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## In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2005/12/13 08:35

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After years of monitoring and trying to be "bin manager", I have found that in-ground bins work best for me. I still have about 16 plastic bins going, because I sell worms and bins. I have all kinds of possibilities set up to demonstrate, how it can be done, in many different kinds of situations, to people who come here to build bins. I have a hole-in-the-ground bin, which was never actually a hole,( never got around to digging it). I just put food scraps on the ground, covered it with leaves, and waited for the worms. They did come and brought all their friends.:) That bin does not have any cover, so it is a free for all. I don't really care, so it works. I have built some cinderblock bins, that do have hinged lids. They are just dry stacked over some hardware cloth, in contact with the ground. I grow most of my herd in those bins, so the free lunch is closed to other large creatures. I do not monitor any of those outdoor bins very much, and I think the worms and all other decomposers are much happier with me just dumping the buffet in and leaving them to their business. They know what they are doing, so..YAY!

Here is a link to the images of my cinderblock bin and 1 shot of the hole-in-the-ground:  
<http://photobucket.com/albums/y209/redhen/projects/>

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by sauce man - 2005/12/13 16:17

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Susan, Great pictures. I have a question, How far do you dig out the dirt inside of the cinder block bin? And are the blocks sitting on the ground or are they buried part way in the ground. This is not what I thought your in ground bins looked like when I read about them in your other posts. I'm glad you put this link on. I wish this site had a page where people could put up pictures because its interesting to see how everybody has a little different set up. It would also be nice to see pictures of the people that frequent this sight. I think I will try to figure out how to put a link to some of my photos of my set up. Thanks for the pictures. Tom

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2005/12/13 21:24

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Sauceman..Look on the "Discussions Suggestions" forum page and click on the "adding images to posts". You will see a detail of how to add images to your posts. Perhaps you could start a new thread with folks showing their set-ups. (Probably not great news for people with "dial-up" connections) :( I only put my Photo Bucket images on because there were so many to show. I never dug anything for those bins. I just laid the hardware cloth down, put cinderblocks on the edges of that cloth, (to keep out voles and moles), and added bedding and food. I use leaves on top of the food in those bins. Today, I buried "plugs" of grain in all quarters, to act as little furnaces. Even with the temps here in NC in the low 20's at night, I see the worms up and feeding.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by sugo - 2005/12/24 10:47

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I'm fixing to make an in-ground bin like yours, Redhen. My partner, though, cautions that hardware cloth contains zinc--poisonous to humans. I wonder if this matters. I know that my worms process out all kinds of pathogens, making the castings safe for the garden. But metals?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2005/12/26 10:41

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hmmm..I do not think zinc is poisonous. Zinc is a nonpoisonous and an environmentally sound product. It does not contain impurities that could be set free under atmospheric conditions or produce toxic fumes in case of fire. Zinc is an element essential for life and most organisms need it to survive. Most rocks and many minerals contain zinc in varying degrees. It also exists naturally in air, water and soil. Zinc is most commonly found in the earth's crust.

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For humans, zinc plays an essential role in metabolism. For example, zinc is vital for the proper functioning of more than 200 enzymes, for the stabilization of DNA and the expression of genes, and for the transfer of nervous signals. Zinc is a trace element, as important as iron, magnesium or calcium.

I actually take zinc supplements when I feel a cold coming on.

There are other metals to consider but I do not think zinc is one.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by ynotnow817 - 2005/12/26 23:01

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Redhen is 100% correct about zinc. Check out a bottle of Centrum. Zinc Oxide is the thick white stuff used by surfers and skiers to prevent sunburn.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2005/12/30 21:04

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Just an update about these bins and winter..I went out there today and checked the worms before feeding them. I have not fed them since a week before Christmas. At the last feeding I put in pockets of chicken feed, to make things a bit warmer. I then put in a big load of produce. The produce was gone today and, where I put the chicken feed, there were masses of worms and some of that grain..P The worms were not more than 6" from the surface and very active.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/01 20:52

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Hi, Susan - this weekend's project is my outdoor cinderblock bin, weather permitting, and I have one more question: I'm assuming that you used untreated wood for your frames and lids based on the possible toxicity of some of the chemicals (even the new mandated stuff). Did you seal the wood with anything, and if so, what?

