



FARM FRIDAY FUN

WITH ARIZONA AGRICULTURE

ARIZONA WORM FARM

Vermiculture is the raising of worms. Vermicomposting is using those worms to turn garbage into fertilizer. At the Arizona Worm Farm, they do both! If you stop by the Phoenix, Arizona Farm you can find your fair share of worms. From the breeding program for worms, to the soldier fly larvae breeding program to feed their chickens, to composting thousands of pounds of trash, the Arizona Worm Farm is an amazing place to visit and learn.

We had the opportunity to interview the Founder and Owner of the Arizona Worm Farm, Zach Brooks. Here is what he had to say.

- 1. How long has the Arizona Worm Farm been in operation?**
 - The Farm has only been operating for 3 years. But we have come a long way in that 3 years!
- 2. What made you get into vermiculture? Why do you feel it is important?**
 - I wanted to create a sustainable, of the grid farm where everything is being put to use. We use worms to compost garbage, and this helps us grow vegetables and fruit. He says that food waste that ends up in the landfills creates methane gas. When waste is used for vermiculture it produces no greenhouse gasses and helps feed our plants.
- 3. Can you briefly explain how your farm works? Where does your green materials come from?**
 - We get our materials from salad producers, local horse stables, and the City of Phoenix. The process is pretty simple. We convert what is in the waste into microbes and things that plants can use to regenerate themselves. We pre-compost all the waste then feed it to the worms. The we screen it and use it in the garden. We place about 10,000 worms into a composting bin and let them go to work. The bins are usually ignored for about 6-10 weeks. After that time the worms can regenerate to a population of roughly 30,000.
- 4. If you had to guess, how many worms do you have?**
 - We have about 1,000,000.
- 5. What products can people get from your farm? Teachers specifically?**
 - We have worms, worm bins, and worm castings.
- 6. What is the best part of vermiculture?**
 - It turns garbage into food and there is no harm to the environment.
- 7. What is the most challenging part of vermiculture?**
 - Being from Phoenix the most challenging part is dealing with the summer's heat!
- 8. How many employees do you have?**
 - 7 employees





Founder and Owner of Arizona
Worm Farm, Zach Brooks.



Worms can eat $\frac{1}{2}$ their body
weight in food a day!