

**B-32 Effect of organic mulch on growth and development of ginger**  
**(*Zingiber officinale* (Rosc))**

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Ginger is an important spice crop which can be grown in a wide range of soils, but soils rich in humus have been found ideal. In sandy and infertile soils, ginger can be grown with organic mulch, which could improve the fertility and moisture-conserving ability of the soil. Based on this concept, an experiment was conducted to study the growth and development of ginger with different organic mulch in the sandy regosols of the Eastern region of Sri Lanka.

This experiment was carried out at the Eastern University Agriculture farm between Jan 1995 and May 1995. It was laid out in Randomised Complete Block Design (RCBD) with 4 replicates and 4 treatments: Control (No mulch); Straw mulch; Coir dust mulch and Saw dust mulch at a rate of 1200 kg /ha.

Healthy seed pieces showing signs of early sprouting were planted at a spacing of 30 x 30 cm in raised beds at the depth of 10 cm. Mulching was done after sprouting. All the agronomic practices including fertilizer were done as recommended, up to harvesting.

The results indicate that organic mulch application had a positive effect on fresh weight, leaf area, biomass and yield of ginger. Among them coir dust and saw dust were significantly superior than straw. It can be concluded that organic mulch, especially coir dust and saw dust along with inorganic fertilizer, can enhance the yield of ginger in sandy regosols of the Eastern Region of Sri Lanka.