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- Daily Leader staff report

A lot of Southwest Kansas was hit with severe storms over the past week, and hail destroyed hundreds of acres of crops in the area, according to a press release from Seward County K-State Extension agent Mike Hanson.

“Wheat harvest will probably start by the end of this week, but unfortunately, many fields were ‘mowed down’ by hail,” he said. “Some fields received less damage, but most had at least some hail damage.

It will be difficult to know how much damage was done until the combines harvest the crop.”

Hanson said many acres of corn, milo, cotton, potatoes, sunflowers and soybeans were also damaged.

“Some of these crops look like total losses,” he said. “The hail stripped them of all their leaves and left little more than a nub sticking out of the ground. Weed pressure and potential for disease is going to be a problem.”

Hanson said once leaves are removed, this opens the ground to more sunlight, thus weeds are more apt to germinate and thrive.

“Many trees in the area were also damaged,” he said. “Making sure the trees have plenty of water and nutrients is very important. If bark was damaged, wrapping these spots with a mesh fabric will help protect the tree from our harsh wind and heat. The healthier the tree, the more

likely it will survive.”

These storms caused millions of dollars worth of damage to crops and property, according to Hanson.

“They are part of life where we live, and there is little we can do about it,” he said. “Many acres will have to be replanted to other crops, and the potential for income will be lessened. The moisture we received is a blessing and let us hope we continue to get more.”

For more information on this or other crop and garden topics, call Hanson at 624-5604.

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