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Performance of Tomato Plant (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) as Affected by Organic Mulching

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Abstract: The use of organic mulching in growing crops is one of the safest, least expensive, more practical, yet equally profitable methods of enhancing the soil condition. This project aimed to provide a natural and effective way of enriching soil. It also aimed to determine the performance of tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) plant as affected by organic mulching. Dried papaya and banana leaves as organic mulches were tested and compared. Shredded papaya and banana leaves were applied separately on the soil in the pots planted with tomato in four replicates. Ten days after transplanting, the plant's initial caudex was measured and it was found out that there was no significant difference among the setups on this parameter. After the determined mulch application, the researchers measured the height increases and final caudex of tomato plants. Data showed no significant differences among the setups based on ANOVA result. However, study showed positive effects because papaya mulch promoted the tomato plant's height and final caudex and it was recorded to be the best mulch.

Key Words: *Lycopersicon esculentum*; organic mulching; performance; and caudex