

# Composting with Worms



## Materials List

- Stack of shredded non glossy paper
- Storage tote
- Drill & drill bit
- Red wigglers

## Prepare a Worm Bin

- Carefully select the permanent location for your worm bin. A simple 18 gallon storage tote with lid works great.
- Drill holes at the bottom of your tote and along the sides and lids. Any size hole will do, your worms will not leave as long as they are happy. The holes are for drainage and air flow.
- Mix the worm bedding and place it in the worm bin. Place shredded non glossy paper at the bottom of your bin. Mix water into bedding until moist. A few drops should fall from a fistful when squeezed.
- Add mushy food scraps like coffee grounds, watermelon, salad greens, etc. Try not to add things that have a lot of acid like citrus, onions, garlic or things that are super hard like apple cores. If you are able to blend your worm food that is best. Each time you put food items in your worm bin, cover it with more shredded paper. Depending on how moist the food material is you will not need to wet the paper covering it.
- Worms do not actually eat your food scraps; they eat the bacterium that feeds off your food scraps. Give the bedding time to go through the "heat" stage. Once it has gone through the heat stage, turn the bedding with a tined fork. If the bedding is still "hot" continue to turn the pile every few days until "cool." Once the pile is "cool", the worms can be introduced to the bedding.

## Introduce the Worms

- Verify that the worms are alive.
- Place approximately 250 worms per 1 square foot of the bin.

## Basic Bin Maintenance

- Do not feed the worms on the first day of introduction. Instead, feed the worms on day two. Corn meal or corn powder can be sprinkled on top of the bedding then wet thoroughly, or *soft* table scraps can be buried under the bedding.
- Water approximately once per week. Water less frequently if you feed with table scraps only.
- OPTIONAL: Add a handful of powdered lime (garden or lawn variety) to a 2' x 2' box to keep the acid and base of the bedding close to even.
- Add water with a sprinkling can to any dry bedding.
- Turn bedding approximately once per week with a tined hand fork.

## What to Feed Worms: DO NOT add meat scraps or dairy products (no animal products)

- Left over vegetable scraps, fruit and vegetable peelings
- Tea leaves / bags and coffee grounds
- Vacuum cleaner dust
- Washed, crushed egg shells (these will help with the pH balance)