



# Worm Farming - Fact Sheet

## What is a worm farm?

A worm farm is a community of worms established as a method of recycling food and some other organic wastes into natural fertiliser products. A worm farm can be purchased or home-made and is ideal for those with small gardens, courtyards or balconies, or for a school or office environment.

## Why start a worm farm?

Worm farming allows us to recycle our food scraps and significantly reduce the amount of organic waste sent to landfill as part of our everyday rubbish. By reducing organic waste to landfill we can reduce the potential for landfills to create liquid 'leachate' which can pollute our streams, oceans and underground water, and reduce the production of methane gas which is a powerful greenhouse gas.

**"Worm farms recycle your food waste into ideal natural fertilisers to improve the health of your garden"**

A worm farm produces vermicast, a soil-like material, and a 'juice' which are both nutrient rich and make ideal natural fertilisers to improve the health of the plants in your garden.

Establishing and maintaining a worm farm is great fun and an excellent way to educate children about our natural world while touching on a myriad of topics including maths, spelling (hermaphrodite), art, biology and soil chemistry. In addition, managing a worm farm may also provide your children, or students, with a sense of responsibility both for their own actions and the world we live in.

## How to set up a worm farm

- The bottom tray is used for catching water that comes through the worm farm. It is recommended you do not use the tap provided. Just put a bucket under the hole to catch the brown liquid coming out. Use the legs which come with the worm farm or use a milk crate to raise it.
- The first tray with holes in the floor is the home base for the worms. Fill this up with good compost, wet it well and then put in your worms. This is their home. From here they will feed on the layers above them.
- Now place the next tray (with holes), on top of the home tray. Ensure the bottom of the empty tray is touching the soil/compost in the home tray. If ever a gap appears between trays you must top up the home tray with some extra compost or potting mix. This contact ensures that the worms can move easily between the home tray and the feeding tray.
- When adding a new feeding tray always get a few handfuls of soil or mature compost or potting mix and throw in to the empty tray (once in position) to join up the new tray, with the food in the current tray.
- For the final step, get one of the new Tumbleweed Worm Blankets from Bunnings or other hardware, or use an old Hessian bag, as a cover over the top of all fresh food scraps. When feeding the worm farm always lift out/up the worm blanket.

For more information visit [www.ecohouseandgarden.com.au](http://www.ecohouseandgarden.com.au), email us at [info@ecohouseandgarden.com.au](mailto:info@ecohouseandgarden.com.au) or contact us via the Kimbriki Resource Recovery Centre on 02 9486 3512 (Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday).





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## Worm facts

- Worms are soil makers and are a key part of healthy soils. Looking after the worm communities in our worm farms assists us to improve the soils in our gardens and to encourage a healthy natural population of worms in this environment.
- Worms eat organic matter and turn it into vermicast, a type of humus - the richest and most important part of all soils.
- Vermicast has a high level of microbial activity, and when added to soil, increases the microbial activity of the soil. This assists plants to strengthen their immune systems.
- Worms in our soils dig holes that allow the rainwater to move deeper into the soil, down where the roots of plants are, ensuring water is getting to the place it is needed most.
- Worm holes allow soils to breathe ensuring plants are healthy and vibrant.
- Worms increase the water holding capacity of the soil.
- Worms increase the amount of minerals available to plants in the soil.

*To learn more about worm farming come along to one of Kimbriki Eco House and Garden's [The Wonderful World of Worms](#) workshops.*

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