

The Vermicomposting Center and Program is a collaboration between **Hillview Urban Agriculture Center**, the **University of Wisconsin-La Crosse**, and **Mayo Clinic Health System** turning food waste into fertilizer using worms. We have recovered more than **72,000 pounds** of food waste from our partner's cafeterias as well as other sources and turned it into over **12,100 pounds** of VermiGold worm castings. This collaboration eliminates food from the waste stream, creates a sustainable local fertilizer for the community, and operates a replicable model for other entities to follow.

Thanks to a grant from the **Robert & Eleanor Franke Charitable Foundation, Inc.** given through the **Coulee Food System Coalition**, Hillview is able to provide free demonstrations of our worm farm.

Hillview performs regular tours and demonstrations for the public, schools, and community groups. Please contact us if you are interested in volunteering, touring our facility, or having us visit your location for a presentation.

Hillview Urban Agriculture Center (Hillview) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit grassroots organization that was formed in 2010 with the belief that everyone in our community should—and can—have access to healthy, local food. Hillview Urban Agriculture Center grew out of the Hillview Greenhouse Life Center that was established by Dr. Tom Klemond.

Hillview Urban Agriculture Center (Hillview) holds the mission of creating a healthy community through a local, sustainable, and accessible food system by:

- Building soil with food waste
- Educating and inspiring people of all ages and abilities to grow food
- Preparing and preserving healthy food together
- Supporting a food system that serves all our community needs



Natalie Kostman
Program Manager

262.994.2141 | greenhouse@hillviewuac.org

hillviewuac.org   **HillviewUAC**



Kyle Spradley | © 2014 - Curators of the University of Missouri

Classroom or Home Worm Bin

Materials: ~\$50

Red Wiggler
Worms

1 lb = 1000 worms
~\$25-35

Two plastic bins



Some scraps
of PVC pipe
and shredded
newspaper.

Worms can be purchased
from Hillview Urban
Agriculture Center. Please
contact our Program Manager
to arrange for a pickup:

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262.994.2141
greenhouse@hillviewuac.org

Instructions:

The smaller clear bin, when placed inside the larger bin, should be propped up by plastic/metal (i.e. PVC pipe) inside larger solid container. (Avoid using wood or brick due to smell)

Drill holes in the smaller bin with drill bit (3/16):

Inside Bin:

Drill holes on the bottom, cover, high on sides



Outside Bin:

Drill holes high on sides



Once you have your bins ready and worms have arrived, place stripped newspaper and worms in bin to let acclimate for 48 hours, and then begin feeding.



Feeding



Chop food into small pieces

DO NOT feed: meat, oil/dressing, dairy, bones, highly acidic fruit (oranges, lemon, lime, pineapple, et cetera), onions, garlic

Freeze food for 12 hours

Feed no more than one inch high

Coffee will encourage worms to eat more and faster, but do not overdo it. Filters okay.

Harvesting

Pull worms off top

Scoop castings from bottom

Troubleshooting/Maintenance

Fruit fly trap: Apple cider vinegar and dash or two of dish soap in an bowl or wide-mouth bottle.

Moisture and Smell Control: Remove leaked liquid (leachate) from bottom of container.

Can pour leachate back into pile, or dilute it to use on plants (ten parts water to one part leachate)

Add sawdust, newspaper, paper towel scraps, and other paper scraps to absorb the leachate

How to use castings

General rule:

Make a solution that has a 10–20% concentration of castings.

If adding directly to soil: one part castings to four parts soil,

One tablespoon to soil when starting seed/transplanting

Side-dress each plant with ½ cup, or one cup per linear foot of castings and water every two months

Worm tea: brew castings in old sock with five gallons of water for 24 hours, aerate with aquarium air pump