



Quick Start Instructions:

CFT Wheelie Bin (Continuous Flow Through)

Starting The CFT & The Feeding Process

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How To Start A CFT, With A Proper Bedding Base

In the bottom of a new CFT you must put materials that will stay long enough to resist the worms and moisture.

These materials must last at least several months so that the CFT won't self harvest.
It may even take 6 to 12 months for the CFT to be ready for it's first harvest.

I've seen a lot of different ways used; some fail. Those that only use a few sheets of newspaper often "break through" early, sometimes causing a CFT to fully self harvest.

Cardboard Sheet Layer (Covers the harvest bars):

<THIS PART GOES IN DRY >

What you need to do is lay sheets of cardboard over the bars. The sheets should go up the wall either side of the base. Go one direction, then the other, over lapping as you go.

Make this layer about 10 sheets of heavy box cardboard thick - about 7 to 8 cm thick.

Bedding Layer: About 30cm deep.

<THIS BEDDING NEEDS TO BE MOISTENED >

This layer can be all cardboard, or 3/4 cardboard and 1/4 newspaper, a small proportion (say about 1/16 of the total) can be old leaves or well aged grass clippings.

If you have received bedding materials from me, use the shredded cardboard (moistened) then add the microbial starter (a mix of decomposed grass/leaves and material from an active worm farm, supplying a jump-starter of microbes).

Worm Farm Conditioner

Add a liberal dusting of worm farm conditioner to the surface and lightly water in.

Add Worms

Dig a hole in the middle of the material, tip the worms into the hole with the bedding they are packed with, then cover the worm pile back over with what you dug out.

How To Start A CFT Using Material From Another Worm Farm

If you are using the contents of one or several other smaller farms to start the CFT, I advise to do it this way: Start the cardboard over the bars like I described in the section above.

Then layer new bedding in, like I described in the above section, to a depth of 12 inches total.

THEN put your existing material and worms from your existing smaller farms in.

THEN put another 2 inches of bedding layers above that.

The idea is that we don't want the worms in the layer near the bars, eating that cardboard out.

Sure, your first harvest may be more compost than castings; but that's better than self harvesting from the worms eating out the cardboard too quickly.

How Soon Can I Start Feeding A CFT

You can do a light feeding immediately you set up the bedding; or when you put the worms in.

Feeding A CFT

A CFT is often fed once per week.

But if you didn't want to save your scraps up for a week you could feed every day if you wished. Just be careful that you aren't overfeeding, which will be harder to monitor with so many feedings per week.

In the beginning you have to be very careful you aren't over feeding.

Generally, once established, (with a stable base of 30 cm of processed material) a CFT can be fed more heavily.

How Much Food?

Depending on the starting population, your worms will need more or less food.

Each week you could try to feed 2 to 4 cups of kitchen scraps for every 200 grams of worms in your starter population.

The Pocket Feeding Method In A Wheelie Bin:

For a smaller CFT like the wheelie bin, I would always pocket feed into the corners, quite heavily.

Be careful not to over feed.

(The FIRST Feeding)

In one corner, dig a hole. In the bottom of the hole, put new DRY bedding in proportion to the food you are about to add. Add the food. Shake on a little conditioner. Cover back over with what you dug out.

Feed Again:

(The SECOND Feeding)

After a week feed in the next corner around.

(The Third Feeding)

Then on the next week you could feed again.

(The Fourth Feeding Onwards)

Then, wait until you see the worms have eaten the first feeding before you continue.

Keep doing this process, keeping a couple of feeds ahead of the worms.

Increasing The Feeding As Time Goes On

As time goes on, your population of microbes and worms increases. You will notice they eat it more quickly.

Try increasing the feeding volume a little, making sure the worms continue to keep up with your feeding.

Moisture: Remember, A CFT Must Not Be Kept Too Wet - We Want No Leachate

The Squeeze Test: Get a handful of bedding, squeeze it, you should get from 1 or 2; to 6-10 drops of water; to a small trickle out of it.