If no sealer, does anyone have any recommendations for wormie-safe wood sealer?

My intent is to use standard 2x4s for the frame and 5/8 or 3/4" marine plywood for the lid(s).

Surely don't want to poison my li'l fellas, but also don't want my lumber to warp and draw in the weather.

Thanx

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/01 21:27

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I used left over lumber that I scrounged. I do not actually think the wood being treated would have a big effect on the worms, as they would stay away from something they found not to their liking. (Once again..funny we worry about the worms and treated wood and yet use it all around our own homes.) Being that my wood frame, for the lid, fits outside of the cinderblock, it keeps it's shape.

For me..I just keep it simple and use what I have.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/01 23:39

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Thanx, Susan - I was thinking about the possibility of treated wood chems leaching out and soaking through the cinderblocks into the bedding. That would probably not be "to their liking", eh? Think I'll stick with the plain vanilla lumber, unless somebody posts a "done that and it works with treated stuff".

I don't think a little bit of paranoia is necessarily a bad thing :unsure: , considering labor, cost and time invested in building an outdoor bin. I want this thing to be around and productive long after I am, for all intents and purposes, done feeding the worms ;) .

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I think we'd have bigger issues with treated wood chemicals if we actually lived in the dirt with our wormies - I imagine that's where the majority of the chems end up if they do leach out.  
Myself, I built my raised veggie beds with treated posts and sides - no issues so far...yes you have...no I don't...yes you do (slap - quiet!)...OK - we're good :silly: .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/04 22:29

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gnosnhoj wrote:

this weekend's project is my outdoor cinderblock bin, weather permitting  
Well, crap :angry: ! Winter has finally found W KY. Freezin' & breezin' all day today. I did get all my materials though, and just might bundle up and git 'er dun tomorrow. We'll see.  
If anybody is interested, I visualized my plan in a 3-slide Powerpoint file; bin & lid design + materials list/costs. E-me at gnosnhoj@gmail.com and I'll be glad to share.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/05 11:38

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Gary..bundle up and just do it! You will be ahead of the game and can start adding bedding and food too! Kind of a "Field of Dreams" theme, "build it and they will come", just might happen. :P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/05 21:02

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I'm gonna have to stop listening to you, Susan

:S - my back and ankle are killing me!

Yes, I did git 'er dun today :woohoo: ! Weather wasn't so bad after I got to shoveling and such - warmed up right quick!  
Found a lot of various & sundry while grading: rocks, bricks, shoes(!), an old-timey 10 or 12oz pepsi bottle etc. It's good to have a tractor w/blade

:P !

Also found a few native wormies; I told 'em they'd be getting some neighbors :woohoo: !

Let me know if y'all can actually get to these work-in-progress pics...

[http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnailshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523\\_3794523/t\\_=3794523](http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnailshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523_3794523/t_=3794523)

I'll work on the lid evenings through the week - don't intend to rush measuring, cutting, fastening and mounting.

I'm getting there :whistle: .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/07 00:45

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Hey, All -

Looking for 'lessons learned' on initial bedding for my new outdoor bin; layers, mix, depth, OM etc.

Thanx

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/07 08:39

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When I started one of my bins, I put in a load of shredded paper. I got paper already shredded from my daughter's elementary school, as the office has to shred documents daily and they saved the bags for me. (It was in late spring and

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my leaves were not available.) Next bin was started with leaves for bedding and some old bales of straw. That straw takes some time to break down and would probably work better if chopped up, but by now you should know, (and for those of you who do not know me), I do not do a lot of processing of additions to my bins, food or bedding, (especially my outdoor bins). I have 3 teens and a way too busy household, so around here you have to have the will to live, (or decompose :P )

Gary..Look around at what you have. It will all work just fine. If you are looking to harvest compost, I would pick something that breaks down faster than straw.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/07 23:03

Thanx for the info, Susan.

