

# Head 'em up!...Move 'em out!

Ah, those cute, cuddly little doggies; you just can't help but love 'em! And, you can start your very own ranch without buying that 140 acre spread out in Montana.

Worm ranching, or "vermiculture", is not only a hobby, but a business, as well. Plus, there are all sorts of benefits: it produces worm castings (the richest natural fertilizer known); minimizes food waste; reduces greenhouse gasses; and worms are selling for \$9.00-\$30.00 a pound! (depending on the type), not to mention the value of the fertilizer. Worm farms are also a great way to recycle kitchen waste and can be set up in the smallest of spaces.

The earthworms used in worm farms are compost worms, which are different from regular earth worms found in your backyard. Compost worms are surface feeders and don't burrow deep into the soil like garden earthworms. They also eat their body weight in food each day; regular garden worms only eat half their body weight each day.

You can go small, building your own, or with kits purchased on line, or go big, with much larger containers. An actively growing worm bed will produce 4-5 pounds of worms per square foot of bed space per year.

*Cautionary note: discuss this with your spouse before starting such an enterprise.*

