



## Office of EBT Banking Services/Client Accounts

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)?**

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp Program, is the nation's largest nutrition assistance program. The program is managed at the federal level by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Food vendors are required to be authorized by FNS before accepting SNAP benefits for approved food items. SNAP helps to supplement an individual's or a family's income to help buy nutritious food. SNAP households get an EBT card, which operates like a debit card, to buy eligible food at stores authorized to take SNAP benefits.

#### **What is Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)?**

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is an electronic system that allows a recipient to authorize transfer of their government benefits from a Federal account to a retailer account to pay for products received. EBT is used in a 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam.

#### **What is the importance of Farmers' Markets and Direct Marketing Farmers to SNAP Recipients?**

Farmers' Markets (FM) and Direct Marketing Farmers (DMF) are great sources for fresh fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods. Increasing the number of SNAP authorized FM/DMF increases the opportunity for SNAP recipients to access food while also supporting the economy for farmers.

#### **How do I become a SNAP authorized merchant?**

Everything you need to know about becoming a SNAP authorized merchant can be found at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/farmer-producer>. If you are an owner or manager of a Farmer's Market or a Direct-Marketing Farmer, you can apply online to accept SNAP. Training material is also available to assist you.

#### **Will I need special equipment need to accept SNAP?**

In order to process SNAP transactions, you will need point-of-sale (POS) equipment. Options are available for FM/DMF to receive SNAP-Only POS equipment at no cost.

#### **What is the difference between wired and wireless POS equipment?**

Wired POS equipment requires markets/farmers to have access to electrical outlets and telephone lines. This type of POS can be provided at no-cost to authorized SNAP merchants.

Wireless POS equipment does not require electrical outlets and telephone lines; however, a reliable wireless signal is required to process transactions.