I scrounged enough coarse yard stuff (leaves, twigs, old grass) for an un-compacted +/- 2" base over the wire...thinking the coarser stuff will help with drainage. Looking to generate compost, but a good base will stay in the bin regardless. Also cleaned out a few of my office shredders and got a good mix of strip & cross-shred for another un-compacted 3 - 4". Hoping to get a goodly supply of leaves tomorrow to mix into the paper, and top with a layer of shredded cardboard. Reckon I'll water some then.

Kinda leery about using a large amount of shredded paper, as it seems to really clump up in my WF. Does layering with other materials help that, and/or do the wormies really care? Really trying to make this easy, but don't want to start off bad and have to rebuild the bedding.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/08 09:47

Gary..I do not use cross-cut shredded paper because it compacts and makes miserable bedding (IMHO). Strip cut works well and is easy to fluff up.

I try not to get twigs in my outdoor bin and I do not layer anything, other than to put a covering of bedding over the food. The nice thing about an in-ground bin is that you do not have to worry about drainage at all. The worms will stir things up just right also. In-ground takes almost no monitoring and for me being lazy.. um..no.. laid back, it is vermicomposting at it's best:P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/08 21:38

Well, some of our office shredders are cross-cut and some strip, so I scrounged it all, but mostly strip. My home shredder is also strip. I figure if I can get everything (paper, leaves, manure, cardboard) mixed together to start, my wormies will move around as they wish. Additional bedding / feedstock cover would be of a similar mix.

How deep did you make your original bedding before adding worms, and did you let it settle some first?

I'm with ya on the laid-back aspect of outdoor bin 'management' :P . Just want to get it set up right the first go'round so I can be that way.

I seem to remember that you started your outdoor bin(s) later in the year; any recommendations or "don't do that"s for me setting up this time of year? I'm not adverse to letting the herd grow indoors until spring - more wormies and more established bin conditions.

Thinking it would probably not be a good thing to transplant wormies from a 65-75df environment to an outdoor bed with night temps below freezing, although I could generate heat with in-bed OM furnaces.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/08 21:39

My last posted twice for some reason, so I deleted the content since I didn't see an option to just delete the post. Carry on. :P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by Bob Ingram - 2006/02/09 03:06

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Good job, Gary. That young buck may be a good augury for site selection as well, lol. Seeya, Bob

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/09 10:06

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Gary..Because the in-ground bin is in contact with the ground I did not put much of anything in the bottom for bedding, maybe about 3" of shredded paper or wet leaves. Then put the food in and cover with about 1' of paper/leaves. You can do that right now and you will find the natives and other decomposers will make their way in there and get things going. You could add OM that you know would heat up your indoor bins. (It is so much fun to do that, on purpose, after you have gone crossed eyed trying to manage not doing that in your indoor bins) If you do that now, by spring you will have great populations and active vermicompost in your indoor bin, to finish seeding your outdoor bin. I must admit when I did this, I could not quite bring myself to give up my worm population to the outdoor one. I took a big portion of them and kept my indoor one going. I put the vermicompost (with some worms and cocoons) into the outdoor one, under the paper covering the food. The natives and other guys were already in there having a big time. Each time I harvested the indoor one the material went into the outdoor one. The outdoor one now runs on it's own. When I harvest compost, (outdoors), I just stop feeding one quadrant and in about a week or so the worms have moved into the other parts of the bin and I shovel it out, put in new bedding and start feeding. I then go to the next quadrant and move around the bin the same way. My bins right now are all full of compost waiting to be harvested..."I'll think about that tomorrow", (Scarlett O'Hara):whistle:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/10 00:11

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redhen wrote:

