



Riverton Organic Growers Fact Sheet | [www.sces.org.nz](http://www.sces.org.nz)

## BUILDING A WORM FARM

**It's fun, easy and a great way to turn your household scraps into rich soil.**

A worm farm can be made from any type of container as long as it is large enough to hold enough worms to take care of your organic household waste. One kilo of worms will get through approx 500gms per day. Some examples of containers may be:

- An old bath
- Drums cut lengthways
- Square wooden box

### THE BEDDING

Once you have the container together you will need to provide some bedding for the worms to live in. A layer of compost with some straw or a layer of wet scrunched up newspaper are to the worms liking.

### THE WORMS

Tiger or Red worms are the type you will need for composting your food waste. You can get them from someone else who has a worm farm or buy them from some garden centres or Environment Centres. You will need 300g approx. Place on top of the bedding and leave for a week before you start to feed them. This lets them settle into there new home.

### FEEDING THE WORMS

Feed in a different spot each week so after 6 weeks you should be able to revisit the first place as it should be finished by then - if not feed a little less until numbers of worms build up more. Make your own rotation plan.

### THE FOOD

Worms will eat anything that was once alive. This may include:-

Fruit and vege scraps	Dead or dying plant material	Coffee grounds	Crushed egg shells
Horse and animal manure	Newspaper	Cereals and grains	

### CHECK THE PH

Give a handful of lime each month to keep the worm farm sweet and if you have no Worms have no teeth so the food needs to start breaking down before they will eat it.

### A COVER

Cover with wet newspaper or cardboard, a piece of plastic and old carpet or underfelt. Worms like to be dark. Finally a lid to keep out the vermin. If using a plastic drum drill holes in the bottom for draining the drum. Place your worm farm near the kitchen in semi/shade as they do like some sun but do not let dry out. If you have vermin it means that the farm is too dry.

### HARVESTING VERMICAST

Feed one end of the farm and after 3 weeks the worms should have moved to the end where the food is, leaving the other end ready to take out and begin spreading around the garden. Another option is to spread some wind cloth on a flat surface. Tip the worms and vermicast on the top then start to scrape off the vermicast and the worms will go down under the cloth to get away from the light. When you only have worms left start another worm farm.

### TO USE VERMICAST

Vermicast may be applied as a liquid fertilizer by mixing with water to a weak tea colour. Plants absorb this liquid rapidly. Another way – one handful around a plant – mulch and water.

Potting mix: one part vermicast two parts compost.