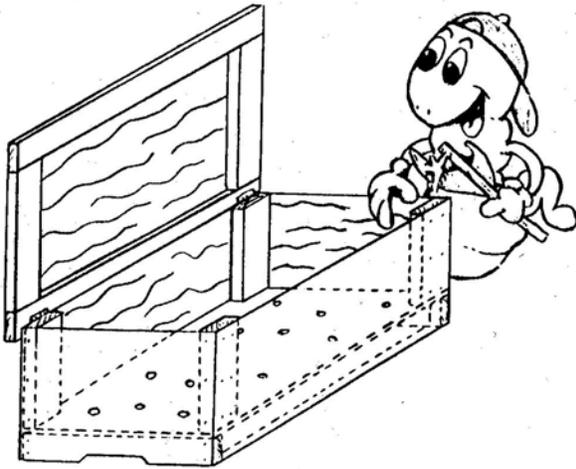


WORM COMPOSTING BINS MADE EASY



Compost has proven to be extremely successful when used as a natural fertilizer on house plants, gardens and flower beds. One composting method, known as vermicomposting, utilizes the natural functions of redworms to produce a compost rich in nutrients - all from your kitchen "waste!"

This information sheet is designed to accompany the "Digger Downunder" Guide to Vermicomposting provided by the City of Lawrence. It will help you decide what *size* and *kind* of bin best fits your home composting needs...easily.

HOW EASY IS EASY?

The easiest bin setup that we recommend is a plastic tub (e.g. Rubbermaid) which are most commonly used for storage. These are strongly recommended because they are lightweight, durable, available in a variety of sizes, and inexpensive. A 10-gallon tub, found at any discount store, is a perfect size for a two person household, providing 2 square feet of surface area and an 8-inch depth.

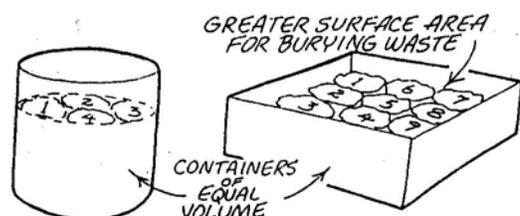
The only "construction" required for these boxes is to drill $\frac{1}{2}$ " holes in the sides and the bottom for ventilation. Once drilled, the plastic tubs must be placed on boards or another form of support to allow air to circulate underneath. Redworms do not usually crawl out of the holes. However, small amounts of bedding or worm castings may fall out. It is therefore a good idea to place a sheet of plastic or a tray beneath your bin.

If you are improvising with containers on hand, be sure that the one you select has not been used to store chemicals (such as pesticides) which may kill the worms. Some worm growers suggest that new plastic containers should be scrubbed with a strong detergent, then thoroughly rinsed prior to placing worms in them.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...

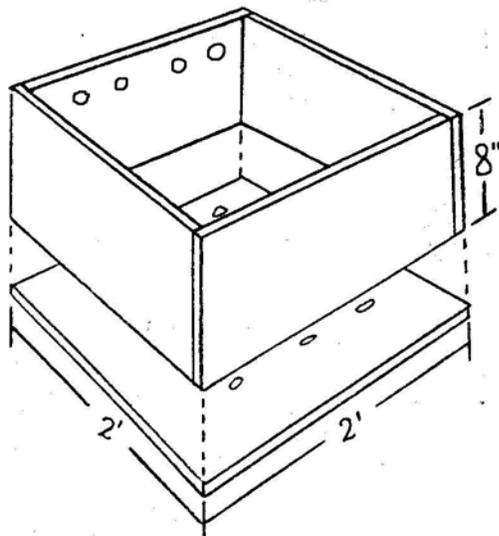
The container you choose needs to be shallow (8-12" deep) for three reasons:

- 1 Redworms tend to be surface feeders.
- 2 The bedding can pack down in a deep container, compressing the air out of the bottom layers and making it more likely to develop foul-smelling anaerobic conditions.
- 3 More surface area allows more locations to bury waste on a rotating basis and better ventilation.



WANT TO BUILD YOUR OWN?

2 PERSON BOX



MATERIALS AND TOOLS REQUIRED:

2 PERSON BOX

4 pieces $\frac{5}{8}$ " CDX plywood ($23\frac{3}{8}$ " x 8")
2 pieces $\frac{5}{8}$ " CDX plywood (24" x 24")
36 2" ardox nails, hammer, drill with $\frac{1}{2}$ " bit
2 hinge kits

4-6 PERSON BOX

2 pieces $\frac{5}{8}$ " CDX plywood ($35\frac{5}{8}$ " x 12")
2 pieces $\frac{5}{8}$ " CDX plywood ($23\frac{3}{8}$ " x 12")
2 pieces $\frac{5}{8}$ " CDX plywood (24" x 36")
38 2" ardox nails, hammer, drill with $\frac{1}{2}$ " bit
2 hinge kits

* Ardox nails have a spiral shape which increases their holding power, particularly important for wood which is alternately wet and dry.

This figure shows how to interlock the corners for greater strength. Each side should be nailed with about four nails. Next, secure the bottom to the sides using five to seven nails per side. There should be twelve $\frac{1}{2}$ " holes drilled into the bottom, which will require you to place the bin on boards, legs, or casters for proper ventilation. Holes near the top of the box help release hot air in the summer. The materials list provided allows for a lid, which is the same size as the bottom, to be hinged onto the bin. If you would like a slightly more secured lid, we recommend attaching some trim to the edges of the lid so that they overlap the sides. Costs for construction are dependent on current lumber costs.

HOW LONG WILL A WOODEN BOX LAST?

This is a common question, and we have found that used continuously, without ever letting the box dry out, unfinished wooden boxes should last two to three years. Longevity can be increased by letting the box dry out for several days between set-ups.

PLACES TO BUY REDWORMS:

M&J Worm Ranch
216 S. West St.
Valley Center, KS 66407
(316) 755-4826

Rising Mist
PO Box 70
406 Anderson
Belvue, KS 66407
(785) 456-6725

NOTE: One pound of redworms is a good amount with which to start. Worms can eat their own weight in food per day, but in the box you must also account for the bedding. (e.g. 1 lb. would be adequate for 3-5 lbs. of food waste per week, which is the average for a two person household).

Refer to our website or call us for more information on waste reduction, recycling, and composting: 832-3030, www.LawrenceRecycles.org.