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Hailstorm severely damages New York state apple crop

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A massive hailstorm that swept across New York state Tuesday, June 18, may have reduced the state's apple crop by as much as 60 percent.

"The storm tore across western New York," Jim Allen, president of the New York Apple Association in Fishers, NY, told The Produce News the day after the storm. "It moved from east of Buffalo -- across the main fruit belt area -- and hit south of Syracuse and the Hudson Valley. It was like the storm had radar for apples."

Mr. Allen said that demand for apples is very good today. "And we just lost a big part of our supply," he added. "Only two of our six apple-producing regions escaped damage. We still have apples, but it's far too early to assess the total loss. We are heading into our first meetings today, and should have loss and damage assessments from growers within the next day or two."

There are reports that the state's peach and cherry crops were also badly damaged, and both crops are only two weeks away from scheduled harvesting.

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