

## How to culture grindal worms

Grindal worms are similar to white worms and are a small non-parasitic worm naturally found in soil. They reproduce readily if given the right parameters and there is no need to purchase multiple starter cultures. Once your culture has established it is easy to split and make new cultures.

They are very nutritious with an added benefit of being used as a live food and with a size ranging 6 – 10mm they are suitable for feeding a wide range of fish species. Live food helps induce breeding behavior and also triggers hunting, a natural behavior in the wild. Breeders gut-load these worms with food sources such as veggies, bread, cereal, fish food and spirulina to help ensure that their fish have a mixed and varied diet. Whatever you feed to your grindals ultimately goes to your fish.

### Materials needed:

- Starter culture
- Peat moss, coconut fiber or potting soil
- Plastic container
- Cutting blade to make a small hole on the lid for ventilation
- Filter floss or sponge to stuff the hole on the lid. This will prevent bugs from getting into the culture
- A small piece of mesh grid or plastic for harvesting



### Directions:

- Prepare your culture medium. I like using peat moss. The culture should be damp enough that it clumps a little but not wet and soggy. The worms will drown if the culture is too runny. Have a spray bottle on hand to spray the culture if it gets too dry.
- Add the starter culture to the middle of your substrate, feed and place a piece of mesh/ plastic on top. Placing the mesh/ plastic on top of the substrate will allow the worms to crawl onto it while eating. Removing the grid/ plastic and rinsing in aquarium water makes it easy to harvest worms.

- Make a hole on the lid for ventilation and stuff it with filter floss or a sponge. I have found that more ventilation allows the worms to reproduce faster. Close and set in a cool place.
- The more substrate you use the longer it will take to get the culture going.
- Feed the worms once a day. If you find a lot of food left over after 24hrs then you are feeding too much and this attracts mites and flies. If the food is finished before 24hrs then you are feed too less.
- Avoid feeding your worms fruits with high amounts of citrus, which may be too acidic for them

### **How and when do I make a new culture?**

It is always a good idea to have two cultures running just in case one crashes. You can expand your cultures once your main culture has established itself. To make an additional culture simply gather some worms, add them to another container with bedding, feed and wait for it to reproduce.

At least once a month, depending on how fast your culture is reproducing; you can remove a portion of the culture and replace with fresh bedding. The portion taken out can also be used to make additional cultures.

If the culture starts to smell it is time to change the bedding.

### **What happens if I see mites and flies in my culture?**

Mites and flies are often found in cultures that are kept too wet and overfed. To get rid of mites, collect some worms and place them in a cup of water. The worms should sink and the mites or eggs will float to the top. Gently pour out small amounts of water and when you feel you have removed as many as possible you can add those worms to new bedding. Ensure your lid is tight on your culture and the ventilation hole is stuffed with no gaps.