



**Hello** friends! Wilma the worm here! Spring has almost sprung and Earth Day, April 22, is approaching fast! The red wigglers have been doing their part for the environment, eating up your lunch wastes and providing nature with some pretty splendid soil. But, I'm just a little bit curious as to what you have been doing to better our environment? Have you been practicing your three R's: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle? Well, I certainly hope so, because the Worm Lady needs your help in promoting environmental awareness! She is challenging you to create a **BIG** and **BRIGHT** poster with exciting new ideas that relate to environmental concerns happening **ALL** around the world. Posters are due April 14th and will be displayed at the Main Public Library from April 14th to May 2, 2010.

## Worms and the Carbon Cycle!

Worms eat fallen leaves and other plant material (litter), this begins a decomposition process in which organic materials pass through the animals digestive tracts and back into the soil. The amount of carbon in the litter which is on the surface would be more likely to go through oxidation and release the carbon into the atmosphere, if worms were not present. After the worms feed on the forest litter they take the carbon down into the soil and mix it in, potentially leading to a build up of carbon in the soil. This could be a long term way of stabilizing carbon.

However even though the worms are bringing the carbon down into the ground and potentially making it harder for bacteria to decompose it, potentially reducing the carbon released into the atmosphere. The act of moving the carbon is also altering the chemistry of the soil. The leaf litter layer plays a beneficial role to seedling survival in native forests. The change in soil of the forest can change the forest composition (what kinds of trees are in the forest).

## Travelling Worms

Worms were brought over by European colonizers and in northern North America forests, settlers never found earthworms present in their soil because the worms never reoccupied soils formed when the glaciers melted.



## Worm Tea

Ingredients: Water plus diluted Castings

To use it on potted houseplants, dilute the tea with an equal part of water before using. Worm tea can really bring old potting soil to life. For use on plants planted directly in the ground, it is fine to use full strength. Worm tea is especially good for weak or diseased plants. Roots of stressed plants have shown increased vigor when exposed to worm tea. Drench stressed plants with worm tea or use it in a standard feeding program.



Send any questions, art or inquiries to:  
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