monthly statements and let either Kim or Tracy know if something doesn't look right.
4. Remember that DHS will reimburse you for any of the monthly fees that are associated with EBT. DHS does not reimburse you for debit or credit transaction fees or PCI fees as these are not EBT related fees.
5. Remember that statements are always a month behind. (example – Bank account debited on July 2nd for the June statement fees).
6. The monthly fees will be debited out of your bank account around the 2nd of every month that your machine is live.
7. DHS will reimburse you for the fees that are associated with EBT by the 15th of the month.
8. Make sure to print your monthly statements as you can claim the amount of the statement that you are responsible for as an expense on your taxes.

Care of your wireless machine

Below are a couple reminders on how to take care for 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 rolls away from the elements.

Farmer Spotlight – Iowa Orchard

This month we are spotlighting Bryan Etchen of Iowa Orchard.

You can find Iowa Orchard at the Downtown Des Moines Wednesday and the Saturday markets; Johnston; Drake and the Valley Junction farmers market. Iowa Orchard also has a road side stand located at 9875 Meredith Drive in Urbandale.

Iowa Orchard sells apples, seasonal produce, cider and bakery items.

Bryan promotes EBT by making sure that his signs are posted. Clients will walk on by if they don't see the signs. Most EBT clients think they can only purchase fruits and vegetables so Bryan makes it a point to let them know that they can purchase anything on their table.

Iowa Orchard has been with the Wireless EBT Project since 2006.

New posters for the DHS county offices

DHS is in the process of mailing out posters to the county DHS offices. On the bottom of these posters are listed all of the farmers markets in their area that have farmers that can accept EBT. This is one of the ways that DHS promotes what markets that you are attending to Iowa Food Assistance families.



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.