Nebraska Department of Roads

**Roadside Vegetation in Nebraska**

![Map of Nebraska showing roadside vegetation regions]

**Discover Nebraska's Roadside Flowers**

- **State Flower**
  - Black-eyed Susan
  - *Rosa arkansana*

- **Grasses**
  - Purple prairie clover
    - *Amorpha canescens*
  - Leadplant
    - *Sorghastrum nutans*
  - Little bluestem
    - *Schizachyrium scoparium*
  - Canada wildrye
    - *Elymus canadensis*
  - Sand lovegrass
    - *Eragrostis trichodes*
  - Buffalograss
    - *Buchloe dactyloides*
  - Blue grama
    - *Bouteloua gracilis*
  - Little bluestem
    - *Bouteloua curtipendula*
  - Big bluestem
    - *Andropogon gerardii*

- **Indiangrass**
- **Bleeding heart**
- **Wild oats**
- **Brown-eyed Susan**
- **Yellow coneflower**
- **Black-eyed Susan**
- **Purple prairie clover**
- **Leadplant**
- **Little bluestem**
- **Canada wildrye**
- **Sand lovegrass**
- **Buffalograss**
- **Blue grama**
- **Little bluestem**
- **Indiangrass**

**Legumes**

- **Tradescantia Species**
  - *Callirhoe involucrata*
  - *Argemone polyanthemos*
  - *Erysimum asperum*
  - *Aster novae-angliae*
  - *Aster laevis*
  - *Silphium laciniatum*
  - *Callirhoe involucrata*
  - *Purple poppy mallow*
  - *Argemone polyanthemos*
  - *Aster novae-angliae*
  - *Aster laevis*
  - *Smooth blue aster*
  - *Prickly poppy*
  - *Argemone polyanthemos*
  - *Aster novae-angliae*
  - *Aster laevis*

**Flowers**

- **Desmanthus illinoiensis**
- **Roundhead lespedeza**
  - *Lespedeza capitata*
- **Illinois bundleflower**
  - *Lespedeza capitata*
  - *Desmanthus illinoiensis*
  - *Chamaecrista fasciculata*
  - *Partridge pea*

**Roadside Vegetation**

- **Nebraska's roadside seed mixtures have changed through time.**
- **Nebraska Roadside Plant Identification**
- **Photos are included here to help satisfy your curiosity**
- **• were introduced by wind, water, or other external factors.**
- **• were included in a planted seed mixture, or**
- **• occur naturally in prairie soil,**
- **because their seeds:**

**Benefits from these customized seed mixtures include:**

- **Increased control of soil erosion**
- **Increased durability and permanence of the plants that stabilize and beautify roadsides**
- **Increased likelihood of the seeded plants germinating**
- **Improved growing conditions.**

**Regional Considerations:**

- **Conditions such as climate, soils, and topography vary from about 16 inches annually in the southeast to 34 inches annually in the northwest.**

**NDOR Project:**

- **The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) project is designed to enhance the beauty and functionality of Nebraska's roadways.**
- **Roadside management must take into account the specific conditions and requirements of each region.**
- **Vegetation farther away from the roadway is mowed every 3 to 5 years.**
- **Seed mixtures of short-growing grasses for this area are regularly maintained.**
- **The first 12 to 16 feet off the surfaced roadway is mowed immediately next to the pavement.**
- **Vegetation farther away from the roadway is mowed every 3 to 5 years.**

**Hand-drawn maps of the Nebraska region in which the NDOR project occurs.**

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Roadside vegetation in Nebraska features plants that are adapted to the state's environmental conditions. Conditions such as climate, soils, and topography differ from region to region across the state. Rainfall varies from about 14 inches annually in the northeastern corner down to 24 inches annually in the southern part of the state at Falls City.

The plants you see along the roadside may occur naturally, have been intentionally seeded, or may have been carried there by wind, wildlife, or a passing vehicle. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has developed a plan to promote the use of native plant species that are most likely to thrive in the different regions of the state. Native plants that occur in these regions within Nebraska are adapted for the specific growing conditions.

NDOR’s roadside seed mixtures include cool- and warm-season grasses, legumes, and flowers. Species are selected as a roadside seed mixture according to the Nebraska region in which the NDOR project occurs.

Benefits from these customized seed mixtures include:
- Increased likelihood of the planted seeds germinating and becoming established on the roadside
- Increased dalliance and permanence of the plants that stabilize and beautify roadways
- Active plant growth throughout the growing season
- Increased control of soil erosion
- Lower maintenance and mowing costs
- Planted areas blend with the natural context of the regions

Roadside soils are compacted and nutrient-poor - a difficult setting in which to start new vegetation. Moisture and temperature conditions can be extreme, as well. To attain successful re-vegetation after a road construction project is completed, NDOR crafts seed mixtures using a majority of native species, and uses common agronomic practices. This results in improved soil stabilization, reduced maintenance requirements, and a visually-pleasing roadside.

