



pramp

PEACE RIVER AREA  
MONITORING PROGRAM

Vermicomposting is a great way to use kitchen waste and avoid adding to the landfill.



# Vermicomposting with Red Wiggler Worms

Vermicompost is the product of a composting process using various species of worms, usually Red Wigglers, to create a natural fertilizer called vermicast. Red Wigglers digest food waste and bedding materials and excrete worm castings.

## Why Vermicompost?

Compostable materials such as paper, yard trimmings, food waste and wood waste account for more than half of our waste. When fresh green-waste from the kitchen or landscape are sent to decompose in a landfill, they release high amounts of methane gas.

As a worm eats its way through vegetable scraps, it creates digested organic matter rich in nutrients and beneficial microbes. These microbes control harmful bacteria, aid plant growth, help fight off disease and nourish plants with readily absorbed nutrients.

## How to Vermicompost

**Bedding** - Fill your bin with enough shredded paper, about 3" deep, and add more each time you feed the worms. Almost any kind of paper works, but avoid heavy, glossy or colored paper.

**Feeding** - Feed chunks of leftover fruits and vegetables, coffee grounds, tea bags and eggshells. Do not feed meat, dairy, fatty, oily or fermented products. Once per week add a layer of bedding, add food then another layer of bedding. Start by adding foods slowly and work up to more substantial amounts as the food disappears.



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**Managing** – Keep the bin at a temperature around 20°C and out of direct sunlight. A shady area in a garden, below the kitchen sink, or in a basement are all workable options. Worms benefit from the fewest disturbances possible. If there are too many worms in the bin, share extras with your friends!

**Harvesting** – Move everything – worms, castings, bedding, food – to one side of the bin. Pick out partially decomposed materials and push to the empty side. Place some food on top of the partially decomposed materials. Replace the lid and leave bin for a couple of weeks. During that time, the worms will migrate over to the new food. When the worms have moved to the other side you can harvest the worm castings (compost). Finally, add more bedding mixed with a small amount of the compost.

### Using Vermicompost

Vermicompost can be added to potting mix at a rate of 10% by volume or added directly into your garden; both options will provide plants with valuable organic matter, nutrients and a diversity of beneficial microbes.

### Troubleshooting

**Bins that are too wet generate foul odours or attract fruit flies.**

- Find a liner for the bin and drill a few holes in the bottom to avoid moisture gathering in the bottom
- Also avoid overfeeding to reduce chance of odours

**Bins that are too dry will reduce worm feeding and growth.**

- Spray a little water on the bedding

**Check these websites for more info and tips:**

- <https://morningchores.com/vermicomposting/>
- <https://www.planetnatural.com/worm-composting/>
- Search for “vermicomposting” on YouTube and Pinterest for great videos and other resources!

### Who Are We

The Peace River Area Monitoring Program (PRAMP) monitors emissions and air quality to ensure a healthy environment in the Peace River area.

PRAMP Outreach and Education offers presentations on air quality monitoring and vermicomposting to schools and community members.

### Find Out More

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