...maybe about 3" of shredded paper or wet leaves. Then put the food in and cover with about 1' of paper/leaves. Fiddle-dee-dee, Susan - hoping you meant 1" v 1' of wormie-chow cover...:unsure: Dat's a lotta stuff :ohmy: ! Coordination disconnect didn't get me the supply of leaves I was anticipating the other day, but I think I'm good for pickup and application Friday. Hoping I can get it in the bin early, since we're supposed to get a goodly bit of snow tomorrow. No intention of shutting down my indoor bin! Just gonna spread the love outdoors. Imagine once I get the outdoor bin crankin' I'll get more 'in accordance with instructions' with my WF, but will probably still maintain 2 working trays, just because I can and because more worms are better than less worms :woohoo: !

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/10 00:24

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Thanx, Bob :cheer: ! Yep, thought the bin'd be a good backdrop for my target practice...and if I actually missed it'd serve me right to have to buy new arrows :blush:.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/10 08:47

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No..not 1 inch, I put a good foot of leaves or shredded paper on top of the food I put in. It,(bedding) gets added to every week or so, as needed, (and it is needed).

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/10 23:02

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redhen wrote:

No..not 1 inch, I put a good foot of leaves or shredded paper on top of the food I put in.

OK, I'm a dumb-arse :S ...still thinking 4"x12"x12" WF tray applications :whistle: .

Note to self: outdoor bin depth & surface are much greater than WF. Smack head; repeat as required.

Leaf pickup fell through again - somebody hauled them off before I could. Plan B: getting >= 6 full bags Monday. Is it spring yet?!:P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/16 00:13

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Interesting how life gets in the way of my wormies :ohmy: !

Dead truck sidetracked me a bit this week (all better now), but I did get a bunch of leaves run through the shredder this eve (pre-cold front) and fluffed into paper etc resulting in bedding about 8" deep.

Thinking I'll spread some anaerobic slurry, lightly, and top with more shredded paper this weekend. Oh, yeah - and build my lids :P

Is it spring yet? :huh:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/16 09:57

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Gary..If you have anaerobic anything, you can put it all in that outdoor bin..at one time. You no longer have to worry about those kind of things, as it's all good in that big bin. That's why I love those bins!

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/18 01:27

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Quote copied from "New Bin Status" topic:

Bob Ingram wrote:

...you will have some migration, however, but the two species seem to instigate one another for growth and reproduction...you might be surprised how large your red worms will get...

So, if EFs and ENC's integrate well, should I even try to keep them segregated in my outdoor on-ground bin, and would a production / reproduction experiment of EF v ENC be fairly worthless without pretty much hermetically splitting the bin (which I've no intention of doing)?

Not worried about the mingling - just thought it'd be neat to see who does better over time, all things being fairly equal.

redhen wrote:

..If you have anaerobic anything, you can put it all in that outdoor bin..at one time. You no longer have to worry about those kind of things, as it's all good in that big bin. That's why I love those bins!

Susan - I'm with ya! Got a big bucket outside ready to spread :woohoo: !

FYI, I did get my bin lid frame cut & mounted today...started getting right chilly, though, so I'll do the lids tomorrow...almost there...B)

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by worm rancher - 2006/02/19 14:19

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Hi all:) newbie here just wanted to pop in & say i really enjoyed all the info i read about the bins here posted by redhen

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and the photo's. I got interested in raising red worms some years ago & read alot of books on the subject by charlie morgan,robert shields & earl shields.Some really good info.in these books...

Anyways life happened " as it will " in the last eight years so i never got around to starting my adventure in worm ranching ;) Things are good now "yay" so 2006 i will give it a whirl & make a go of it:P Im really into organic gardening of veggies & flowers and really see this as a good thing !! so look forward to chatting here & making new friends :) YOU CAN BURY ALOT OF TROUBLES DIGGIN IN THE DIRT:P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/19 16:58

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Welcome, WR - glad you've made it, and yepper, there really are a lotta helpful folks with a plethora of knowledge in here!

