



FREESTATE  
FARMS

# MULCH QUALITY GUIDE

**Mulch adds beauty to gardens and, potentially, nutrients to soils. While it's been around for a long time, its impact on our gardens is often misunderstood. When choosing a mulch, here are a few things to look for and consider.**

## Finding a quality mulch can be relatively easy

With a few simple questions and observing the final product, it can be pretty straightforward to find a good mulch for your gardening needs.



**"FRESH" OR UNCURED MULCHES ARE COMMON AND CHEAP. UNFORTUNATELY, THEY CAN INTRODUCE WEED SEEDS TO THE GARDEN AS WELL AS TIE UP SOIL NUTRIENTS, LEADING TO COSTLY PLANT REPLACEMENTS.**



**MULCH SHOULD BE BROWN** or slightly darker, even when you break open a piece of the mulch. If the inside is white or has a green-ish tint, it may not be processed correctly or could contain recycled wood.

**GARDEN MULCHES SHOULD BE PRETTY FINE IN SIZE** so that it can replace soil nutrients over time. Larger mulches are cheaper, may not be cured fully, and are more appropriate for walkways.



**SMELL FOR A WOODY, EARTHY SMELL.** If you get a scent of alcohol, rotten eggs, or vinegar, it's likely that the mulch contains wood alcohol and could harm your plants.



**MULCH SHOULD SPREAD EVENLY AND EASILY.** If it is clumpy or you have to spread it multiple times, it may not be made correctly.



### ASK QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THE MULCH IS MADE.

**PROCESS:** All mulches should be cured to kill weed seeds and allow the material to start breaking down so it can feed your soil.

**INGREDIENTS:** The starting wood has a large impact on its value to plants and soils.

- **White wood:** A porous wood that is frequently used in dyed mulches because it holds the color well. "Recycled" wood from construction, pallets, or crates is often used but may contain lead paint, chromated copper arsenate, and other potentially harmful contaminants.

- **Mixed wood:** Branches from tree trimmings and storms often used for non-dyed or natural mulches. This most closely mimics nature.

- **Hardwood:** These mulches last the longest and are usually a natural wood. When used over time, the concentration can cause soil to accumulate levels of manganese and other elements that are toxic to plants.



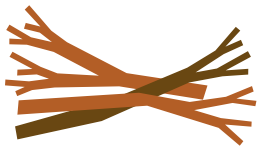
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# GROW GOOD MULCH

Local,  
organic &  
sustainable  
products



Use our mulches on your garden beds to help prevent weeds, retain moisture, and replenish important nutrients in your soil.



### **NATURAL INGREDIENTS, BETTER MULCH**

No dyes. No construction debris.  
Just natural wood, returned to nature.



### **WEED-FREE**

Cured to kill weed seeds,  
not introduce them.



### **FEED YOUR PLANTS**

Aged with care to give your  
soil beneficial humus and  
nutrients over time.

**Natural, healthy mulches for nurturing nature.**



### **DOUBLE MULCH**

A coarser cut of wood than a traditional "triple" mulch that still uses our same high-quality process. It lasts longer, making it ideal for walkways and forest-area floors.



### **TRIPLE MULCH**

A traditional mulch, expertly made. Perfect for garden beds to prevent weeds during the season and replenish some nutrients (decompose) at the end.



### **NUTRIENT BLEND MULCH**

Get the benefits of mulch and compost in one, top-of-the-line product. Ideal for annual, perennial and vegetable beds.



[www.freestatefarmsva.com](http://www.freestatefarmsva.com)



(703) 542-4540



[info@freestatefarmsva.com](mailto:info@freestatefarmsva.com)