

# The Washington Times

## N.Y. food stamp recipients shipping groceries overseas: report

By Jessica Chasmar – July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013

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New Yorkers are using millions in taxpayer-funded dollars to ship food to relatives in Jamaica, Haiti and the Dominican Republic, the New York Post has found.

Shipping food abroad is so common that hundreds of 45- to 55-gallon barrels line the walls of markets in almost every Caribbean area of New York City. Customers pay about \$40 in cash for the barrels and typically ship them with \$500 to \$2,000 of rice, beans, pasta, canned milk and sausages, The Post reported.

“Everybody does it,” a worker at an Associated Supermarket in the borough of Brooklyn told The Post. “They pay for it any way they can. A lot of people pay with EBT,” or electronic benefit transfers, which replaced paper food stamps.

Michael Tanner, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, called the practice just another example of welfare abuse.

“I don’t want food-stamp police to see what people do with their rice and beans, but it’s wrong,” Mr. Tanner told The Post. “The purpose of this program is to help Americans who don’t have enough to eat. This is not intended as a form of foreign aid.”

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service said states should intervene if people are caught shipping food abroad.