

WORM FARM- HOW WORMS WORK IN THE GARDEN!!!

PLAN A. Small worm farm for observing

Cut the top off a clear plastic soda bottle, tape the edge.

Pour in 2 inches gravel or stones for drainage (good way to get small rocks out of the yard!)

Then, add a 2 inch layer of sand, 2 inches of dirt. If you want, include a shredded newspaper "bedding" layer as would be done in a larger bin (see below).

Slightly dampen the soil. Put a few small pieces of banana peel or other vegetable scrap in the middle for worm food.

Continue with layers till near the top. Add worms (from the yard, or purchased wigglers), cover top with plastic wrap and tape, with a few air holes.

Tape black construction paper around bottle, and leave for a day or 2 -

When you take the paper off, you will see tunnels the worms have made, and the shifted and mixed layers. Great way to show how worms work in the garden!

When your children are done with the worms--together-- put them back in the garden.

PLAN B. Working worm bin.

This is for a larger a "working" worm bin in which worms steadily change food scraps (garbage like coffee grounds, fruit/ vegetable scraps, but no meat or fat or grease) and "bedding" into castings for the garden.

The bin container should be waterproof and well ventilated— worms need air. A vented top or a screen lid are fine.

The most common worm bedding for home bins is shredded newspapers- readily available for free. Worms through the mail usually ship in peat moss, which is also ok to put in the bin. Fill your bin nearly full with bedding.

Put some dirt in the bin too. Worms don't have teeth, so they need grit to help grind up their food. Rock dust, powdered limestone, or regular dirt work fine.

What worms? Worms from your yard don't work as well in a worm bin of bedding-- worms from the soil like to live in soil. For worm bins, red wigglers are better— order twice as many worms (by weight) as the amount of garbage you will put in per day. So if you'll put a half pound of garbage into the bin a day, start with a pound of worms.

Check every day or so. Use a spray bottle to keep the bedding moist but not water

logged-- just right for worms. Loosen the bedding occasionally with a hand fork. Add food scraps for the worms to convert—you can add them every day, but observe to see how your worms are keeping up, and add less if the scraps aren't being worked on enough.

Keep the bin in a spot that's about 60 to 70 degrees. Leaving the bin outside in the summer sun will cook your worms. You may want to put it on a wheeled cart or dolly since it will be heavy. The bin should smell earthy but not rotten; if it starts to smell bad, add more bedding, check that it's damp but not soggy, and make sure your worms are ok.

As the worms make castings, remove some of that for your garden. Add more bedding and continue to add food scraps to keep the bin going.

Source(s):

A: Barb Shelby <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20080613124852AA7qmRu>