



**STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE**

CINDY HYDE-SMITH
COMMISSIONER

PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Paige Manning, Marketing Director
(601) 359-1163
E-mail: paige@mdac.state.ms.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

January 6, 2012

What: Meeting for Fruit and Vegetable Growers interested in becoming authorized EBT retailers

**When and Where: 10:00 a.m., Thursday, February 9, 2012
Forestry Building, Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum
Jackson, Mississippi**

New Marketing Opportunity Available to MS Fruit and Vegetable Producers

The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) and the Mississippi Department of Human Services (MDHS) are pleased to announce an opportunity for Mississippi fruit and vegetable growers. An informational meeting will be held on February 9, 2012, at 10:00 a.m. at the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum's Forestry Building in Jackson, Mississippi, for all Mississippi fruit and vegetable growers interested in becoming an authorized Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) retailer.

At this meeting, growers will have the opportunity to apply for approval to receive a free wireless machine to accept EBT/ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) transactions (formerly Food Stamp Program benefits) at farmers markets. The MDAC and MDHS will discuss all aspects of this program and answer any questions. The USDA Food and Nutrition Service staff will be available to assist growers in completing the application process. Once approved to become an authorized EBT retailer, each grower will receive a free wireless machine for use when accepting SNAP benefits. Based on possible attendance, meeting participants planning to submit an application at the meeting are advised to allow an adequate number of hours to complete the process. Attendees completing the application on-site should bring the following items to this meeting: Driver's License, Social Security Card or an official document with the Social Security number, and a voided check for the bank account where EBT/SNAP deposits will be posted. Photocopies of each item will be accepted.

There is no cost to attend the meeting. The deadline to register is February 3, 2012. For more information or to obtain a registration form, contact Purvie Green at (601) 359-1168 or purvie@mdac.state.ms.us or visit www.mdac.state.ms.us.

###