



UNIFORM STANDARD FOR CERTIFIED ALL-NATURAL HORTICULTURAL SOIL PRODUCTS

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DRAFT

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UNIFORM STANDARD FOR CERTIFIED ALL-NATURAL HORTICULTURAL SOIL PRODUCTS

PART I. Purpose & Scope

This standard establishes mandatory requirements for horticultural soil products—including landscape soils, potting mixes, seed-starting media, raised-bed/vegetable-garden soils and in-ground soil amendments—that seek MSC “Certified All-Natural” status. It complements the MSC *Uniform Voluntary Product Guidelines for Horticultural Mulches, Growing Media, Landscape Soils & Amendments (UVPG)* and the MSC *Product Guidelines for Certified All-Natural Horticultural Mulch (CANM)* by (1) extending the “all-natural” concept to soil products and (2) **prohibiting all post-harvest chemicals, pesticides, synthetic or non-naturally occurring inputs.**

PART II. Definitions & Product Categories

Unless otherwise noted, definitions follow UVPG (Part IV).

Category	Primary Use
All-Natural Potting Mix / Horticultural Growing Medium	Container production or houseplants.
All-Natural Seed-Starting / Propagation Mix	Germinating seeds or rooting cuttings.
All-Natural Landscape / Garden Soil	In-ground soil replacement or conditioner.
All-Natural Topsoil	Basic landscape soil for filling holes, creating berms and grading slopes.

All categories must comply with the ingredient, processing and labeling rules below.

PART III. Ingredient Requirements

1. Allowed Ingredients

Only ingredients explicitly listed as “All Natural” in the latest version of the *MSC All-Natural Ingredient List* (hereto incorporated by reference) are permitted without additional documentation. These ingredients must be naturally occurring in origin (plant, mineral, or animal-derived):

Examples of Allowed Ingredients include:

- **Plant-derived materials:** pine bark fines, aged forest products, shredded hardwood, coir (coconut husk), rice hulls
- **Animal-derived materials:** bat guano, earthworm castings, feather meal, bone meal (no preservatives), blood meal (no anticoagulants), unmanipulated manures (steer, cow, horse, poultry, dairy, etc.)
- **Mineral-derived materials:** pumice, expanded shale, perlite (naturally expanded), gypsum (mined), greensand
- **Compost materials:** bark, cow manure, steer manure, dairy manure, rice hulls.

All must be free from paint, preservatives, chemical additives, synthetic coatings or treatments.

2. Conditionally Allowed Ingredients

Ingredients listed as “**Conditionally Allowed**” in the latest version of the *MSC All-Natural Ingredient List* (hereto incorporated by reference) are conditionally permitted only if:

- Their **origin is 100% natural** (plant, mineral, or animal); and
- Their **processing involves no chemical synthesis or artificial modification.**

Written disclosure must include:

- The material’s origin (plant, mineral, animal)
- All processing steps
- A signed attestation or third-party verification confirming **natural sourcing and non-chemical processing**

Examples (conditionally allowed if verified):

- Humic acids or humates (naturally mined, not chemically extracted)
- Seaweed or kelp extracts (cold or water-extracted only)
- Fish hydrolysate (cold-processed, no preservatives)
- Natural rock phosphate (unprocessed or mechanically ground)
- Leonardite-based soil conditioners (if unmodified)
- Vermiculite or perlite (if not treated with surfactants)
- Generic compost (depending on origin and process)

3. Prohibited Ingredients

Ingredients listed as “**NOT All Natural**” in the latest version of the *MSC All-Natural Ingredient List* (hereto incorporated by reference) or lacking sufficient documentation are disallowed. These include:

- Synthetic fertilizers (e.g., ammonium nitrate, urea-form, polymer-coated nutrients)
- Biosolids, sewage sludge, industrial waste inputs
- Synthetic wetting agents or polyacrylamides
- Preservative-treated or painted wood, laminated board
- Any chemical additives, synthetic growth regulators, or artificial colorants

4. Foreign Matter Limit

Foreign matter is metal, plastic, glass or other man-made materials that may appear in mulch or soil products from the processing/grinding of reprocessed/recycled materials or foreign matter

embedded in natural forest products. All-Natural Soil products shall not contain more than 0.2% by volume of foreign matter.

5. Water-Holding & Wetting Agents

Only plant- or mineral-derived agents are allowed (e.g., yucca extract), **provided they are not chemically modified or solvent-extracted**. Synthetic polymers and polyacrylamide gels are prohibited.

