



The Plant Professionals

## Benefits of Compost & Mulch

### **COMPOST**

A mixture of organic residues such as leaves, brush and the like, that have been piled and allowed to undergo aerobic biological decomposition, a process called composting.

#### **Benefits of Compost**

- Provides nutrients the plants need.
- Improves microbial activity that helps release soil nutrients for plant use.
- Reduces or eliminates the need for chemical fertilizers that are costly and potentially damaging to the environment.
- Increases the amount of organic carbon and nitrogen by improving the physical properties of soil, allowing higher nutrient intake by plants and higher crop yields.
- Improves soil structure, porosity and density, making tillage easier, thus creating a better plant root environment.
- Increases water holding capacity of the soil, thus reducing water loss and leaching in sandy soils.
- Increases moisture infiltration and permeability of heavy soils, thus reducing erosion and runoff.
- Aerates soil, breaks up clay and binds sand.
- Degrades pollutants and neutralizes toxins.
- Improves and stabilizes soil pH.
- Supplies beneficial micro-organisms to soils and growing media, thus controls or suppresses certain soil borne plant pathogens.
- Helps create a balanced soil food web.

### **MULCH**

Loose organic materials such as grass clippings, tree leaves, brush and the like. Used to cover the soil around the plants for protection or improvement of the area covered.

#### **Benefits of Mulch**

- Conserves soil moisture by reducing evaporation of water from the soil.
- Prevents crusting of soil surface, thus improving the absorption and percolation of water to the plants where the roots are growing.
- Prevents soil compaction and erosion.
- Prevents fruits and plants from mud splashes and reduces soil borne diseases.
- Maintains a more uniform soil temperature by acting as an insulator, which keeps the soil warm during cool times and keeps cooler during the warm months of the year.
- Reduces weed problems by preventing weed germination especially if the materials are weed free and if applied thickly.
- Builds good organic soil structure.
- Protects and stimulates microbial activity in the soil.
- Adds nutrients to the soil as mulch decomposes.
- And by the way, the area covered looks great and beautiful.