

# »Mulching your garden«

## »Mulching your garden«

Mulching is important for your crops but this has to be done right to get the best out of it.

Mulching is beneficial because it helps regulate soil temperature in extreme hot and cold temperatures. High soil temperatures slow down plant growth and mulch helps moderate those temperatures. Mulch shades the soil from the sun's direct light preventing variations in soil temperature.

## Advantages of mulching

Mulching reduces water evaporation from the soil. When you mulch, less water leaves the soil, you have to water less frequently and this saves time.

Mulching adds organic matter in the soil when organic residues decay.

Mulching helps prevent weeds because it covers the soil layer preventing the sun from reaching the soil which is needed for weeds to grow.

## Types of mulch

Compost is a good mulch for the garden. It has a high nutrient content and has a finer texture than all other mulches.

Pine needles. If you have pine trees, you can have pine needles and these can be laid in the garden to a depth of between 3 to 5 inches deep.

Straw is a great mulching material, dry leaves or shredded leaves. Bark or wood chips are another mulching material though these can compete for nitrogen a little bit as they break down.

Grass cover crops. Chop them up and let them dry in the sun for a day or 2 before putting it in the garden as mulch.

Card board or news pepper can also be used as mulch but this needs to be covered up with another mulch.

All the mulch is suitable for raised beds and in case of drip irrigation, let the drip lines run over the mulch.