



# WIRELESS EBT PROJECT

## December 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
August	1211	5030	6241	\$14,615.26	\$91,383.53	\$105,998.79
September	936	6951	7887	\$12,125.34	\$161,268.76	\$173,394.10
October	659	10319	10978	\$9,612.25	\$270,246.26	\$279,858.51
November	97	1813	1910	\$2,892.63	\$59,425.27	\$62,317.90
<b>Total for Year</b>	<b>4,992</b>	<b>43,347</b>	<b>48,339</b>	<b>\$66,991.91</b>	<b>\$1,115,819.49</b>	<b>\$1,182,811.40</b>

#### November 2014 Facts:

Total sales for November this year were slightly lower than November 2013 (\$62,317.90 compared to \$62,683.24). The number of EBT transactions were higher in 2014 than in 2013 (97 compared to 79). For November 2014, there were a total of 1,910 wireless transactions compared to 2,046 in 2013.

In November 2014, there were 187,882 Food Assistance/EBT families in Iowa. \$44,242,594 in benefits were issued in November to these families.

#### Here are other interesting facts regarding November sales:

There were 53 farmers who were active in November and 28 of those had EBT sales. The farmers with the highest EBT transactions were:

- ❖ Yoder's Natural Farm (12) Bloomfield
- ❖ Grossman Meats (10) Preston
- ❖ Hoffman Produce Farm (8) Waterloo
- ❖ Iowa Food Coop (8) Des Moines
- ❖ Hollow Maple Farm (6) Bennett
- ❖ DeMoss Pumpkin Farm (4) Ames
- ❖ Harvest Barn (4) Weldon
- ❖ Sawyer Beef (4) Princeton
- ❖ Heilmann's Hawkeye Acres (3) Goose Lake
- ❖ Oak Hill Acres (3) Atalissa
- ❖ Westrum Produce (3) Stratford

Congratulations go out to Yoder's Natural Farm for having the highest amount of EBT transactions and to Iowa Food Coop for having the highest amount in EBT sales. Congratulations to both!

## Downtown Des Moines Winter Market

Tracy headed to visit the Downtown Des Moines winter market on Friday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at Capital Square. Several farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project were vendors at this market. This winter market is a great market and offered a wide selection of things to purchase.



Connie Chartier  
Connie's Creations



Garon Shutt  
Shutt's Garden Center

## Farmer Survey

The 2014 Farmer Survey has been sent out! If we have an e-mail address for you, DHS sent you the link to complete the survey online. The online survey takes around four minutes to complete. The link for the online survey is below:

<http://www.surveymoz.com/s3/1908588/2014-Wireless-EBT-Project-Farmer-Survey>

If we don't have an e-mail address for you, we sent you a hard copy of the survey. All surveys, online and mailed need to be completed by Monday, December 29<sup>th</sup>.

The data collected from this survey is very important as it helps us to know how the project is doing and if we need to make any changes. The data is also shared with other states and non-profit organizations that want to begin a farmer's market project like the Wireless EBT Project.

Thanks for taking the time to complete this survey!

## Upcoming Events

**Iowa Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association Annual Conference** – The IFVGA Annual Conference will be held on January 29-30 at the Iowa FFA Enrichment Center in Ankeny.

## 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.