

BUILD YOUR OWN COMPOST BIN/WORM FARM!



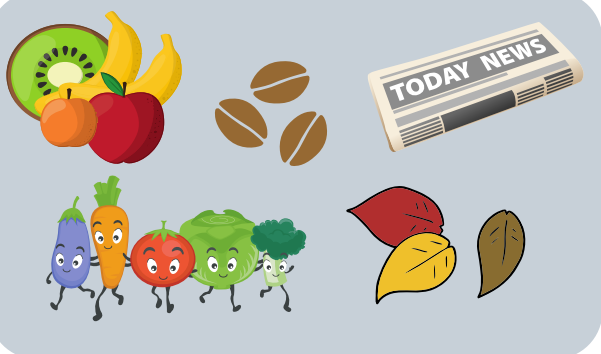
Medium Scale

Materials

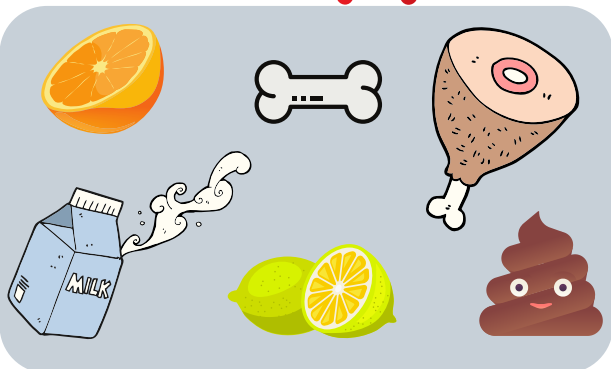
- Two stacking containers and a lid.
 - Wood, plastic, and Styrofoam boxes work.
 - Size depends on how much waste you produce.
- A drill or anything you can use to make holes in your containers.
- "Bedding" and newspaper
- Worms!
 - Red wigglers or tiger worms are the best for compost.

WHAT TO FEED YOUR WORMS...

YES!



NO



Instructions

1. Drill holes in container #1 every 3 or 4 cm, lots of holes to allow for drainage into container #2. Drill extra holes in the lid of container #1 to provide aeration.
2. Line container #1 with newspaper flat in the bottom of the container.
3. Stack containers, placing container #1 on top of container #2. Container 2 will collect any fluids that leak and this can be used as fertilizer for your plants! (We recommend watering it down about 10/1, or 1 part leachate for every 10 parts of water).
4. Introduce "bedding" - about 10 cm thick layer of shredded newspaper, or a combination of soil, compost and newspaper.
5. Introduce worms. Bury them in the bedding and gently aerate the soil.
6. Cover your worms with a layer of newspaper.
7. Wait! Give your worms a few days to settle in before you start feeding them!
8. Start adding kitchen scraps to the worm bin, and remember to place newspaper on top of your worms and scraps to keep moisture in and minimize flies!

NOW WHAT? WAIT AND AERATE!

Then... don't be afraid to get your hands dirty! After several weeks you can harvest the fertile compost! Take a week or two long break on feeding the worms before you plan to harvest. One good strategy for pre-harvest is to only put food on one side of the worm farm so that worms will congregate on that side. Then you can harvest the vermicompost (really amazing fertile soil) from the other half!

Smelly? It will have a musty, EARTHY kind of smell, but it shouldn't be foul and you shouldn't be able to smell it when the lid is on. The MOST COMMON reason that a worm farm smells is OVERFEEDING. For help troubleshooting your compost pile, reach out to info@foodliteracyproject.org.

COMPOST EXPERIMENT!

Small Scale

Materials

- Empty 2-liter soda bottle (make sure it is clear!)
- Scissors
- Raw food scraps (vegetable/fruit peels, tea bags, coffee grounds, raw leftovers)
- Soil
- Water
- Spray bottle



Instructions

1. Remove the label and rinse your soda bottle. Cut the top off the bottle (the end with the lid, leaving at least 2/3 of the bottle intact).
2. Throw a handful of soil into the bottom of the bottle. Follow this with a handful of food scraps. Avoid things like meat, dairy, citrus and onion for this experiment!
3. Repeat this process until the bottle is full, finishing with a layer of soil. Once your bottle is full, spray the bottle with water (it shouldn't be too wet, but it should be damp).
4. Place your composter in a sunny spot. When the top soil dries out, you should spray it with water to maintain a constant level of moisture.
5. Watch and wait as your food scraps decompose and turn to soil. You will need some patience - the whole process will take about 8 weeks. Take photos of the bottle once a week so that you can compare changes that take place from week to week.
6. Want to take it a step further? Add some "Green and Brown" materials to your bottle, exploring the impact of nitrogen and carbon on the decomposition process.

