

HARVESTING PROCEDURES FOR ALL TYPES OF BINS

It is important to harvest your vermicast regularly, at least twice a year.
Leaving old cast in your habitat will cause your worm colony to dwindle.
You may not notice this until your population is greatly decreased or gone.
Also, don't harvest too early, remember that it takes approximately 6 months for food scraps to be completely broken down, looks can be deceiving.

Basic Bins:

There are 2 methods I recommend for basic bin harvesting: A: removing layers & B: pushing contents aside.

You may want to suspend feeding for a week prior to harvesting so as not to have "fresh food".

A:

- 1) Remove and set aside each layer separately: *don't worry about the worms*
 - The top cover layer: unprocessed food & paper
 - The middle layer of light brown & fluffy material: processed but not yet 'done'
 - The bottom layer of finished cast - which will have worms in it. .
- 2) Create a new shredded paper/Coir bedding layer in the empty bin. Mix in the just-removed middle layer; then the just-removed top layer. Add a shredded paper/ Coir layer. Feed and top with a new, 1-2" deep, shredded paper cover layer.
- 3) Removing worms from your cast: Follow "Separating Cast" below

B:

- 1) Gently push aside the contents of half of the bin, until dark brown finished cast is exposed. Pull out cast.
- 2) Add shredded paper & Coir bedding to the bottom of the bin before pushing layers back over to expose and harvest cast from the other half of the bin.
- 3) Removing worms from your cast: Follow "Separating Cast" below

Separating Cast from Worms

Under good light, create a "mound/s" of cast. Leave the mound/s alone for at least 3-5 minutes allowing worms to move into the center. Brush away cast from top and sides of the mound/s. As worms are exposed, push mound edges in to keep the mound compact. Allow to sit for a few minutes again and repeat the process until most cast is removed and the worms are massed in a ball. Return worms to your habitat, under the cover layer. *You can let cast sit for 3-4 weeks, moist & in the shade, allowing cocoons (eggs) and hatchlings to grow. Then separate them again repeating this step.*

Separating worms from cast will help you assess the health of your habitat, since you should see larger "balls" each time.

After the initial harvest from your Basic Bin or Hang Out, the next batch of cast will be ready in 3-4 mos.

Stacking Trays:

- 1) Approximately 1 week after feeding, pull the bottom tray, the 1st tray you started feeding, out & place it on top of the current feeding tray. Fluff cast & allow it to dry for a few days.
- 2) Harvest day: open the lid; disrupt a thin layer of cast; leave uncovered for 10+ minutes, *Disrupting & Good lighting while harvesting encourages worms to move down.*
- 3) Scrape away "worm free" layer of cast. Repeat process till the tray is nearly empty. Use this remaining cast to inoculate your new bedding in this tray.

Using Cast

Allow cast to "mature" for at least 1 month prior to use. Bacteria and any harmful pathogens will be processed and/or will die off during this time.

There will likely be worms from eggs or hatchlings, in the cast after the maturation period.

Cast is highly concentrated. Mix with topsoil (1part cast to 3-4 parts topsoil/dirt) & mulch to make a basic potting mix. May germinate directly into cast.

Cast is viable for up to 1 year after harvesting, as long as it is not: stored in an airtight container, dries out, or is stored in direct sunlight.

Happy worming! Visit or contact Kokua Worms with any inquiries or questions. LeslieFoster@kokuaworms.com 742 Queen St. 808-256-6717
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