

## Coffee Chaff – Fact Sheet

An estimated 2 billion tonnes of coffee byproducts are produced every year from the processing of coffee, one of the largest contributors being chaff (or husk). Chaff is the dried skin surrounding coffee beans that falls off when exposed to high temperatures. Although most roasters have chaff collectors, the contents often end up being mixed in with general waste, which then goes to landfill where it breaks down. The coffee husks are light and floaty like flakes of bran and have an oily feel to them.

### How To Use

#### Supercharged Soil:

- Packed with nitrogen, a key nutrient for lush, green plant growth.
- High in cellulose and lignins (i.e. food for microbes), coffee chaff contains other beneficial minerals like potassium, calcium and magnesium.
- Acid loving Plants: Varieties like blueberries, azaleas and rhododendrons can also benefit from the acidity that coffee chaff imparts to the soil. Introducing coffee chaff into the soil can help **maintain** the pH levels for their growth. Using it in moderation will not change the pH significantly. Avoid using on Alkaline-loving plants (lavender, carnations). Roses like slightly acidic soils too.
- Adding chaff to your compost or directly into the soil enriches it with essential nutrients.
- Carrots: The fine consistency of coffee chaff serves as a medium for carrot seeds providing them with a nutrient rich environment to flourish in.

#### As Mulch:

- Coffee chaff's lightweight nature makes it an excellent mulch.
- It helps to suppress weeds, retain soil moisture, and regulate soil temperature – all essential factors for a thriving garden.
- In a 1-2-inch-thick mat around vegetable plants (use drip irrigation under the husk mulch).
- It is best to lightly moisten the husk mat upon application.
- A thick layer may be good for sheet mulching to kill weeds if you have enough of it and will eventually break down like cardboard.

#### Worms and Compost:

- Worms love it! Chaff is organic, light, and airy, which means it mixes well with other compostable contents.
- Coffee chaff in your compost pile will attract beneficial creatures that further enrich the soil, creating a nutrient powerhouse for your plants.
- Coffee chaff functions as a 'brown' component, balancing out the 'greens' and expediting the composting process.
- Has a Carbon: Nitrogen ratio of 14-19:1

#### Natural Pest Deterrent:

- The aroma and texture of coffee chaff are a turn-off for slugs and snails.
- Sprinkle it around your plants to create a protective barrier against these unwanted visitors.

**HELP YOURSELF TO A BAG OF THE COFFEE CHAFF IN THE RAINBOW SHED. RETURN THE BAG IF YOU CAN & IT WILL BE REUSED**

