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# Center for Smart Agriculture

## Organic Farming



### **Module 4: Mulching**

### **Session 2: Mulching material.**



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## **The Sources of Mulching Material can be the following**

- Weeds or cover crops.
- Crop residues.
- Grass
- Pruning material from trees
- Cuttings from hedges
- Wastes from agricultural processing or from forestry.



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# Different organic mulching materials



Bark mulch



Grass clipping



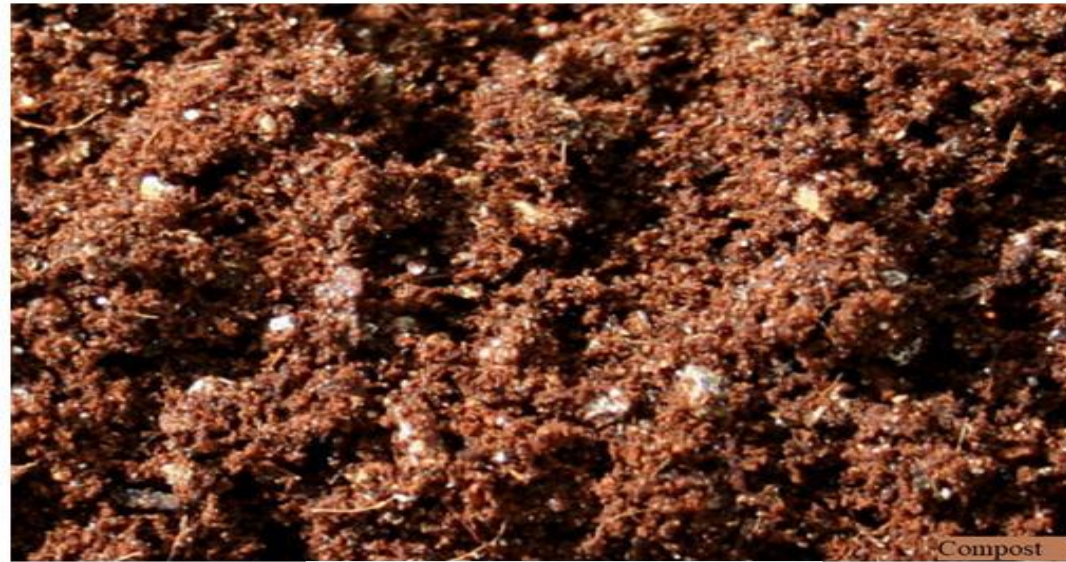
Dry leaves



Straw mulch



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Compost mulch



Saw dust mulch



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# CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF MULCHING MATERIAL

## **Cost of the material:**

If the suitable mulching material is available at little or no cost then use locally available material.

## **The crop selected to mulch**

Crop materials which increases the risk of conveying viruses or pest to the cultivated crops should not use as mulch.

## **The period when the mulch is to be used**

During summer season light, colored materials are beneficial as a mulch they reflect the heat. The dark colored materials are beneficial as mulch during early spring season as it helps to warm the soil which permit crop planting earlier and accelerate the growth of crop.



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## **Importance of organic mulching**

### **Mulching provides nutrients to the crops:**

While decomposing, organic mulch material continuously releases its nutrients, thus fertilizing the soil.

### **Increasing the content of soil organic matter:**

part of the mulch material will be transformed to humus.

### **Weed control:**

Mulch layer also restricts the weed growth because if soil is covered with mulch layer than light is not reached at soil surface.



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## **Limitation of Organic Mulching**

- Organic mulch can keep the soil too moist on poorly drained soils and restricting oxygen in the root zone.
- If it is applying near to or in contact with the stalk, the trapped moisture creates an environment conducive to the growth of diseases and pests.
- Many of organic mulches cause the breeding spots for many insects and pests.
- Mulches such as hay and straw contain seeds which may become weeds.
- These organic mulches are easily biodegradable, and they can serve for the only short period.



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**THANK YOU**