

Using Wool Waste in Your Garden

Wool waste is everything remaining after processing the raw fleece. Here are some reasons to use wool waste to promote sustainable horticultural practices.

1. *Cost Efficient*

Savvy farmers and gardeners can recycle and repurpose wool waste rather than disposing of it. Wool wastes saves money by reusing repurposing. In addition, it saves labor time and costs as well.



2. *Eco-friendly Mulch*



Companies are now felting wool waste into mats for seasonal row covers. A wool waste mat suppresses weeds, keeps soil moist longer and acts as a heat shield. It naturally holds water so young plants do not dry out quickly. It also allows good air flow, so helps stop damping off in small transplants.

3. *Adds Essential Nutrients*

Wool waste adds beneficial nitrogen and sulfur, though it is not a good source of potassium. When mixed into the soil with compost and/or manure, it helps aerate heavy soils. Like other amendments it needs to be mixed together before digging in so it does not make a layer or crush into a ball. It decomposes in about six months. Wool waste is now being processed into pellets for an effective, easy-to-use fertilizer. A local company in Courtenay manufactures it. It is available for sale in 1 and 2 kg bags at garden centres.



4. *Assists in Pest Control*



Wool waste provides an effective barrier against flying pests who lay their eggs in the soil. It is also effective at excluding ground-dwelling pests, especially slugs. There is some evidence it may help in aphid control. This is not definitive, but it is thought the lanolin in the raw product may play a role. Its protection works as shown in the image, or when used as a mat.