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by n1hat - 2006/02/21 10:12

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how do you keep the top layer from freezing? or does the hot pocket prevent that?:S :cheer: :blush: :side: :whistle: :S :evil:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/26 22:30

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:woohoo: ! I finally got the lids cut & mounted on my outdoor bin! 'Bout fargin' time, eh?!  
[http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnaillshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523\\_3794523/t\\_=3794523](http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnaillshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523_3794523/t_=3794523)  
Now all I need is some steady spring weather to transplant some of my indoor herd outside :P .  
Any recommendations on how / when?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/27 12:13

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Gary..I would not put them out in the new bin, outdoors, until the nights are above 40. They would probably be just fine, as the sheer volume of the bin would take a long time to freeze, but the processing will be slow until the weather gets warmer..or the bin gets older.  
When I have transplanted my worms, to seed the new beds, I usually use all of the vermicompost, from the indoor bins and add to just below the level of the food in the outdoor bin. I will add some of the worms too in the same area. I started one quadrant at a time. My outdoor bins had about 5lbs to start, plus the vermicompost.  
Oh..and Gary..Your bin looks MAH-VA-LUS!!

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/27 22:54

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B) Thanx, Susan.

I was actually leaning towards a higher nighttime temp avg round-about 50-55df planting minimum before I made the move. That'll be fine by me, as the li'l fellas are crankin' along just dandy in my WF.  
What I was planning to do was take 2 of my 3 'working trays' complete and just upturn them into one side of the outdoor bin (hoping that'll work out to 3 or 4 lbs by then ;) ).  
Thinking now that I'll pull all but 2 or 3" of bedding out first, and put that on top after I introduce the wormies. I'd like to weigh the li'l fellas first; still planning to populate the other half with ENC's, right about the same time. Imagine I can come

up with some kinda screen thingie to get them into a bucket for weighing first...:whistle:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/02/28 11:10

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Bob taught me a good way to weigh your worms. Put a container with fresh,damp bedding on a scale. Now reset the scale to 0. I then put a hardware cloth tray, I made, onto the fresh bedding. Take off the top bedding from your working tray. Take any recognizable food out and scoop the rest onto the screen about 1-2" deep. The worms will leave through the screen, to get away from the light, and go into the new bedding. When you are done with all the material in your old tray, you will have, (pretty much), all worm weight when you remove the screen tray.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/02/28 22:15

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Thanx, Susan - that's just about how I was thinking of doing it, although I might have to use my fishin' scale instead of the kitchen scale...think the kitchen one only goes up to 2lb :P . I have enough 1/4" screen left to put together a rig plenty big enough to handle a spread-out WF tray.

I spread a big old jug of slurry in opposing quadrants today - think your feeding cycle makes sense; always room for comfort zones that way.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/18 02:44

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Time to stir up this topic again :P .

Re:New bin status - 2006/03/14 21:42

Planning on moving 'em out next weekend...

...but as is often the case with WKY spring, the night temps have dipped again this week and the 10-day forecast ain't much better, so I reckon I'll hold off for a bit longer...

Has anybody tried running a shop-light (standard incandescent bulb) in an on-ground bin to elevate / regulate temps? I used one under my chicken roosting box during PA winters for a few years and the birds seemed to like it a lot; wondering if it'd help speed up getting the bin right for my pending wormie transplant...?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/03/18 12:56

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IMHO.."Just be patient and when it is time to move the worms all will be well", (spoken with the voice of Glenda the Good Witch of the North). One of the great things about an on-ground bin is the natural ease of it. (If you want to obsess about monitoring/managing a bin you still have your WF :P )

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/19 12:21

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:woohoo: Yes'm, tryin' real hard to maintain patience. KY spring is usually pretty tricky - I'm chompin' at the bit every year round-about this time :whistle: .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/23 23:18

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I just found the instructions for posting pics on the suggestions/discussion page, and I gotta try it. If it works it's time to smack myself in the head again...it has been a while :silly: .

