

07 November 2007

Lefke Launches Mulching Pilot Program

A new mulching pilot program was launched in the Lefke community on 7 November 2007 in collaboration with the Supporting Activities that Value the Environment (SAVE) project which is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and works to build local capacity to better protect and manage Cyprus' valuable natural and cultural resources. This project will dispose of local tree and branch trimmings by converting them into organic mulch.

There are numerous orchards and gardens in the Lefke area that produce a large quantity of branches and shrubs that need to be disposed of on a regular basis. Mulching is a way to recycle those trees, branches, and limbs rather than overwhelm the local landfill or cause damage to the soil by burning the material. SAVE is working closely with Mr. Mehmet Zafer and his staff to implement the program. It is hoped that the Lefke community will serve as a model for other towns and villages that have similar problems disposing of large amounts of garden and orchard waste in a manner that safeguards the environment. On the basis of the mulching pilot program, SAVE will evaluate the feasibility of implementing similar programs in other communities in the future.

To support the pilot program, SAVE has provided a new wood chipper for the community and also trained local staff on the safe use of this machine. The new wood chipper quickly and safely shreds woody plants, larger branches, and tree limbs into the smaller pieces that comprise the mulch. This resulting mulch material can then be used by in gardens and orchards to enrich the soil and provide a better growing environment for plants and trees.

Mulching is one of the easiest, cheapest, and best ways to improve gardens and orchards because it helps save scarce water resources by trapping moisture in the soil. Mulching also prevents weeds, limits soil erosion, and insulates the soil so it maintains a more even soil temperature.

Mulching not only improves the growth of plants and trees, it helps the community by disposing of woody plants, larger branches, and tree limbs in an environmentally friendly way rather than burning or dumping the material in a local landfill.

During the pilot program, the wood chipper will be available to all area residents to recycle their garden/orchard organic waste into mulch that can then be used in their gardens and on their fruit trees. All area residents will also have access to free mulch during the pilot program and are invited to pick up their free bags of mulch at the central municipal building. For more information, call 728 7732 or 728 7358.





Mr Mehmet Zafer & SAVE Environment and Natural Resources Program Manager Sibel Paralik



Wood Chipper Demonstration



Mulch samples distributed during the launch

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