



Under What Conditions Do Redworms T-H-R-I-V-E?

Print this page for a handy reference.

T - Temperature

- Optimum is between 68° - 77°F
- At 40° F the worms are less active.
- Worms become stressed at 85° F.

Feeding too much can cause bin to heat up and kill worms or cause them to escape!

H - H₂O (Moisture)

- Optimum is between 75%-85% moisture.
- Bedding should have the same moisture as a wrung out sponge.
- Squeeze a handful of bedding, 1 or 2 drops should be released.
- Drainage is extremely important in any vermicomposting system.

R - Recycle Organic Material Only

Anything that was once alive and is now dead:

- | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------|----------------|
| • Fruits | • Coffee & Filters | • Beans |
| • Cereals | • Tea bags | • Breads |
| • Pastas | • Paper or cardboard - shredded | • Aged manures |
| • Egg shells | • Limited citrus | • Vegetables |

- No dairy, fish or meat products. Worms will eat it but these items can smell bad and attract pests.
- Oily or salty foods can harm worms.
- Recycle pet waste in a separate system.
- Add more food only when you see that the worms are completely involved in the food that is already there.
- For Indoor Composting – To help limit pests such as fruit flies, freeze or cook waste prior to feeding to worms.

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Feed in layers no thicker than 1 inch to avoid heating up the bin and baking your worms.
DO NOT OVERFEED!!

I - Invertebrates and Microbes Found in a Healthy System

Beneficial creatures that are harmless to you, your worms, and your plants:

- Enchytraeids or pot worms
- Flies and their larvae
- Bacteria (Aerobic)
- Fungi
- Gnats and their larvae
- Millipedes
- Molds (beware of allergies to spores)
- Mites
- Nematodes
- Protozoa
- Spiders
- Springtails

Invertebrates and Microorganisms to avoid:

- Anaerobic Bacteria - characterized by a bad smell, caused by too much moisture & or overfeeding (lack of oxygen) - aerate bedding ASAP
- Ants - bedding too dry
- Centipedes - carefully remove
- Beetles - remove
- Planarians or flat worms - remove & destroy

V - Ventilation

- All the creatures in the system need AIR and lots of it!

E - Environment

- pH 5.5 is preferred.
- Worms tolerate a range from pH 4 to pH 9.
- The worms are sensitive to light so keep it dark.
- Good bedding can be any combination of aged manures, shredded paper products, coir (coconut fiber), decomposing leaves, straw, wood chips, peat moss, a handful of soil to seed bin with microorganisms, etc.
- Worms can eat about 3 times their weight a week.
- Redworms mature in 8 weeks & double in biomass every 3-4 months under ideal conditions
- 1 mature worm could produce 96 worms in 6 months (2 cocoons x 24 weeks x 2 hatchlings)

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