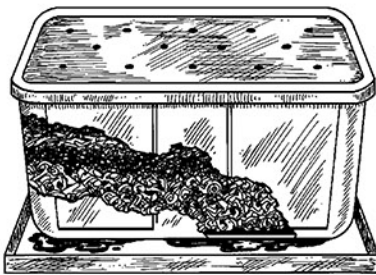


Indoor Worm COMPOST

If you have limited outdoor space ...
If you want to produce an incredibly rich soil amendment ...
If you love to learn from nature ...



... TRY VERMICOMPOSTING!

Composting worms (red wigglers aka *eisenia foetida*) will eat up to 1/4 their own body weight each day, producing nutrient-rich castings. Worms need darkness to survive and need lots of moisture to breathe. They are like us and live best at 50-85°. A well-maintained bin is a balanced ecosystem and should never smell bad or inspire worms to escape. Happy worms will reproduce after 3 months.

1 Prepare A Bin

1

You can use any plastic, wood, or styrofoam container, as long as it's at least 8-12" deep and provides 1 sq foot of surface per pound of food scraps you want to compost each week. It must be opaque, worms will become paralyzed when exposed to light. Drill or poke pencil-sized holes in the top and upper sides of the bin for good air circulation.

2 Add Bedding & Worms

2

Soak bedding in water, then wring out till it's as moist as a damp sponge (shredded newspaper works best) and fluff it up to ensure your worms have plenty of air. Your bin should have about 8" of loose bedding. Now add your red wiggler worms to the bin (regular earthworms will not survive in your worm bin). Worms will try to escape if their bedding is too wet or too dry.

3 Feed Your Worms

3

Feed your worms a vegetarian diet (no meat or cheese) and avoid lots of oil. They will eat most fruits and veggies, but will avoid onion, garlic, and citrus. Start with one handful of scraps and feed by pulling back the bedding and burying the food in one corner of your bin, rotating feeding spots. Feed weekly until your bin is well-established. Keep the food completely covered with bedding to discourage smells or fruit flies. If your bin gets smelly or moldy, you are feeding more than your worms can handle. Slow feedings or remove food until the bin comes into balance again.

Contact CCE Tompkins for sources of worms and free upcycled bins. Vermicomposting classes are held twice a year.

