



Garden Tips from the Cheyenne Botanic Gardens

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710 S. Lions Park Dr.

Cheyenne WY 82001

www.botanic.org

Hail- Strategies for before and after a severe and damaging storm

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1. Clean it up. Compost the debris (at least it will become fertilizer and someday help the soils)
2. Stimulate new growth. Fertilize the remaining live plants by using a quick acting liquid based plant fertilizer. Even houseplant food would work fine.
3. Cultivate the soil. The hail can do a lot of compaction. Cultivate to get some air back into the soil.
4. Replace and replant. Look for good deals on fresh new plants to replace the plants that are totally dead.
5. Keep the faith. You will be surprised how fast things grow back.

Other things to consider before it hails:

1. Keep in touch with the weather. Besides many great weather internet sites, there are also ways to get weather warnings as text messages on your phone. One great web site that has a daily listing of the probability for hail is www.livehailmap.com.
2. Place a series of stakes in your garden beds that are higher than the tops of your garden plants. These stakes should be strong enough to support a heavy duty plastic sheet or old blanket. Then when there are severe storm warnings, you can quickly throw the protection over the stakes. The stakes prevent damage to the plants by the covering. Always have your covering ready to go at a moments notice.
3. Grow mainly smaller leaved plants as they are a smaller target and also don't show the damage nearly as badly as a wide and large leaf does. For instance petunias are great at recovering from a hail storm as they often are stimulated by the pruning from the hail stones. Also native plants tend to be very hail resistant.
4. Mulched beds help lessen the bounce back damage when the hail stones can do secondary damage.
5. Consider a greenhouse.

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