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The plants you see along the roadside may occur naturally, have been intentionally seeded, or may have been carried there by wind, wildlife, or a passing vehicle. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has developed a plan to promote the use of native plant species that are most likely to thrive in the different regions of the state. Native plants that occur in these regions within Nebraska are adapted for the specific growing conditions.

NDOR’s roadside seed mixtures include cool- and warm-season grasses, legumes, and flowers. Species are selected as a roadside seed mixture according to the Nebraska region in which the NDOR project occurs.

Benefits from these customized seed mixtures include:
- Increased likelihood of the planted seeds germinating and becoming established on the roadside
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- Planted areas blend with the natural context of the regions

Roadside soils are compacted and nutrient-poor - a difficult setting in which to start new vegetation. Moisture and temperature conditions can be extreme, as well. To attain successful re-vegetation after a road construction project is completed, NDOR crafts seed mixtures using a majority of native species, and uses common agronomic practices. This results in improved soil stabilization, reduced maintenance requirements, and a visually-pleasing roadside.

Roadside vegetation in Nebraska features plants that are adapted to the state's environmental conditions. Conditions such as climate, soils, and topography differ from region to region across the state. Rainfall varies from about 14 inches annually in the northeastern corner down to 24 inches annually in the southern part of the state at Falls City.

The plants you see along the roadside may occur naturally, have been intentionally seeded, or may have been carried there by wind, wildlife, or a passing vehicle. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has developed a plan to promote the use of native plant species that are most likely to thrive in the different regions of the state. Native plants that occur in these regions within Nebraska are adapted for the specific growing conditions.

NDOR’s roadside seed mixtures include cool- and warm-season grasses, legumes, and flowers. Species are selected as a roadside seed mixture according to the Nebraska region in which the NDOR project occurs.

Benefits from these customized seed mixtures include:
- Increased likelihood of the planted seeds germinating and becoming established on the roadside
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Roadside Vegetation in Nebraska

Roadside vegetation in Nebraska features plants that are adapted to the state’s environmental conditions. Conditions such as climate, soil, and topography differ from region to region across the state. Rainfall varies from about 14 inches annually in the northeastern quarter to 18 inches annually in the southern part of the state at Falls City.

The plants you see along the roadway may occur naturally, may have been introduced, may have been carried there by wind, wildlife, or a passing vehicle. The Nebraska Department of Roads (NDOR) has developed a plan to promote the use of native plant species that are best suited to the different regions of the state. Native plants that occur in these regions within Nebraska are selected for the specific growing conditions.

NDOR’s roadside seeding mixtures include cool- and warm-season grasses, legumes, and flowers. Species are selected as a roadside seed mixture according to the Nebraska region in which the NDOR project occurs.

Benefits from these customized seed mixtures include:
- Increased likelihood of the selected plants germinating and becoming established on the roadside
- Increased diversity and prominence of the plants that stabilize and beautify roadways
- Active plant growth throughout the growing season
- Increased control of soil erosion
- Lower maintenance and mowing costs
- Planted areas blend with the natural context of the regions

Nebraska’s roadside seed mixtures have changed through time. The plants that you see along the highway are there because their seeds:
- Were introduced by wind, water, or other external factors.
- Were included in a planted seed mixture, or
- Naturally, may have been intentionally seeded, or may have been carried there by wind, wildlife, or a passing vehicle.

Nebraska Roadside Plant Identification

Nebraska’s roadside seed mixtures have changed through time. The plants that you see along the highway are there because their seeds:
- Occur naturally in prairie soil.
- Some are included in a planted seed mixture, or
- Some are introduced via wind, water, or other external factors.

Photos are included here to help satisfy your curiosity and to identify several prominent species of flowers, legumes and grasses in your roadside view. Because of changing philosophies regarding roadside management, some of the species pictured here are no longer used in the Department of Roads’ seed mixtures, especially the plants shown in the “non-native” section.

Nebraska Department of Roads Landscape Regions

The Text 12 to 16 feet off the surfaced roadway is mowed regularly during the growing season. NDOR develops seed mixtures of short-growing grasses for this area immediately next to the pavement. Vegetation farther away from the roadway is mowed every 3 to 5 years. Seed mixtures for these areas include taller grasses and flowers that add color and texture to the roadway.

Roadside soils are composed and nutrient-poor - a difficult setting in which to start new vegetation. Moisture and temperature conditions can be extreme, as well. To attain successful re-vegetation after a road construction project is completed, NDOR crafts seed mixtures using a variety of native species, and uses common agronomic practices. This results in improved soil stabilization, reduced maintenance requirements, and a visually-pleasing roadside.