

## Culturing Micro Worms Earl Blewett

### Micro Worms

I use cottage cheese containers as culture containers. I find opaque containers work better than clear.

1. Put  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of oatmeal in the bottom of the container and add enough water to moisten.
2. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of Gerbers Baby Cereal (I use mixed grains or banana)
3. Add water until it is saturated.
4. Add a pinch of activated yeast
5. Use a knife to harvest worms from the side of a healthy container and transfer to new container
6. Add date and worm type.

My cultures last 6 weeks or longer but I harvest them every day or so. I usually have 4-6 of each culture going at a time.

### Harvesting Worm Cultures

You are supposed to wait until the culture matures and worms start crawling up the sides. Some books advise putting a piece of glass or balsa wood in the culture and collecting worms that crawl up on it. This isn't good enough. You rarely have worms crawling up the sides when you need them. Here's how I do it.

1. Loosen the lid (if screw on) or remove and sit on top (if cottage cheese container)
2. Place worm culture on a heat source (I put them on top of a compact fluorescent canopy light that generates some heat)
3. Wait 5 – 20 minutes for the worms to crawl out of the culture and up the sides of the container.
4. Fill a dish with de-chlorinated water
5. Using a knife (or your finger) scrape the worms from the sides of the dish and rinse off in the water
6. Replace the lid on the culture and return to it's normal place
7. Use a tablespoon or syringe to squirt the worms into the tanks that you wish to feed. I often suck up the worms in a loop of airline tubing and use that to gently blow the worms onto fry (especially cichlid fry).