

Vermicomposting



What is vermicomposting?

The practice of using worms to compost food waste into a nutrient rich soil amendment.

Reasons to vermicompost:

- Save landfill space.
- Enables you to get rid of kitchen waste.
- Able to use vermicompost, for house plants, gardens, etc.
- Have a ready supply of fishing worms.

Worms

- Red worms (*eisenia foetida*)
- Each day a worm eats half its weight in food.
- Worms can double their population every 90 days.
- A healthy box can build a population of worms that will consume 4-6 pounds of food scraps per week.
- Order worms from a composting supplier or purchase them at a local bait store.

What should I feed the worms?

- Fruit and Vegetable peels
- Oatmeal
- Coffee grounds
- Tea bags
- Egg shells
- Avoid greasy foods

How do I take care of the worms?

- Keep food scraps covered under bedding to avoid fruit flies.
- Do not overload bin with food waste
- Stir contents to prevent unpleasant, strong odors.
- Keep bedding moist.
- Harvest castings by removing finished compost from the bin (usually after 3-5 months)

Worm Bin Construction

Worm bins can be a plastic or wooden box with a snug fitting lid. Small holes should be drilled in the bottom or sides for ventilation (1/4" or smaller). Damp bedding (shredded newspaper) should be added occasionally for worms to live in and bury food scraps. Worms prefer a dark, moist environment.

For more information, contact the DMASWA Education Office at 563-588-7933.