



BOYCOTT MULCH!

by Ken Morrison

Until recent years, cypress mulch was a by-product of logging. Now the demand for mulch is so great that big cypress stands in the Green Swamp and elsewhere are being clear-cut just to be chipped for gardening and landscape use.

Clear-cutting is a bad practice. It devastates the wildlife community that lived there. Clear-cutting destroys the diversity and integrity of the living landscape. It encourages rapid runoff and erosion. It is awful to look at, resembling a scene from Desert Storm.

From a conservation standpoint, we should only use mulch that is truly a by-product. As far as I know, pine bark falls in that category and is very satisfactory, but often not available.

A product called Florimulch is available at some Winn-Dixie stores and perhaps a few other locations. It is made from melaleuca trees, which are an exotic pest in south and central Florida. It is a public service to eradicate these "punk trees", so I encourage everyone to boycott cypress mulch and buy Florimulch or pine bark whenever possible. To help protect the Green Swamp, let's urge Wal-Mart, Scotty's, and all supermarkets to handle Florimulch or pine bark. Here is a good way for them to stress the commitment to the environment that some of them have made.

Florimulch is a product of Forestry Resources, Inc. of Ft. Myers. Their phone number is 813/332-3966.