



WIRELESS EBT PROJECT March 2023 Newsletter

From the Editor – Tracy Penick

| Month | EBT Transactions | Debit/Credit Transactions | Total Transactions | EBT Sales | Debit/Credit Sales | Total Sales |
|-----------------------|------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| January | 19 | 553 | 572 | \$1,569.86 | \$29,956.97 | \$31,526.83 |
| February | 27 | 683 | 710 | \$1,993.56 | \$27,241.64 | \$29,235.20 |
| Total for Year | 46 | 1,236 | 1,282 | \$3,563.42 | \$57,198.61 | \$60,762.03 |

February 2023 Facts:

Total sales for February this year were lower than February 2022 (\$29,235.20 compared to \$38,072.28). The number of EBT transactions were lower in 2023 than in 2022 (27 compared to 30). For February 2023, there were a total of 710 wireless transactions compared to 598 in 2022.

In February 2023, there were 134,292 SNAP/EBT families in Iowa. \$43,171,380 in benefits were issued in February to these families.

Farewell

As I write my final newsletter for The Wireless EBT Project it comes with mixed emotions. I have worked with this project, and some of you, for the past 15 years and it has been the favorite part of my job. I so respect the work that each of you do to assure that Iowa's families have access to the freshest food possible.

As I begin the next chapter of my life and change my focus to Penick Farms and Penick's Sweet Corn, please know that I will miss all of you and wish each of you the best of luck! I hope to see you at a Farmers Market in the future! Farewell!



Mike & Tracy Penick
Penick's Sweet Corn

Are you ready for the 2023 Farmers Market season?

It is hard to believe that the 2023 farmer markets season is just around the corner! Several markets will open on Saturday, May 6th.

Below are some things that you will need to do before your season begins:

- Make sure your machine is fully charged before your first market.
- Run some test transactions. If you haven't called me to run a test EBT test transaction it is imperative that you do so. We need to make sure that EBT is functioning on your machine prior to you going to your first market.
- 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 is.
- Have your signs cleaned up and ready to go. If you need additional signage, please let me know.

Iowa's Farmers Market Brochure

The Iowa Farmers Market brochure (Comm 284) has been completed and is posted on the HHS website. Below is the link if you want to check it out:

<https://hhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/Comm284.pdf>

If you have any changes to the markets that you are attending, please let me know so that I can get it updated on the website.

Time to recruit new farmers!

It is that time of the 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.

Seed & Vegetable Plants can be purchased with EBT

Many greenhouses will soon be open, so I wanted to remind everyone about allowable food items for SNAP/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 and tomato plants.

For more information on what can be purchased with EBT, go to USDA website listed below.
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/eligible-food-items>

Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA)

Some of the farmers that participate in the Wireless EBT Project offer CSAs to their clients. The below information only pertains to clients that are using their EBT benefits for CSAs.

- For SNAP recipients – payment may be accepted no more than 14 days in advance of product delivery.
- SNAP (EBT) benefits may not be used to pay any administrative or membership fees associated with operating a CSA.

USDA reauthorization

Just a reminder that you must reauthorize every 5 years with the USDA to accept EBT. If you receive a reauthorization letter from the USDA, please complete and return it promptly. If you don't complete the paperwork timely, you will lose your EBT authorization and will have to reapply and complete the application to come back into the program.

Just a reminder that you must be authorized by the USDA to accept EBT to participate in The Wireless EBT Project.

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. Please call 312-353-6609 to report any changes.

Changes to your contact information?

It is very important that HHS has your current email address and your correct phone numbers. I send out a lot of important information and if HHS does not have your current information, you could be missing out on important information. Please make sure that if you change your email address or drop or pick up a new phone number that you share that information with me.

Paper for your wireless machine

Just a reminder that HHS 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 HHS supplies. If you are running low on paper, please contact Jan at 515-971-1076.

Reminders:

1. **Remember that you cannot ring up a sale for another vendor. You could lose your SNAP (EBT) certification and be terminated from the Wireless EBT 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 transactions.**
4. **Hot foods and hot drinks (cocoa, coffee, and tea) cannot be purchased with SNAP EBT benefits.**
5. **If you experience technical issues with your PAX A920 machine, please call GoEBT at 1-877-418-7957. If you can't get the problem solved, please call Tracy.**

Help Desk

We are here to help you!

When you have questions about:

- **Participating in the Wireless EBT Project? Call Tracy Penick at 515-491-6325.**
- **What you can sell to EBT customers, or being authorized to accept EBT? Call USDA/FNS at 877-823-4369.**
- **SNAP eligibility? Call Melana Jensson at 515-281-7000.**
- **Supplies – call Jan Walters at 515-971-1076.**