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Center for Smart Agriculture

Organic Farming



Module 4: Mulching

Session 3: Application of Mulch



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Mulching is generally applied in the following area of lands:

- In rain-fed areas to conserve moisture.
- In areas that need irrigation, Mulching reduces the frequency of irrigation.
- In greenhouses to maintain the soil temperature.
- In areas with soil borne diseases, Mulching is needed for solarization.
- In heavy rainfall areas to reduce the impact of rain and prevent soil erosion.
- In lands where high value crops are being² cultivated.



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Best time to applying mulch

- Organic mulch apply in the late fall, after the saturating of soil after initial heavy rainfall; or it may be applied in the late spring.
- For balancing the soil and mulch to minimizing the risk of occurring of any type of disease, after applying of mulch it can well-watered for 2-3 months before the beginning of rainy season.
- Application of mulch nearby the end of the rainy season when the steam in the soil has released but still moisture is available in the soil, helps the mulch to decomposes into the soil. Also, the best time to applying the mulch are after



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Best way to applying mulch

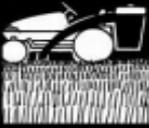
- Before applying of organic mulch remove weeds from the field. Ensure that the selected mulching material has free of any weed seeds.
- Avoid the mulch material contaminated with pesticides or disease to reduce chances of attack of insects or pest on the cultivated crop.
- Apply a layer of plain cardboard or a 4-6 pages thick layer of newspaper before using the mulch in field to control annual weeds and to reduce perennial weeds.
- If the mulch material is coarser, then it should be applied more thickly. Mostly, a 3-6-inch mulch layer controls most of the annual weeds.



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Methods of application for different mulching materials

Mulch materials		
	Amount to Apply	Notes
Bark mulch 	2-4 inches	Smaller chips are easier to spread, especially around small plants. Excellent for use around trees, shrubs, and perennial gardens. When spreading mulch around trees, keep the mulch an inch or two away from the trunk. A couple inches of mulch is adequate. There is no need to apply the mulch 6 or 8 inches high, as often is seen.
Wood chips 	2-4 inches	Similar to bark mulch. If using fresh wood chips that are mixed with a lot of leaves, composting may be beneficial.
Leaves 	3-4 inches	Best to chop and compost before spreading. If using dry leaves, apply about six inches deep.
Grass clips 	2-3 inches	Thicker layers tend to compact and rot, becoming quite slimy and smelly. Add additional layers as clippings decompose. Do not use clippings from lawns treated with herbicides.
Newspaper 	1/4 inch	Apply sheets of newspaper and cover lightly with grass clippings or other mulch material to anchor. If other mulch materials are not available cover edges of paper with soil. Applying on a windy day can be a problem.
Compost 	3-4 inches	Excellent material for enriching soil.



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Mulching between Crop Rows



Mulching around Tree Trunk



3



Compost



Dry leaves



Newspaper



Saw dust

10



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THANK YOU