

Compost and Mulch:

Compost helps to improve your existing soil. It can make it looser (for clay soils) and adds water holding capacity (for sandy soils). Compost also helps add nutrients and beneficial microorganisms to your soil. You should work compost in to the top 6-12" of your soil whenever you make a new flower bed, and top dress your lawn with a quarter to an half an inch every spring and fall.

MORE COMPOST = LESS FERTILIZER

Mulch is any organic material (leaves, compost, aged wood chips) that is layered over your flower beds and garden.

Mulch should be held about an inch away from trunks and stems, and laid about 1-3" deep. Mulch helps to maintain a healthy soil temperature, conserves water and helps prevent weeds.

MORE MULCH = LESS WEEDING AND WATERING



A word about Native Plants

Native plants (and native plant relatives) are great to use in the sustainable garden. Native plants are already adapted to your growing conditions. They have developed natural resistance to pests (bugs) and diseases. They also thrive in our natural growing environment and usually don't require intensive watering. This makes them a good option for low input gardening. **NATIVES = LESS INPUTS**

Guidelines for Sustainable Plantings



- Put plants in the right conditions. Sun plants planted in the shade, or shade plants put in the sun will require more care (watering, fertilizer, chemical use) to grow and are more susceptible to disease.
- If planting non-natives, look for new or improved plants. Plant breeders are constantly improving plants to help improve their disease resistance and habit.
- Plants need air circulation. Avoid planting right up against a building or fence.
- Consider a plants water needs in your plans. Put drought tolerant plants in areas that are full sun or difficult to water. Put bog and margin plants in areas that are wet.



For more information on our Sustainable garden practices go to the EPA website at:

www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/greenscapes/owners.htm

For information on sustainably grown plants available at this independent garden center go to:

www.fandbfarms.com