



Iowa Department of Human Services

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Equal Access, Healthy Eating with Wireless EBT Project *Food Assistance recipients, farmers and communities benefit*

(Des Moines, Iowa) – Spring has arrived, and that means the Iowa Department of Human Services is preparing for another busy season of helping Food Assistance recipients get access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

DHS's Wireless EBT project, in its 10th year, allows low-income Iowans to use their electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at farms, farmers' markets and roadside stands.

"The project helps low-income families shop locally for the freshest and healthiest foods, and the farmers can educate buyers on how best to prepare produce," says Tracy Penick, EBT director. "This program benefits low-income Iowans, farmers and the local community."

The wireless point-of-sale machines issued to qualified vendors can process EBT food assistance cards, as well as MasterCard, Visa and Discover Card transactions. This provides a convenient option for all Iowans who want to use credit and debit cards at farmers' markets, and it can make transactions easier for farmers.

"It's a win-win situation for all Iowans looking to eat a healthier diet of fresh Iowa products," says Penick.

In its decade of operation, the program has had more than \$6 million in total sales, including \$1.2 million in sales last year. DHS continues recruiting farmers for this successful program.

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http://www.dhs.state.ia.us/Consumers/Assistance_Programs/FoodAssistance/FarmersMarket.html

