

Worm Farming Fact Sheet



Worm farming is one of the most natural and satisfying ways of recycling.

It helps:

- retain water in the soil
- improve soil structure and adds nutrients
- reduce the cost of waste disposal to the community
- reduce greenhouse gases produced by rotting material in landfill
- save landfill space



Did you know ...

Compost worms are not like the earthworms found in your garden. They feed at the surface and can consume their own body weight in food every day!

Listed below are some of the more common items that are suitable for feeding your compost worms as well as some food items they don't like.



Worms like

Fruit and vegetables
Coffee grounds
Paper and cardboard (soaked)
Egg shells
Hair (human and animal)
Manure (aged)
Pizza boxes (torn and soaked)
Tea bags and leaves
Vacuum cleaner dust

Worms don't like

Citrus fruit, like oranges and lemons
Meat
Dairy foods
Fish
Junk food
Lollies
Oils
Garlic and onions
Pineapple

Worm Farming Tips

Avoid feeding your worms meat, dairy and junk food as they may attract rodents and ants. Citrus fruit contain a chemical that is toxic to worms. Keep your worm farm cool, dark and damp as compost worms don't like the heat. If the worm farm starts to smell or attract flies, you may be over-feeding it. Only feed as much as the worms can eat in a few days. Worms have small mouths, so if you cut up their food, they will eat it faster. Adding some eggshells or sand to the worm farm can help the worms' digestion. You can use a little garden lime to rebalance the pH of your worm farm.

You will need to add bedding to your worm farm when you start a new farm or tray or when you harvest the castings. Good bedding materials include shredded paper (damp), coir (can be bought at the hardware store as compressed blocks – just add water), coffee grounds and aged cow manure.

Types of Worm Farms

You can build your own worm farm out of a bathtub, old fridge or polystyrene box. Make sure to drill holes for drainage – you don't want your worms to drown! Plastic multi-level worm farms are a good option and make harvesting castings easy, but they can get hot. Be sure to keep it in the shade or indoors. In-ground worm farms or worm towers can be made out of a bucket or pipe set in the ground with holes to allow the worms to go in and out. The advantage of this system is that the worms can easily keep cool and will distribute the worm castings into the garden bed for you.

For more information or to find out about free composting and worm farming sessions contact the Fleurieu Regional Waste Authority Project and Education Officer (details at the top of the page), or go to the FRWA website at www.frwa.com.au