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Vermicomposting

Get the whole family involved converting kitchen scraps into valuable worm compost and fertilizer for your houseplants & gardens.

Here's what you need:

- ❖ Plastic box (about 2 x2 feet for 2 people or 2 x3 for four people, 8 to 12 inches deep)
- ❖ One pound of red worms can process about a half pound of kitchen scraps per day
- ❖ Bedding of shredded paper or cardboard
- ❖ Kitchen scraps (lettuce leaves, broccoli stems, coffee grounds, egg shells)

To Build:

- Drill holes in the bottom of the container.
- Fill with moistened bedding. Add peat moss or leaf mold to increase water retention.
- Mix in a couple of handfuls of soil the worms need for grit. Occasionally add a pulverized egg shell for calcium and grit.
- Place red worms in bedding.
- Bury kitchen scraps, coffee grounds and filters with the bedding in one corner of the box and cover loosely with black plastic.
- Place the next installment of kitchen scraps next to the first. Continue this pattern placing the raw materials in an unused portion of the bedding.
- Moisten as needed to keep bedding moist but not soggy.
- Add fresh bedding every four months or when you have more worm castings than bedding.
- Dump the compost out of bin onto plastic sheet
- Create several cones of worm castings.
- Shine a light on the cones for 5 to 10 minutes to drive worms down into the piles
- Harvest the outer layer of castings and repeat until only the worms remain

Then start the process again by reassembling a fresh new worm bin. Use extra worms (these well-fed worms have been multiplying) for fishing, or share with friends who want to start their own worm farm.

Use worm casting as a slow release organic fertilizer for your container gardens. You will be amazed at the impact such little critters can have on your garden.