

## **Facts about Worm Farming**

The number of worms per kilo vary from 800 (fish bait size) to 4000 /kg (pit run, i.e. mix of babies and adults).

Worms ingest their own body weight in food every 2 - 3 days or more, depending on the type of food.

Worms will **NOT** eat weed seeds, plant roots or people, (while they are still alive!).

Worms will eat anything that has lived and died (organic matter).

## **Common food on the worm's menu**

- Soak, drain, then shred envelopes, newspapers, cardboard and serve neat or mixed with vegie waste
- Vegetable scraps finely chopped or blended in a food processor (add a little water) are quickly consumed. Worms prefer to dine in the dark, so it's best to bury the scraps
- Worms will eat meat; we all become worm food eventually!!
- Old, worn out natural fibre clothing such as cotton T-shirts, woollen jumpers, denim jeans
- Bird seed husks
- Bio-solids
- Animal manure - dog, rabbit, guinea pig, horse, cow, pig
- Worms do like citrus, onion & garlic, but only in smaller quantities

## **Hints and Tips**

### **Keeping Cool**

On really hot days, remove the lid, so the hot air can escape. Place a frozen bottle of water under the carpet. Crack the lid a little, and as the ice melts, the cool water will drip in the farm and keep your worms cool.

### **Going Away**

If you are going away, you can give your worms some extra food before you leave. Place some shredded paper and/or compost, sheep poo or horse poo in the worm farm. Make sure it is moist first. Do not give them excess food scraps. This will only cause a rotten stinking mess. It is a good idea if you can get someone to water them while you are away. Alternatively, you can tip a bag of sheep or horse poo in a moist or reticulated part of your garden, remove your worms from their home and place them where the manure is.

When you get back from holidays, tip a fresh / new bag of horse or sheep poo in the same spot and within a few days the worms will collect in the new food, you can collect them & return them to their home.



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# Frequently Asked Questions

- Q.** My worm farm seems to be infested by a very small red mite like insect. Is there any way to get rid of these without harming the worms?
- A.** The red mite are not a problem. They will not harm the worms, they will also help to break down the food. Red mites tend to come & go, appearing when particular types of food are used, (like yeast products). If you want to get rid of them, try sprinkling on some dolomite (garden lime).
- Q.** When I check my worm farm, there are worms on the inside of the lid and trays, are they trying to escape?
- A.** If there are masses of worms congregated together in the corners or up the sides of the farm, then this could indicate a problem with their bedding.  
if there is the odd worm here and there, they are probably just having a wander around, especially if the trays and lid are moist from condensation.
- Q.** I have had my farm operating for a while now, but it seems to be taking a long time to fill up with castings.
- A.** If you are feeding mostly food scraps, your farm will not produce a lot of solid castings, as most food scraps are 80-90% moisture. Rectify, by feeding bulky types of food to your worms, like shredded paper, manures, compost or straw.
- Q.** How do I keep ants out of my worm farm?
- A.** Stand the worm farm legs in containers of water  
& add a few drops of metho or kerosene. To prevent attracting ants bury food scraps completely in the bedding.



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