

mn 2000 46 6/10/68

YARD 'N' GARDEN

Department of Information
and Agricultural Journalism
Institute of Agriculture
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101



EXTENSION
HORTICULTURISTS

Prepared and distributed
by the Minnesota Agricultural
Extension Service

For use week of
June 10

AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE • UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

SUMMER MULCHES

Mulches can be a big help if they're applied at the right time. Mulches help control weeds, conserve moisture, keep the ground cool and keep fruits and edible parts of vegetables off the ground. Mulches also cut down on the amount of hoeing and watering necessary.

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Ground corn cobs, finely chopped straw, grass clippings, sawdust, vermiculite or peat moss all make good mulches. Apply a layer an inch or two deep immediately following a good rain before severe hot weather strikes in mid-July.

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A mulch around tomato plants will eliminate the necessity of cultivation and the chance of cutting off plant roots. This root pruning is a cause of blossom-end rot of tomatoes.

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If foliage shows a yellowing condition where mulches are used it may indicate a nitrogen competition. This can be corrected by adding a little ammonium nitrate over the mulch around the plants.

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