

Q: Name 3 things that compost worms eat.

Worms eat fruit (except citrus), vegetables, coffee grounds, tea bags, crushed egg shells, leave and shredded unbleached paper/cardboard.

Q: Name 3 things that compost worms don't eat.

Don't feed your worms citrus, oily foods, meat, poultry, fish, dairy, vinegar/salad dressings or sugar.

Q: How do worms breathe?

A: Through their skin.

Q: True or false – A worm can reproduce on its own.

A: True – a worm has the organs of both a male and a female.

Q: How much food can a compost worm eat in a day?

- a. Half its body weight in food.
- b. Equal to its body weight in food.
- c. Double its body weight in food.

A: A worm can eat equal to its weight in food (and may even be made to eat more given the desired conditions).

Q: How quickly can a compost worm population grown in a well-maintained worm farm?

- a. Double every 2-3 months.
- b. Double every 6 months.
- c. Double every year.

A: Worm populations in a well-maintained worm farm will double every 2-3 months. Adult worms can produce up to 12 babies per week.

Q: Why should we feed our organic waste to compost worms?

A: We can reduce the amount of waste going into landfill, reduce our Greenhouse Gas emissions and create worm castings to help enrich our soil so we can better grow plants.

Q: Can you add eggshells to a worm farm?

A: Yes! Eggshells (crushed) will maintain the worm farm at a safe pH level. You can also add shredded egg cartons if the cardboard hasn't been bleached or coloured.

Q: What happens if your worm farm starts to stink?

A: A healthy worm farm or compost bin doesn't stink.

There is too much 'wet stuff' (nitrogen) and the contents have become acidic. Add some 'dry stuff' (carbon) like dry leaves, shredded newspaper, shredded brown paper bags to balance the pH levels in the worm farm. The ratio should be about 70% nitrogen to 30% carbon.

Q: What happens if you see worms around the lid of your farm?

A: If worms are making a run for it, the conditions in the worm farm need adjusting. Most likely, your worm farm is too wet and has become acidic. Add some carbon like dry leaves, shredded newspaper and brown paper bags to balance the pH level.

Q: Can you put earthworms in a worm farm?

A: Earthworms taken from the garden are used to eating organic matter like leaves from trees. It is best to buy some special 'compost worms' that can eat our food waste like Red or Tiger Worms.

Q: How are worm babies born?

A: After mating, both worms form a capsule (or cocoon) containing up to 20 eggs. Each capsule produces around 4 baby worms. Babies hatch after about 30 days and are ready to breed 55 to 70 days later.

Q: How many species of earthworms are there in Australia?

There are 350 species of earthworms in Australia and most of those found on farms and in gardens are introduced species.

Q: Do worms have eyes?

A: No. They sense light as well as vibrations and temperature through special organs in their skin.

Q: What can you do with worm castings?

A: Worm castings can be used in the garden in the same way as compost or mixed with commercial potting mixes to pot plants. However, do not remove *all* of the castings as they help breeding.

Q: What are worm castings?

A: Worms turn your food leftovers into a rich soil-like substance called ‘castings’. This type of fertiliser is also called ‘vermicompost’.

Q: What do worms need to survive?

A: Moisture as they breathe through their skins and need to keep moist. Drainage as they can suffocate if it gets too wet. A dark, cool place to live as worms don’t like direct light or too much heat.

Q: How many hearts does a worm have?

A: Worms don’t actually have a heart but they have an organ that acts similar to a heart called an ‘aortic arch’. Earthworms have five of these! They need at least five arches to pump blood around their bodies.

Q: How do worms move?

A: Worms use their muscles and four pairs of setae (pronounced “see-tee”) which look like a bunch of small hairs or bristles. Their setae act like the brakes on a car, helping them to slow down or stop. Muscles go in circles around their bodies and some run the length of their bodies.