Indoor method: **Worm Factory**

Size: 41 cm wide x 41 cm long x 62 cm high. Each tier is 9 cm tall.

Maximum capacity: This depends on the size of the worm colony; red wigglers can eat their weight in food waste and bedding in a day. Sandra added approximately 4 litres of food waste a week.

Price: $80—125 for bin, $10—25 for red wigglers

Tester satisfaction: very high

Features: Four green plastic tiers with perforated bottoms, strong base with spigot for excess liquid.

What you can put in it: Kitchen scraps (excluding meat, bones, dairy, and fats), shredded paper. Not meant for large amounts of yard waste, but small amounts of dry leaves can be used for bedding.

"Yuck" factor: Moderate. Requires dealing with large numbers of red wiggler worms, and can sometimes attract flies.

Complexity to use: Moderate-to-high. Some knowledge of bedding, caring for worms, and eliminating flies is necessary.

Mobility: The bin is easy to move. It is quite heavy when full, but the tiers can be moved individually.

Available at: Bin at The Better Good (Saskatoon) and online. Saskatchewan worm suppliers listed at **goo.gl/LS4RT3**.

Tested by: **Sandra**

Sandra is a red wiggler worm breeder and supplier in Saskatoon. She has many vermicomposting bins going at all times, and recycles food waste from her own two-person household as well as waste from neighbours and one small restaurant. She has plenty of time to dedicate to her vermicompost bins.

Sandra was delighted to receive the Worm Factory for our study. She set it up using the bedding supplied with the bin and her own squirm of worms. She replenished the bedding over time with newspaper.

While vermicomposting is generally used indoors, Sandra kept her Worm Factory outside during the late spring, summer, and early fall. In the colder months, she brought it into her heated garage, where the temperature stayed around 10°C. While outside in the sun, she noticed the bin got dry faster and more frequently. The top lid also warped in the sun and no longer fits properly. In the garage, the worms became somewhat sluggish from the low temperature and consumed less food waste.

Sandra uses the worm tea from the spigot to water her cedars, grass and perennials.

Results:

Testing period: May 2014—May 2015

Inputs:

- Began with bedding of shredded cardboard, soil, rock dust, and crushed pumice
- 200 litres of organic waste (food waste, dryer lint, vacuum dust, dog hair)
- Added 40-60 sheets of newspaper bedding during the test period (exact volume unknown)
- Added 34 litres of water

Outputs:

- 171 litres of worm castings

Recommendations:

The Worm Factory is a good system for processing food waste indoors or outside during mild weather. It uses red wiggler worms to eat food scraps and turn them into high-nutrient worm castings. It does require some knowledge of vermicomposting, and especially, how to avoid getting fruit flies or fungus gnats in the bin. Sandra buries food waste carefully and sprays neem oil on the top bedding to discourage flies.

The Worm Factory comes with four tiers that the worms can pass between freely. Sandra found it best to have waste processing in all four tiers. When one tier is close to full, no more waste should be added to it for several weeks, after which time it can be harvested.

Excess liquid drains through to the bottom stand, where it should be tapped every 1-3 days to avoid turning anaerobic and smelly. This "worm tea" is excellent fertilizer for plants.