Well, it didn't work, and that's enough for tonight...now my brain hurts.

Is there a way to just delete these 'failed' posts???

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/24 20:59

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OK - trying again with a muchly downsized pic...crap!

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/24 21:01

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OK - trying again with a muchly downsized renamed pic...I'm sorry, folks :blush: I will get this right!  
[http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com\\_simpleboard/uploaded/images/binlidopensm.jpg](http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com_simpleboard/uploaded/images/binlidopensm.jpg)

:woohoo: Fargin' Hooah!!! :woohoo:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/03/24 21:42

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WTG Gary! Terrific looking bin and you posted the pics...no stopping you now:P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by jlance - 2006/03/25 09:12

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wow! what did that cost ya  
john

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/25 12:53

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jlance wrote:

wow! what did that cost ya

john

Hey, John

Materials cost just under \$170 :pinch: .

I coulda got 'er dun cheaper, but I used all new higher-end lumber and such. The plywood and the hardware cloth were the biggest bites besides the blocks themselves.

Of course, I had to get a dado blade for my table-saw too :whistle: .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/03/26 20:55

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jlance..I built that same kind of bin with recycled building materials and whatever I had at the house. The bin cost maybe \$50.00.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by Bubbles - 2006/03/29 22:01

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Dear Red Hen and Jlance,

Your pictures were amazing! I only looked at them now and I wonder how things are going, now that spring is on the way. Did the buck stay on guard?

Happy burrows!

Bubbles

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/31 21:47

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Bubbles wrote:

...Did the buck stay on guard?

Hey, Bubbles

Think that was probably my deer pic, and yepper, he's out there 24/7, although I did have to 'remove' a big ole 'possum last week from way too close to the bin for my (and my wormies') comfort :whistle: .

Think this spring weather has finally stabilized enough for me to make my bin shift.

Jeez, I hope so - just ordered 3# of ENC's from Bob for half of it :S , and gonna screen two thirds (or less/more, based on equal weight) of my indoor li'l fellas this weekend for the other half :woohoo: !

If the temp looks like it's gonna dive again, I will run that shoplight out there for a while :unsure: .

:woohoo: Bring on the spring :woohoo:

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/03/31 22:36

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I will run that shoplight out there for a while . Gary...Why the shoplight?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/03/31 23:18

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...Why the shoplight?

Hi, Susan - outdoor bin temps have been ambient, round'about 6pm at least, but weather temps have dipped to below 40df at night off & on, and no, I ain't been checking bed temps in the wee hours :blink: .

I just plan to have a warming system available if Mamma Nature hiccups - that wouldn't be a precedent 'round here :S .

Thinking light might be an idea anyway with my new ENC herd coming in, to help keep 'em from roaming...maybe

:unsure: .

Whatcha think?

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## Re:In-ground bins

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Posted by redhen - 2006/04/01 12:50

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weather temps have dipped to below 40df at night off & on

Those temperatures will be okay for your worms, even if they did stay like that for some time. They can go deeper if they feel the surface is too cold. The Enc's will be in that big bin, that has lots of bedding and food. It has a cover, so I do not see any need for the light. If they arrive in daylight, I would add to my bin and leave the lid up to settle them deep and then close the lid at dark. I cannot imagine where else they would rather be.B)

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/04/02 23:27

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Well, I did it :woohoo: !

2 of 3 WF trays are now outside B) .

Pic = about 1/4th of one tray B) .

[http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com\\_simpleboard/uploaded/images/Wormietransplantclumpb.jpg](http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com_simpleboard/uploaded/images/Wormietransplantclumpb.jpg)

Wormie weight was just over 2.5#. I also mixed both trays of bedding into the outdoor bin, since I got way tired way fast trying to pick out cocoons :whistle: there were more than a few :P

The rest of the pics are here:

[http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnailshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523\\_3794523/t\\_=3794523](http://www.snapfish.com/thumbnailshare/AlbumID=36822746/a=3794523_3794523/t_=3794523)

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/04/07 21:22

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Just got my ENC herd this morning - had to pick up at the PO, as we had issues with my last batch of EF :whistle: .