PART IV. Processing & Manufacturing

- Post-harvest processing must use non-chemical, mechanical, thermal, or biological methods only.
- Acceptable operations: grinding, screening, composting, anaerobic digestion, drying, mechanical blending.
- No chemical extraction, polymerization, coating, or synthetic enhancement allowed.
- Compost must be thermophilic and biologically stabilized.

PART V. Product Labeling

Manufacturers shall follow nomenclature and labeling rules, required under the UVPG with the following *Certified All-Natural*-specific requirements:

1. **All-Natural Claim Use:**
 - Both the **MSC Certification AND “Certified All-Natural Soil”** seals must appear on the primary OR secondary display panel only after approval.
 - Any additional marketing claims (e.g., “organic,” “chemical-free”) must be factual, not misleading, and substantiated.

PART VI. Performance & Safety Criteria

Parameter	Landscape / Garden	Potting / Seed Mix	Test Method
Growth Test	LSSA GH Protocol	PGM, SGM & SSM GH Protocol	MSC Certification Greenhouse Growth Test Protocols
Heavy Metals	EPA 40 CFR 503	EPA 40 CFR 503	MSC XRF Test Protocol
Physicals	Product Inspection	Product Inspection	MSC A-N Test Protocols

PART VII. Certification Process

- Application must include full formulation, ingredient affidavits, and third-party lab data.
- Audits and unannounced surveillance pulls ensure ongoing compliance.
- Products found out of compliance lose certification until corrective action is verified.

A	B	C	D
1			Mulch & Soil Council
2			All-Natural Ingredient List
3			As of 02/04/2026
4			CONSOLIDATED LIST BY CATEGORY
5			All-Natural
6			NOT All-Natural
7			Conditionally Allowed
8			
9			Animal-Derived Inputs
10			Subcategory: Animal Meals & By-Products
11	1		Blood Meal with No anti-caking agents or flow agents
12	1		Bone Meal with No anti-caking agents or preservatives
13	1		Feather Meal with no anti-caking agent
14	1		Hydrolyzed Feather Meal with no anti-caking agent
15	1		Meat Meal without preservatives OR organic certified
16	1		Fish Bone Meal with no synthetic nitrogen, fillers, or
17	1		Crustacean Meal with no Synthetic fertilizers or fillers mixed in, no Chemical preservatives or stabilizers OR organic certified
18			Bark, Wood & Forest-Derived Materials
19			Subcategory: Bark & Bark Fines
20	1		All natural bark-based materials from various tree species or blends of tree species, provided in a range of particle sizes and forms, including aged and fresh bark, fines, nuggets, mulch, shredded bark and other
21			Subcategory: Forest Products & Wood Pieces
22	1		All natural wood materials from timber harvests of various hardwood or softwood tree or shrub species provided as untreated, unstained and unpainted wood pieces, chips or other NATURAL forest products excluding reprocessed wood from fabricated consumer or industrial
23	1		Recycled Forest or wood Products (as defined in MSC UVPG)
24			Subcategory: Wood Fiber & Biochar
25	1		Biochar : without chemical additives or treatments or IBI, EBC or organic Certified.
26	1		Wood Fiber : produced by hammermill, steam or pressure without chemical or synthetic materials
27			Composts, Peat, Humus & Castings
28			Subcategory: Castings
29	1		Earthworm Castings
30			Subcategory: Composts
31	1		Bark : with no biosolids, synthetic chemicals, fertilizers or dyes
32	1		Food Waste from organically grown food materials only.
33	1		Mushroom : no synthetic nitrogen, formaldehyde, or synthetic fungicides — or organic certified
34	1		Rice Hulls
35	1		Yard Waste
36			Subcategory: Peats & Humus
37	1		Humus decomposed natural forest products without fertilizers, wetting agents, pH adjusters, or other amendments
38	1		Peat Humus without wetting/anti caking agents, fertilizers
39	1		Sphagnum Peat Moss without wetting/anti caking agents, fertilizers or liming agents.
40			Manures, Litter & Digestates
41			Subcategory: COMPOSTED Manures & Litters
42	1		Cow Manure : No biosolids or synthetic compost aides or organic certified / OMRI Listed
43	1		Horse Manure : No biosolids or synthetic compost aides or organic certified / OMRI Listed
44	1		Manure Digestate : No binders and/or synthetic additives
45	1		Poultry Litter : No biosolids or synthetic composting aides OR organic certified.
46	1		Sheep Manure : No biosolids or synthetic compost aides or organic certified / OMRI Listed
47	1		Steer Manure : No biosolids or synthetic compost aides or organic certified / OMRI Listed
48	1		Swine/Pig Manure : No biosolids or synthetic compost aides or organic certified / OMRI Listed
49			Subcategory: FRESH Manures, Litter & Digestates
50	1		Bat Guano : no fillers or synthetics or Organic Certified
51	1		Cow Manure
52	1		Horse Manure
53	1		Manure Digestate : No binders and/or synthetic additives

