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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Pike Nurseries Helps Gardeners Prep Plants for Colder Months Ahead***Experts recommend mulching as an essential tool*

**ATLANTA (Aug. 12, 2024)** – The upcoming change in season brings more to do in the garden! **Pike Nurseries**, a trusted name in the gardening community, shares expert advice on a critical practice for maintaining a healthy and vibrant garden: mulching. Mulch not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of a garden but also provides numerous benefits that contribute to plant health and soil quality as the temperatures cool leading into the fall season.

**What is Mulching?**

Mulching involves covering the soil with a layer of material to retain moisture, regulate soil temperature, suppress weeds and improve soil fertility. It serves as a protective barrier, reducing the need for frequent watering and minimizing soil erosion.

**Types of Mulch**

The Pike Nurseries team recommends two main types of mulch:

* **Organic Mulch**: Comprising natural materials such as wood chips, straw, grass clippings and leaves, organic mulch decomposes over time, enriching the soil with essential nutrients. It enhances soil structure and supports beneficial microbial activity.
* **Inorganic Mulch**: Made from non-biodegradable materials like stones, gravel and synthetic fabrics, inorganic mulch is long-lasting and effective in weed suppression. While it doesn’t improve soil fertility, it provides excellent insulation and is ideal for decorative purposes.

**Benefits of Mulching**

* **Moisture Retention**: Mulch helps the soil retain moisture by reducing evaporation. This is particularly beneficial during hot summer months, ensuring consistent hydration, and helpful in cooler months to protect plants.
* **Weed Suppression**: A thick layer of mulch prevents weed seeds from germinating, reducing competition for nutrients and water.
* **Soil Temperature Regulation**: Mulch acts as an insulating layer, keeping the soil cooler in summer and warmer in winter, thereby protecting plant roots from extreme temperature fluctuations.
* **Erosion Control**: Mulching helps prevent soil erosion by reducing the impact of rain and wind on the soil surface.
* **Nutrient Enrichment**: Organic mulch decomposes over time, adding valuable nutrients to the soil and improving its overall health.

**Application Tips**

Pike Nurseries advises gardeners to follow these steps for effective mulching:

* **Prepare the Area**: Remove existing weeds and debris from the soil surface.
* **Apply Mulch**: Spread a layer of mulch 2-4 inches thick around plants, ensuring not to cover the plant stems or trunks to prevent rot.
* **Replenish as Needed**: Organic mulch should be replenished periodically as it decomposes to maintain its effectiveness.
* **Consider the Season**: Apply mulch in late spring or early summer to retain moisture or in late fall to protect plants during winter.

For more complex mulching advice, Pike Nurseries' team of experts are available to provide personalized guidance and assistance tailored to individual gardening needs.

**ABOUT PIKE NURSERIES**Ever committed to its customers’ gardening success, Pike Nurseries takes pride in taking the guesswork out of gardening and helping its customers play in the dirt. Offering superior knowledge, quality and selection in a friendly, caring environment, Pike Nurseries has been a Southern icon for over 60 years. Founded in 1958 by Pete Pike, its ability to adapt to market conditions and community needs has made it a respected Southern institution. As Atlanta’s oldest garden chain, Pike Nurseries has nineteen retail locations, fifteen in the Atlanta, Ga. area and four in the Charlotte, N.C. area. Led by President Monte Enright, Pike Nurseries looks forward to continued growth as it keeps Atlanta and Charlotte beautiful, one landscape at a time.

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