

Types of Worms:

Most common worms are earth worms and Red Wigglers.

Earth worms consume mostly humus and soil while the Red Wigglers are the champions of composting.

Suitable Food:

- Fruit/vegetables
- Paper napkins
- Tissues
- Pizza boxes
- Eggshells/cartons
- Coffee grinds/filters
- Tea bags
- Moldy cheese
- Bread crust
- Small meat scraps
- And especially partially decomposed grass and leaves
- Pasta
- Glossy flyers
- Soaked cardboard strips
- Lint
- Vacuum dust
- Hair clippings

For more information on worm composting visit
www.on.ec.gc.ca/community/classroom/c7-compost-e.html
www.gardeners.com

Step 1 unit assembly

Your 'Worm Farm' consists of 9 major parts:

- 1 Base 'A'
 - 3 working trays 'B'
 - 1 roof section 'C'
 - 1 spigot assembly 'D'
 - 3 metal screens
- Also included:
- 1 c•ir brick
 - 1 layers worth of shredded newsprint (2.5q)

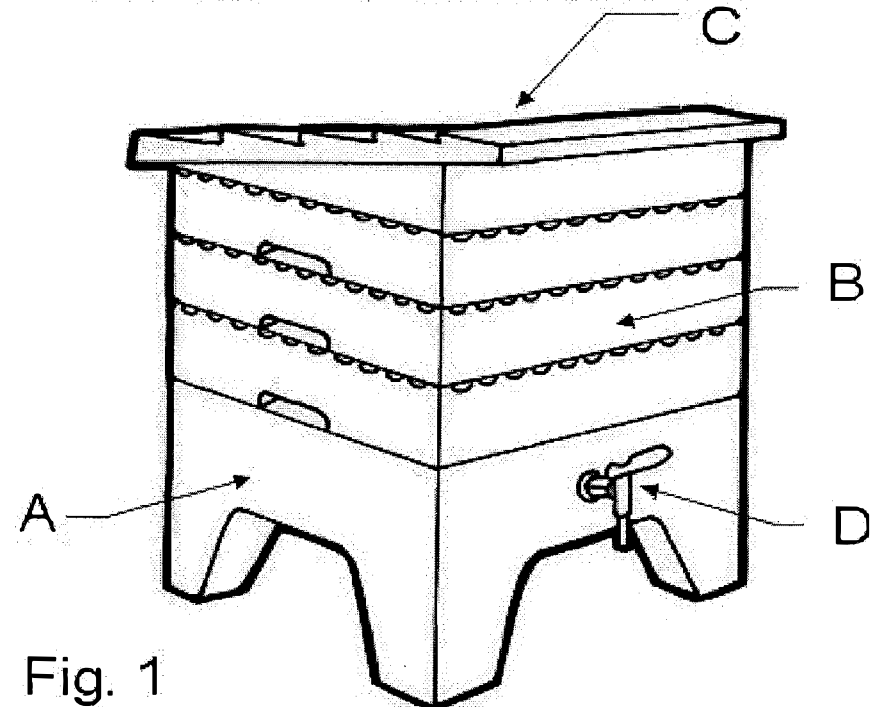


Fig. 1

Note: there are no tools required for assembly

1. Attach spigot 'D' to the hole in base 'A' (Fig.1). Remove nut and washer, insert spigot attach nut and washer to the inside of the base.
2. Place a **metal screen** in the bottom of each working tray 'B' (Fig. 1)

You are now ready to begin!

Step 2 'The Farm'

1. Build a bed for your worms in the **bottom working tray 'B'**. First soak a sheet of newsprint in water and place over screen in bottom of tray, (**initial set up only**).

Soak 1/3 of the 'coir brick' (incl.) in 1.5 litres of water. Mix the moistened coir with one third of the shredded newsprint* (incl.) *(soaked in water approx. 30 min). Spread evenly over the bottom.

Managing Moisture and Airflow

Keeping a balanced moisture level is critical to healthy reproductive worms. 55% moisture is the ideal amount necessary for the composting process.

The moisture squeeze test:

Take a handful of compost material, squeeze it as hard as you can with both hands.

If a few drops of water escape or water forms between your fingers, you have 55% moisture.

A stream of water indicates your composter is too wet. Any less, it is too dry.

If your 'Farm' is too wet:

Add dry fibers, such as coir (coconut fibre), peat moss, shredded paper, egg cartons, cardboard etc. To absorb excess moisture.

If your 'Farm' is too dry:

Re-cycle water from the collection tray through the system, add wet fibers, or pour in a small amount of fresh water.

Worm Farm Chores

Managing Pests:

Small gnat like flies may decide to invade your farm.

There are 2 solutions:

A. Mix 1 tblsp. of vinegar with 3 tblsp. of water, 4 drops of liquid dish soap and a pinch of baker's yeast in a small jar. Place jar just below the surface of the bedding.

B. Place small pieces of banana in a slightly larger jar. Make a 'paper cone' with a tiny hole at the tip. Tape the cone tip down into the jar so th tip is approx. 1/4" from the bottom. Seal the rim with tape.

Note: Make sure your worm bed is light and airy. Avoid a large build up of 'food' which produces excess moisture and slows the composting process, possibly reducing the worm population

- 2.** Add 2 pound of worms.
- 3.** Place roof onto the tray and let worms adjust to their new environment for 2 days.

Note: Do not over feed. Refer to the suitable foods list at the back of these instructions.

- 4.** After 2 days begin adding food slowly, mixing it in with the bedding, until level with the top edge of the tray.
- 5.** Once all food is consumed in the first tray repeat step '1' for the remaining trays ensuring that the food/bedding mixture is in contact with the tray above

Note: Do not place a sheet of moistened newsprint over screens of the subsequent trays.

Note: worms may sometimes fall into the 'base. Which is another reason to drain it frequently.

Things to Remember

1. Do not overfeed, excess food creates excess water which will slow down the composting process and reduce the worm population.
2. In order for the worms to migrate stop feeding in the lower tray adding food to the upper trays only.
3. Drain 'base' as necessary..
4. To speed the compost process you can create a slurry of food scraps in your blender mixed with equal parts of fiber (newsprint, napkins, etc.)
5. Add baking yeast to the top tray. Yeast contains vitamins needed for healthy worms.
6. Your 'Worm Farm' should be placed in a covered location ranging from (54 °F. to 70 °F.).
On hot days (98 °F.) Make sure your farm stays moist.

How Your Worm Farm Works

Worms are an efficient way to quickly compost a variety of food and other scraps found in the home.

At this stage your worms are busy in the lower tray converting the 'food' into rich castings. Normally 1 pound of worms can convert up to a ½ pound of food per day.

Once the worms convert food in the lower tray they will begin to migrate upward to the next tray.

At this time, you can now remove the lower tray, empty, clean, replace bedding/food and rotate it to the top of the stack. The worms now in the upper tray are returned to bottom to begin their process over.

Frequently drain excess liquid from the 'base' 'A' known as 'Worm Tea' through the 'spigot' 'D'.

Mixing this run off with equal parts water provides an excellent fertilizer for watering plants.