A	B	C	D
54	1		Poultry Litter
55	1		Sheep Manure
56	1		Steer Manure
57	1		Swine/Pig Manure
58			Mineral Fertilizers & Salts
59			Subcategory: Primary Nutrient Salts (N-P-K)
60	1		Ammonium Nitrate
61	1		Ammonium Phosphate
62	1		Monoammonium Phosphate
63	1		Potash : excluding muriate of potash
64	1		Potassium Sulfate from mined mineral
65	1		Urea : from animals / not synthetic
66	1		Ureaform
67			Subcategory: Secondary & Micronutrient Salts
68	1		Calcium Phosphate : from mined rock or bone meal
69	1		Ferrous Sulfate
70	1		Sulfate of Potash : when mined / Not synthetic
71	1		Sulfur : when mined / Not synthetic
72	1		Sulphate : when mined / Not synthetic
73			pH Adjusters & Liming Materials
74			Subcategory: Calcium Carbonates & Dolomitic Limes
75	1		Calcium : mined, mineral or bone / not synthetic
76	1		Dolomite : without biners, colorants or other additives or treatments
77	1		Ground Dolomite Limestone : without biners, colorants or other additives or treatments
78			Subcategory: Gypsum & Calcium Sulfates
79	1		Calcium Sulfate Dihydrate : mined not synthetic or by
80	1		Gypsum : Mined only but may be crushed or ground. No
81			Subcategory: Shell & Carbonate Limes
82	1		Oyster Shell Limes : if wild caught or sustainably farmed
83			Plant-Derived Meals & Biostimulants
84			Subcategory: Fibers, Coir & Hulls
85	1		Coir : Unbuffered and without chemical wash or treatment.
86	1		Rice Hulls
87			Subcategory: Extracts, Biostimulants & Mixed Organics
88	1		Hydrolyzed Corn Starch
89	1		Kelp Meal : Dried and milled with no synthetic additives
90			Subcategory: Plant Meals & Seed/Grain Products
91	1		Alfalfa Meal : processed without additives
92	1		Soybean Meal : processed without chemicals
93			Rock, Sand & Inorganic Aggregates
94			Subcategory: Lightweight Aggregates
95	1		Perlite : without additives or surfactants.
96	1		Pumice : without fertilizers, surfactants or dust-control
97	1		Vermiculite : without additives.
98			Subcategory: Sands, Loams & Cinders
99	1		Cinders : Volcanic Rock NOT Coal Combustion
100	1		Sand : Mined NOT Manufactured
101	1		Sandy Loam if 100% native materials without additives.
102			Subcategory: Silicon Sources & Oxides
103	1		Calcium Silicate : Ground or mechanically processed Wollastonite, Xonotlite or Tobermorite
104	1		Silicon Dioxide : from mined quartz, natural amorphous silica, or diatomaceous earth
105	1		Soluble Silicon : from wollastonite, Natural calcium silicate, Plant-based silica, Diatomaceous earth, Rice hull ash or Basalt / volcanic rock minerals
106			Synthetic Polymers & Coated Fertilizers
107			Subcategory: Controlled-Release & Coated Fertilizers
108	1		Controlled Release Fertilizer
109	1		Polymer Coated Ammonium Nitrate
110	1		Polymer Coated Ammonium Phosphate
111	1		Polymer Coated Calcium Phosphate
112	1		Polymer Coated Potassium Nitrate
113	1		Polymer Coated Potassium Sulfate
114	1		Polymer Coated Urea
115			Subcategory: Soil Polymers & Gels
116	1		Cross-linked Polymer
117			Wetting Agents, Surfactants & Colorants
118			Subcategory: Colorants & Dyes
119	1		Colorant : Organic without surfactant or other chemicals
120			Subcategory: Surfactants & Wetting Agents
121	1		Surfactant(s)
122	1		Yucca : Water or mechanically extracted plant extract with no preservatives, surfactants, or synthetic stabilizers
123			