OI Bob @ Trinity kinda screwed up my competition experiment though; was expecting 3# to balance against my 2.5# of EF with a mess of cocoons as backup, but the dang bag weighed better than 4.5#, and there wasn't a whole heck of a lot of bedding :silly: . Fat boogers, too, even after 6 days in USPS hands!

Put 'em in the onground bin about 0830 and propped the lid up a bit for some light incentive to move in. Checked 'em after work and they were all in the bedding - no wall-crawlers. Planned to check after dark, but we're getting a bit of weather this eve, so think I'll wait until the morning :S .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/04/07 23:59

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Got a little break in the weather, so I went to check...well now :ohmy: !

Found 3 that'd squoooozed out between blocks, and I saw a few moving along the perimeter inside, though not above bedding level. Ain't no telling how many others made it 'through the wire' before I got out there.

I know I've read some posts about barometric pressure affecting the lil' fellas, and there is a front moving through tonight - perfect timing, eh :dry: ?! Hope I still have a herd in the morning :blink: .

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Post edited by: gnosnhoj, at: 2006/09/16 21:59

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/04/08 12:17

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Gary..Open the lid and get some light on those guys so they will head down. If there is a way to keep some kind of light at night, you might want to do it. They don't call them nightcrawlers for nuthin'. I don't have ENC's outdoors. The bins without lids, I keep a light on and cover the surface with some black plastic. I mist the surface, sprinkle chicken feed and replace the plastic (not airtight). The worms are all over the surface underneath that plastic feeding. I think you might only need the extra light for a week, to get them settled. Maybe try sprinkling some corneal on the surface so when they do come up at night, they will find what they might be looking for and stick around. They might crawl but I don't think

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they will go far as the food is in that bin, so hang tight and keep us updated.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/04/08 21:19

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Yes'm - just hung a little LED lantern from the center brace; nice & bright in there now B) .  
No issues yesterday or today - they stayed in the bedding. 10-11pm last night, though, they were hittin' the clubs - night-crawlin' :blink: .  
Temp is headed down to mid-30df again tonight, dangit, and I imagine that'll help keep 'em home too. I'll probably check 'em again before I go to bed ;) .  
Plenty of wormie-chow in there now - think I'll hold off on the mash / cornmeal 'til I can pitch it in & say "Good li'l fellas." :P

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by n1hat - 2006/04/09 09:11

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no photo page but pictures can be added to messages my 3 types of indoor  
bins[http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com\\_simpleboard/uploaded/images/mybins.jpg](http://www.wormdigest.org/components/com_simpleboard/uploaded/images/mybins.jpg).JPG

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/04/12 00:18

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Update:  
EF have been out since weekend before last, and my ENC herd went out last Friday as soon as I got 'em.  
I've let 'em be, hard as that's been :blink: , and haven't poked around except to check temp/moisture and turn my ENC-end light on & off (no more runs for the woods since the first night), until this afternoon. I think they're gonna be ok...cuz they're fargin' FAT :woohoo: !  
I pulled bedding up (about 2" deep) in the opposite sides from where I put each herd, just to see if they'd moved from where I set 'em, and Lordy, yes; although not as densely populated as my WF trays (yet!), the EFs I saw appear to be much more robust than I'd ever seen inside (and more lively), and the ENCs are just hogs :P !  
Hoping this summer will be productive for both herds, and that they'll actually stay fairly segregated, mostly just so I can see how they do comparatively.  
BTW, I think a couple of my ENC escapees want back in, but they dive from my light when I see 'em outside of the bin :S

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by gnosnhoj - 2006/05/02 23:33

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gnosnhoj wrote:  
...Hoping this summer will be productive for both herds, and that they'll actually stay fairly segregated, mostly just so I can see how they do comparatively...  
Well, that little experiment has gone to castings! There are way too many various and sundry native munchers (wormie and otherwise) throughout both sides of my bin to even try and compare EF v ENC now, and my ENC herd didn't waste any time spreading themselves under / over / through the divider I put in either. I'll be removing that this weekend - gonna be a free-for-all :P .

