

The bottom layer of upto 2 inches is filled up with broken bricks and topped with coarse sand to aid in drainage. Suitable soil where earthworms are found should be added to the pits as a second layer of 6-8 inches (hard clay or sandy soil should be avoided).

Large size adult worms are distributed uniformly in the soil bed. Fresh dung is then added over the soil layer and covered with straw or dry leaves. The pit is kept moist by periodic addition of water. Suitable material is put to cover the pit to protect from predators while allowing for aeration.

Water is added on alternate days in suitable quantities as per the water holding capacity of the soil. After about 2 weeks the earthworms adapt to the new environment. From this stage onwards 2 to 3 inches of waste materials comprising of fresh and dry leaves, vegetable waste and 10-15% of dung is added twice a week. After each fresh feeding the layers of feed must be turned for effective degradation and release of produced gases. This also helps in reducing temperature in the organic feed materials. The turning must be done carefully twice or thrice a week without disturbing the bed. The most suitable tool is

the long handled garden fork which would avoid injury to the worms during mixing.

Harvesting:

After about 2-3 months the pit gets more or less filled and the organic matter is well decomposed. Before harvest watering is stopped so that worms move to the soil bed. The decomposed waste is then transferred as a heap on a plain open surface under the sun. This allows the worms to move to the centre of the heap from where they are recovered and returned back to the pit. The compost is then dried and sieved through 3 mm mesh and then packed. The un-decomposed large matter is returned back to the pit and the process is thus repeated.

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VERMI (COMPOSTING TECHNOLOGY

“Use vermi-compost to prevent from ill effect on rapid use of chemical fertilizers”

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