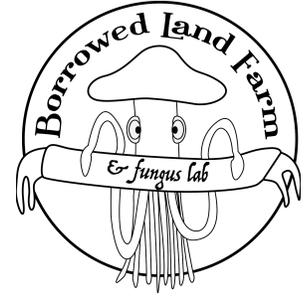


Growing Mushrooms in mulch



1. Choose the location (dappled shade is best)
 - a. in gardens, for example, under squash plants or hostas
 - b. under shade trees
 - c. on the shaded side of the house
2. Gather materials:
 - a. sawdust or grain spawn,
 - b. cardboard or weed barrier,
 - c. hardwood (or mostly hardwood) mulch
 - d. straw, if desired
3. Prepare the location by clearing out plants and then laying down cardboard or another weed barrier.
4. Inoculate! There are a couple of ways you can do this:
 - a. Method 1:
 - i. Lay out at least 3-6" of mulch mixed with straw (to speed colonization).
 - ii. Spread spawn over top (five pounds of spawn will inoculate 20-30 square feet).
 - iii. Rake to disperse spawn down through the mulch.
 - b. Method 2:
 - i. Mix spawn and mulch in a wheelbarrow or large tote or box. (Add straw if you wish.)
 - ii. Spread mulch/spawn mixture over weed barrier or bare dirt.
5. Water as you would a garden. This is easy if you spread mulch under your garden plants.
6. Wait. Depending on when you inoculate, you will typically see results in the spring or fall.
 - Stropharia (wine caps) have a wine-colored, or burgundy-colored, cap. The cap is usually broad and bell-shaped. Each mushroom has a white stalk with a ring on it. As the mushrooms mature, they will produce dark, purplish spores. As a result, the gills of the mushroom will get darker as the mushroom matures. When ready, just twist the mushroom out of the substrate and brush it off. (An early harvest is better than waiting until they're huge.)
 - Oyster mushrooms have a flattened cap. The gills run down the stem, and the stem is offset and not prominent. Oyster mushrooms produce white spores. These may fruit more quickly, so keep your eyes open during the summer.