Congratulations!

You have taken an important step in changing your impact on the environment by reducing the amount of household waste that would otherwise find its way into landfills. The Worm Factory 360 is an incredibly efficient way to quickly convert your kitchen waste, cardboard, newspaper, junk mail, dried leaves, and other organic matter into nutrient-rich compost for your planters, flower beds and vegetable garden.

In nature, organic material (anything that once was alive) is broken down into nutrients that plants use for food, a process that can take many years if left alone. Composting worms can do this same job in as little as three months, composting up to five pounds of food waste, paper and junk mail per week.

In full operation, your vermicomposter will be home to a livestock population of 6,000 to 10,000 worms. The composting worms and microbes (millions of bacteria, fungi, nematodes, and protozoa) living inside your worm composter are the workhorses that process your household waste and transform it into rich vermicompost.

This owner’s manual will give you the basic information and procedures necessary to manage your vermicomposter. Managed properly, your Worm Factory 360 will produce a never-ending supply of nutrient rich fertilizer for your plants and garden for many years to come.

**Worm Factory® 360 Parts**

Collection Base

4 Stacking Trays

Worm Ladder

Sprinkler Tray

Spigot/Washer/Nut Assembly

Quick Tips Lid

Manual

DVD

Coir

Shredded Paper

Minerals

Pumice

Accessory Kit
Quick Assembly

4 **Add the lid**
Your vermicomposter is now ready to add bedding materials and worms.

3 **Add a stacking tray**
This tray will be referred to as the “Starting Tray.”

2 **Install the Worm Ladder**
Set the worm ladder inside the base. The Worm Ladder helps worms that have fallen into the collection tray back into the working trays.

1 **Set the collection base**

**NOTE:** *The Lid ships nested inside the base. Remove the lid before placing the worm ladder in the base.*

Set aside the remaining trays.
The remaining trays are added one at a time as they are needed. It may take three or four months to put all four trays into operation.
Coir
Coir is ground coconut fiber. It is the most desirable bedding material because it retains moisture and improves the quality of the worm castings that go into your garden.

Pumice
Pumice is a lightweight, porous, volcanic rock which provides excellent aeration and drainage for your vermicomposter.

Shredded Paper
Shredded paper, cardboard, newsprint, egg cartons and other types of paper provide an excellent source of carbon, increase aeration, and are an easy source of food for your worms.

Prepare your bedding before your worms arrive. This bedding material is provided to make sure your worms get off to a good start. *For more details about the bedding process, read page 20.*

**Included with your Worm Factory 360:**

1. Place the end of the brick of coir in a bowl. Pour 1 cup of water over the brick and let it soak until it begins to break apart. Crumble off the loosened coir equal to half the brick. Add more water if needed. Coir should be moist but NOT wet. Set aside the unused ½ brick of coir to use later.

2. Mix together the moistened Coir, ½ Pumice, ½ Shredded Paper, 1 Tbsp. Minerals that came with your Worm Factory 360.

3. Use this mixture in the starting tray. Store the unused Coir, Pumice, shredded paper and minerals to use later when adding your second tray.

4. Add one or two cupfuls of garden soil or compost to the bedding mixture. This material contains organic organisms that will inoculate your worm composter with the beneficial microbes worms depend on to help them digest their food.

**NOTE:** Coir and pumice make excellent bedding material, however, they are not required.

Next: Starting your 1st tray
Starting Your First Feeding Tray

1. Cover the bottom of the first starting tray with one or two sheets of dry newsprint. You’ll only do this on your very first tray!

2. Add the moist bedding mixture, spreading it evenly on top of the dry newspaper. Add 2 or 3 cups of food in one corner of the tray. For food suggestions, see page 17.

3. Select 5-10 full pages of newspaper (no slick color paper), fold the paper so it will fit into the feeding tray. Wet the paper until it is damp but not dripping. You have just created a moist newspaper cover.

4. Place the moist newspaper cover on top of the bedding and food in the starting tray and wait for your worms to arrive.

5. When the worms arrive remove the moist newspaper cover. Add the worms, including all of the bedding included with the worms, on top of the moist bedding. Replace the moist newspaper cover. Read more about adding worms on page 16.

6. Place the lid on the worm composter. It is best to not disturb the worms for the first two or three days while they adjust to their new environment. Your worms will want to explore their new home. Leave a light on for the first 2 or 3 days. This will discourage the worms from exploring outside the composter.

7. Leave the worms alone for two or three days then open the lid and peek in. Lift the moist newspaper cover and look around in your bin. Are the worms actively moving around in their food? If so, GOOD! If not, leave the worms alone, then check them again in 2 or 3 days. Once you see the worms actively feeding, you can start adding more food.

To provide the worms with an adequate food supply, add enough food over the next 4-6 weeks to fill the feeding tray. When the feeding tray is filled to within an inch of the top of the tray, it is time to add another tray.

NOTE: From now on, the starting tray will be referred to as the “feeding tray”. This tray will always be on top and is shown in the illustration by the color green.