MAKE COMPOST USING WORMS!

**BENEFITS OF WORM COMPOSTING**
- An ideal method for people who have limited outdoor or patio space, especially those who live in apartments or condos.
- A fun individual, family, or community activity.
- Reduces waste (34% of the waste stream is yard and food waste) and methane gas, a powerful greenhouse gas that contributes to climate change.
- Improves soil and garden health.

**GOOD CRITTERS**
- Springtails, roly polys, earwigs, pot worms, millipedes, mites (except earthworm mites)

**BAD CRITTERS**
- Centipedes, fruit flies, earthworm mites, ants

**TROUBLESHOOTING**

1. **CHOOSE A BIN**
   - Purchase or build a bin. Key bin characteristics:
     - 8-12 inches deep
     - A lid to keep out flies and rodents and keep bin dark
     - Drainage holes on bottom (1/4 inches or smaller)
     - Tray/another bin layer to capture drainage

2. **CHOOSE A LOCATION**
   - Protect from direct rain, sun and excessive cold. Bin can be placed indoors or in sheltered outdoor area (e.g., shed, garage, balcony).

3. **BUILD YOUR WORM HOME**
   - **FOOD**
     - Most fruits and vegetables
     - Cereals and grains (e.g., oatmeal, pasta, rice)
     - Coffee filter paper, tea bags
     - Brown leaves, dead flowers
     - Eggshells, rock dust, crushed oyster shells
       (Worms have no teeth, so these help pulverize food.)
     - Breads
     - Ginger
     - Onions
     - Meat, poultry, fish
     - Dairy
     - Junk food (e.g., potato chips, candy, oils)
     - Citrus fruits (e.g., oranges, lemons, limes)

   - **USE**
     - Most fruits and vegetables
     - Cereals and grains (e.g., oatmeal, pasta, rice)
     - Coffee filter paper, tea bags
     - Brown leaves, dead flowers
     - Eggshells, rock dust, crushed oyster shells
       (Worms have no teeth, so these help pulverize food.)
     - Breads
     - Ginger
     - Onions
     - Meat, poultry, fish
     - Dairy
     - Junk food (e.g., potato chips, candy, oils)
     - Citrus fruits (e.g., oranges, lemons, limes)

   - **USE WITH CAUTION**
     - Breads
     - Garlic
     - Ginger
     - Potato skins
     - Onions
     - Coffee grounds

   - **DO NOT USE**
     - Meat, poultry, fish
     - Dairy
     - Junk food (e.g., potato chips, candy, oils)
     - Citrus fruits (e.g., oranges, lemons, limes)

4. **FEEDING TIPS**
   - Cut food into small pieces. Place food under bedding (but not buried in castings) in different part of the bin each time.
   - Feed worms every day, or twice or once a week. There is no strict schedule. Feed worms just ahead of their rate of consumption.

5. **OTHER CRITTERS**
   - **Good**
     - Springtails, roly polys, earwigs, pot worms, millipedes, mites (except earthworm mites)
   - **Bad**
     - Centipedes, fruit flies, earthworm mites, ants

   *"Good" critters do not hurt worms. There are different ways to handle "bad" critters, depending on what they are.*

6. **HARVEST THE CASTINGS**
   - Worm compost (castings) is dark brown, rich, and moist.
   - For single-tray bin, move contents of bin to one side. Add fresh bedding and food to empty side. Worms will migrate to "new" side. Collect castings in "old" side.
   - For multi-tray bin, add new tray with fresh food and bedding. Worms will migrate up to new tray. Collect castings in bottom tray.

7. **USE IT AS**
   - Planting mix, but not as the only planting medium
   - Soil conditioner
   - On lawns, to base of vegetable plants, or into soil around trees/shrubs
   - **PLANTING TIPS**
     - Compost (castings) can be used in so many places! Here are some ideas:
     - Planting mix, but not as the only planting medium
     - Soil conditioner
     - On lawns, to base of vegetable plants, or into soil around trees/shrubs

8. **TRASH AND TRASHED**
   - The bin is designed to be "trash and trashed".
   - The end product is compost (castings).
   - The bin is a container that holds compost (castings) in the process of forming.

**MAKE IT EASY**

- Contact your local extension office to learn more about vermiculture.
- Check out websites like vermicomposting.org and vermicomposting.com for more information.
- Consider joining a local vermiculture group or club to connect with other vermiculturists in your area.

**SUPPORT LOCAL**

- Purchase your compost bins and bedding materials from local suppliers.
- Support local farmers by using local produce in your bin.
- Consider donating your compost to local gardens or orchards.

**FIND OUT MORE**

- Visit www.marincounty.org/compost for more information on composting in Marin County.
- For tips on vermiculturing, check out the Vermiculture Guide at vermicomposting.com.

**MAKE IT YOUR OWN**

- Add your own twist to the process by using different materials or techniques.
- Experiment with adding different types of food or bedding to your bin.
- Share your successes and failures with others to help improve the process.