

Feeding the Worms in a Worm Farm

Naturally composting waste, providing an organic matter that enriches soil and even supplying hobbyists and fisherman with live bait. These are all reasons for worm farming. Taking care of the worms in a worm farm is typically quite easy but there some guidelines to follow. Proper feeding is important for the health of the worms, and therefore important for the health of the farm.

Worms are fed a variety of food items, and nonfood items, for composting. Some food type items that can be offered are fruits, vegetables, greens, bread products, cereals, tea bags, coffee grounds and filters and egg shells. The worms will eat just about anything so it is imperative to know which foods are appropriate and why.

Fruits and vegetables are easily composted by the worms. The important thing to remember when serving fruits and vegetables is the size of the portions. Fruit pieces should be cut down to 1/2 inch pieces or slices. Smaller pieces will be consumed more quickly. Food blended up with water will also help the worms find the food and consume it faster.

Fruits and vegetables are highly nutritious. Worms that are fed an appropriate diet will in turn produce a nutrient rich substance that is beneficial to crops, gardens, flower beds and even indoor flower pots. Some nonfood items that can be offered to worms for composting are paper products, cotton rags, hair clippings, leaves and soaked cardboard. A pizza box that has been torn up and soaked is a wonderful treat for worms.

When offering leaves to a worm farm, be careful to only use products that have never been treated with chemicals. For the safety of the worms, grass clipping and other yard clippings should be avoided incase chemicals have been used.

Dog and cat droppings can be used in a worm farm with care. Cats and dogs that have been dewormed recently will still have the substance within their bodies. The medicine used for deworming can be excreted in the droppings. If fed to the worms, the droppings can kill the worms quickly. If a pet has been dewormed recently, avoid using the droppings in the worm farm.

Care should also be taken when offering cat droppings from a litter box. Inorganic litters are unsafe for the worms. If your plan is to use the worms to compost the droppings, using a natural and organic litter will keep the worms happy.

While there are many foods that can be offered readily, there are also those

that should be avoided. Care should always be taken with items that have been treated with chemicals, medications or other substances that may prove harmful.

Meats should not be offered to the worms in a worm farm. Being voracious eaters, the worms will gladly consume whatever meat is offered. The problem with meat is with the pests it will attract. Flies and maggots will be found in a worm farm that uses meat and the best way to eliminate these pests is to eliminate the use of meat.

Citrus fruits, onions and garlic should not be used either. The worms appear to find the smell of these items offensive. Most worms will try to escape the bin to get away from the smell. Dairy products will also attract unwanted guests into the worm farm. Another problematic issue with serving dairy products is the foul smell that is emitted as it rots.

Feeding worms is a pretty easy job. The key is to know which items are good and which are bad for the health of the worms. Another point to always remember is to not over feed. New worms should be fed in small amounts when they are becoming established within the farm. Once settled, the amount can be increased over time.

Over feeding leads to problems such as foul smells and pests. Keep feeding down to a minimum, offering new food only when the old food supply is running low. Worms can eat over half their body weight in food per day. The worm population can double every few months. Overfeeding can cause a problem but keep an eye on the population as well to be sure that underfeeding isn't an issue.

A well fed worm population is a happy worm population. Happy worms produce a lot of naturally composted, healthy castings for soil enrichment therefore keeping the worm farmer happy as well.