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by UncleBubba - 2006/06/21 07:57

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Susan, this was a great discussion. I learned a lot. I am already considering an outside bin and wonder, I think it has been about a year since you built that bin, is there anything you would suggest doing differently now?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by UncleBubba - 2006/06/21 08:00

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Susan, this was a great discussion. I learned a lot. I am already considering an outside bin and wonder, since it has been about a year, if there is anything you would suggest doing differently now?

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by redhen - 2006/06/21 23:53

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My outdoor bins are still doing well.

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by mclad - 2008/06/16 23:08

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Firstly hello, long time reader first time poster :)

I would like to set up an outdoor bin to process cardboard (I have lots and access to more) and garden waste. Currently I have 3 indoor bins about 1' x 1.5' each made out of food crates, for processing kitchen waste and about one beer carton per week ;) Also 2 large buried plastic plant pots (with lids cut off and a concrete slab on top) for processing dog poo.

I live in Perth Australia, sandy soils (we are on old beach sand dunes basically), climate:  
winter Jun-Aug means min 4 C (40 F) / max 18 C (65 F) / monthly rain ~125mm (5")  
summer Dec-Feb means min 18 C (65 F) / max 31 C (88 F) / monthly rain ~5mm (1/4")

About 7 months ago I put in some fruit trees and spread a trailer of pea hay and wood chips over the sand (only about 1" thick), with a crate of worms/wormpoo spread around the trees, and either composting worms liked it or natives have arrived as when I scratch the surface anywhere now I find some worms.

I wanted to set up the simplest system imaginable, I was planning to use 4 6' railway sleepers as walls, throw in a 1/2" layer of partly digested compost as a base, rip up my cardboard coarsley (like into 6" squares or even bigger, anything else will take too long), throw in a crate of wormies and then top with another 1/2" layer of compost and finally a large sheet of cardboard on top.

I won't need a lid as it doesn't get that cold and I'm suburban so there aren't any many foraging animals - plus I won't be putting food scraps in the outside bin.

Thoughts/suggestions? Would I be better concentrating my bedding (I only have one tumbler of compost ready) in half the bin then expanding to the other half when I have more compost and cardboard ready? Should I perhaps mix the cardboard and compost better so the compost allows the wormies to move around the cardboard as it sticks together when wet (and let the cardboard age for a while)?

Lots of questions! Thanks,  
Mike

(I am also worried about ants and the heat/dryness in summer but I'll worry about that then!)

Post edited by: mclad, at: 2008/06/16 23:10

Post edited by: mclad, at: 2008/06/16 23:13

Post edited by: mclad, at: 2008/06/17 01:20

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by mclad - 2008/06/17 08:13

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Just talked to my Mum and they have 4 bags of leaves for me so that feels better to mix in with all my cardboard...

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## Re:In-ground bins

Posted by mclad - 2008/06/29 15:04

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### Ingredients:

3 x bags sheep manure  
4 x bags leaves vintage may 2008  
2 x bags leaves vintage may 2007  
1 x bag grass clippings  
1 x compost tumbler  
1 x bin green waste  
4 x wheelbarrow loads of cardboard cut to ~8-12"  
1 x bag wood shavings  
1 x mulch/wood chips 1" layer  
<http://i2.photobucket.com/albums/y41/friskymike/vegieingredients.jpg>

Oh and 1 x wormfarm (nb my farms are made from fruit / veg crates)

<http://i2.photobucket.com/albums/y41/friskymike/wormfarms.jpg>

Worms were concentrated in the bag 1/3 section above as I didn't have enough for the whole area!

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