

Your Mini-Farm is guaranteed to produce mushrooms if the instructions are carefully followed. Direct sunlight, exposure to heat, and excessive drying can all damage or destroy the living culture of the Lion's Mane mushroom (a species of *Hericium erinaceus*), so avoid these conditions. Sometimes the appearance of the mushrooms will follow a different rhythm than the one described above; if this happens, watch patiently. If you experience a problem with excessive drying during one crop, just remove the affected mushroom, mist well, reclose the bag, and the next crops should be fine. If the drying was caused by too-drafty conditions, give the Mini-Farm more protection, such as hanging a plastic sheet to block the wind. If mold growth occurs on the Mini-Farm, remove the affected area with a knife, making a shallow cut, and throw the contaminated portion away, while continuing to follow the general instructions in that stage of development. Remember, the Lion's Mane Mushrooms thrive in the cool moist environments so try to provide these conditions.

The Garrone family of Far West Fungi would like to thank you for choosing us as your source for mushroom products. You can find more of our mushroom products online.



Figure 1



Figure 2

Copyright 1989 FarWestFungi



## Lion's Mane Mushroom

### (*Hericium erinaceus*)

Congratulations! You now possess a pre-activated Lion's Mane Mushroom Mini-Farm that will begin producing its first crop of delicious Lion's Mane mushrooms in the next week or two. A lot of care and pride went into this hand-crafted product, and we hope that you will enjoy growing your own fresh organic mushrooms.

You can expect to harvest a new crop of Lion's Mane Mushrooms every few weeks for the next two to three months by carefully following these simple instructions. This Mini-Farm is exactly identical to thousands of others in production on our mushroom farm. We use a process developed to yield as many mushrooms as possible, and therefore our Mini-Farms are very reliable. This growing kit is a specially formulated mixture of red oak saw dust and rice bran which has been fully impregnated with the culture ("mycelium") of the Lion's Mane Mushroom, which gives the substrate block its white color. With care, and under good conditions, this Mini-Farm should produce one to two pounds of these gourmet delicacies. Read these instructions carefully now, from start to finish!

#### Pre-Growth Storage

Place your Mini-Farm in a cool indoor location where it will receive some indirect light, and will also be protected from heat and drafts. Although the Lion's Mane mushroom can tolerate temperatures between 32°–85° F (or somewhat warmer for short periods), the very best results will occur between 50°–65° F. Above 70° the mushroom will appear unpredictably, and may be of lesser quality. Place the Lion's Mane box down so the farm informational side of the box (side of the

box with the picture of the farm) is on the bottom. Pull out the perforated side of the box and expose the inner Mini-Farm. Next with a sharp knife cut two vertical lines equally spaced apart along the length of the block (Figure 1). It is ok if the knife penetrates the surface of block, but no more than 1" to avoid damaging mushroom growth. Locate the extra plastic bag in your box, and with a pair of scissors cut 10 x-shaped holes about 1/2 inch size into one half of the bag. The small holes you make will allow the mushroom culture to breathe without drying out. Open the bag and tent it over the box with the newly cut x's on the back side of your box. Leave the uncut side of the bag loose in the area where the mushrooms will grow.

#### Storage when MiniFarm is Growing

Watch your Mini-Farm daily for the first signs of activity. Within a week or two you will begin to see some tiny, whitish "pinheads" appearing on the upper surface of the substrate. These will grow rapidly and soon will have the appearance of tiny Lion's Mane Mushrooms. When mushrooms start to develop begin lightly misting the walls of the plastic tent (not on the block directly) once or twice a day. If the bag is not perforated enough, or soon enough, the mushrooms inside will appear long and tubular, with tiny caps. Correct this by moving the air hole side of the plastic bag closer to the mushroom growing area of the box (and mist more). Similar problems may develop if there is a lack of light so just move the farm closer to the light source.

#### Harvesting

You will be amazed at how rapidly your Lion's Mane Mushrooms will grow; they should double in size every 24 hours, unless it is too cold. Lion's Mane Mushrooms can grow to be several inches across, but they are at their flavorful prime when the mushrooms are between one and two inches across. Lift the plastic tent from around the Mini-Farm and keep to use again. You want to pick Lion's Manes by grasping the base of the mushroom between your fingers, then pulling them free leaving as much of the block intact as possible. Your Lion's Mane crop can be stored in the refrigerator for up to one week in a brown paper bag until you are ready to eat them, but they are delicate mushrooms and are definitely at their best when fresh off the farm.

#### Second and Third Flush Production

After the first crop has been harvested, use a clean knife to lightly scrape off any "runts" that were left behind, position the plastic tent so as the air holes are to the back side of the growing area and give the inner plastic wall another good misting. Tighten the bag and tuck any excess plastic under the box leaving the growing area void of space and air. Return the Mini-Farm to its cool, protected

spot and allow it to rest for a few days. Start watching for your Mini-Farm to begin to produce its next crop of Lion's Mane Mushrooms. Follow the above steps just as you did for the first crop. The entire crop cycle can be repeated every one to two weeks. Our Mini-Farm will typically produce three or more crops when the above steps are followed.

#### Soaking the Mini-Farm

With time your Mini-Farm may lose so much moisture on one side that it will stop producing mushrooms. If two weeks pass without a new crop emerging, you can try this: open the box and take out the bag of substrate. Flip around the top of the bag to expose the opposite long side of the block. This is the new growing side. Place the substrate bag back into the box, recut two new vertical lines and restart the growing process.

#### Block Disposal

Even with the best of care, the Mini-Farm will eventually have transformed its entire food reserve into the Lion's Mane Mushroom you have enjoyed. Now it may be retired to your garden where it will enrich your soil. Should you wish to get another Mushroom Mini-Farm we have more Lion's Mane, and if you would like to try something new we have Shiitake, Yellow Tree Oyster, Pink Tree Oyster, and Tree Oyster Mushroom Mini-Farms as well.