

# Hail

Information on weather-ready landscapes

## WHAT IS IT?

The frequency of hail in the U.S. is greatest in the Great Plains due to a higher elevation (closer to freezing level). Hail forms when rain/ice particles are carried in the updrafts and downdrafts in thunderstorms colliding and freezing onto one another, while growing into larger pieces of ice.

An average of 70% of hail reports in Nebraska occur from May-July (1955-2015).

From 2003-2012, there were 7-11 severe hail days (>1.0" hail within 25 miles of any point) per year in Nebraska.

Number of days per year, within 25 miles of any point from 1986-2015:

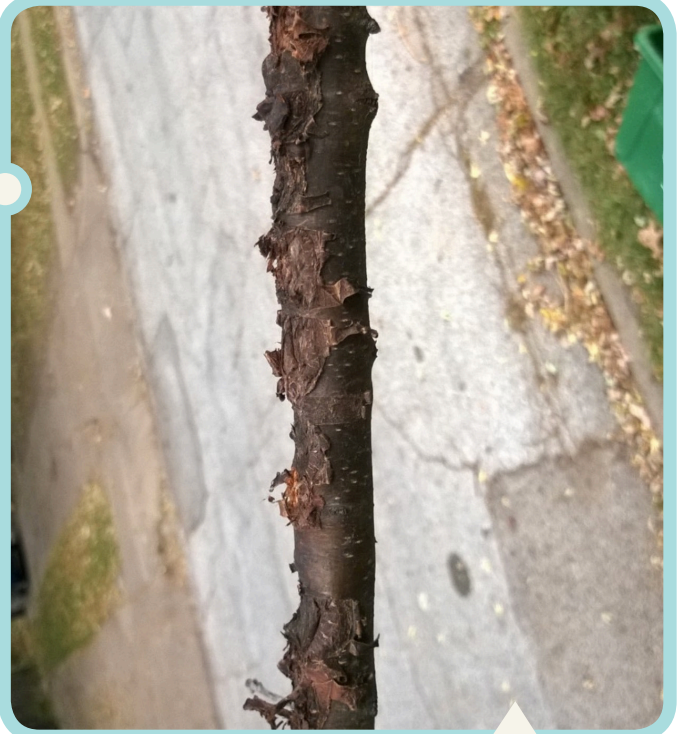
**Hail > 1.0"**

**S Neb** 5+ days  
**N Neb** 3-4 days

**Hail > 2.0"**

**S Neb** 1 day  
**N Neb** 0.6 days

Source: Storm Prediction Center



**Typical Damage:** Impact from hailstones can damage leaves, stems and fruit. The size of the hailstone, the amount of hail, time of year, and the wind speed plays a big role in the amount of damage to plant material.

## PREVENTATIVE ACTIONS

To protect against hail, cover up as much as possible.



1

**Remove any dead, damage or diseased tree branches** as you see them.



2

**Bring potted plants and trees to a temporary protected location** or cover plant material with large empty pots or empty containers until the threat of hail has passed.



3

**Hoops with floating row cover** can help prevent hail damage to vegetable crops.



Changing temps  
can alter the  
effects of hail



## TYPICAL DAMAGE

## CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

Once the hail has passed, remember to trim where needed.



**Utilize corrective pruning** of broken branches if it is safe to do so from the ground or hire an arborist.



**Cut off severely damaged flowers and stems** with a bypass hand pruner just above a node.



**Remove hail damaged fruit or vegetables** if damage is severe before rot begins.



**Avoid excessive leaf removal and pruning.** Remove severely hail damaged leaves, but try to leave as much green tissue as possible which is needed for photosynthesis and plant recovery.



**Replant annual flowers** that do not have any remaining foliage or show signs of recovery within a week.



**Avoid fertilization** until the plant recovers.



**Keep soils around the plant evenly moist**, not soggy or dry.



**Mulch with wood chips** to avoid weed competition and to moderate soil temperature and moisture



**Monitor plants** for signs of cankers on twigs/branches; prune these out

For more information, visit [weather-ready.unl.edu/landscapes](http://weather-ready.unl.edu/landscapes)