

# Fact Sheet: Worm Castings

**Presenter: Josh Byrne, 21/03/2009**

**SERIES 20 Episode 8** Josh is a keen recycler, so one of the first things he did when starting his garden was start a worm farm, "because they do an amazing job of recycling scraps in a small space." Although worms don't actually produce nutrients themselves they happily consume kitchen scraps and convert them into vermicastings - nature's finest soil conditioner. Any nutrients and minerals go into your worm farm come out in a form that is more easily absorbed by plants. Worm castings also contain millions of beneficial bacteria and other organisms which are essential to soil and plant health. Josh has a bathtub worm farm which is divided into two sections. When one side is full of castings he harvests them, while still feeding the worms on the other side. The more you feed the worms, the more castings they produce. Uses for worm castings: \* When planting new seedlings, dig a handful of castings into the surrounding soil. This supplies nutrients and holds moisture around the developing roots. \* Castings also make a fantastic liquid fertiliser. Josh says, "It can be a bit of a messy operation, but it does work." Mix a handful of castings into a ten litre bucket of water. Pour it through a stocking into a watering can. The stocking catches all the fines and other bits and pieces, leaving you with slurry in what looks like a giant teabag. Add the liquid from the slurry to the mix by squeezing out the stocking into the watering can and apply the liquid to your favourite hungry plants. \* Mixing up liquid slurry is also a great way to rejuvenate tired potting mix. This is a richer liquid fertiliser brew. Three or four handfuls of castings into a ten litre bucket of water. Pour it into your pot plant and the fines gradually settle down into the root zone. Josh explains "This is common sense stuff. Not only does worm farming reduce the amount of domestic waste going to landfill, but it can also play a vital role in sustaining your garden, no matter how small."

Information contained in this fact sheet is a summary of material included in the program. If further information is required, please contact your local nursery or garden centre.