

NEWS RELEASE

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“Worm Wigwam” debuts in biology classroom

PINE CITY, Minn. – A new “Worm Wigwam” was installed in biology instructor Alexis Grinde's biology classroom/lab the week of June 8. The wigwam holds thousands of worms and is used to demonstrate the value and efficiency of composting.

"The Wigwam was purchased with biology money and serves to demonstrate chemical processes and nutrient cycling," Grinde said. "Plus, as an added benefit, the Ever Green Club is able to point to this as a premier example of composting," Grinde added.

In its mere two weeks in residence at Pine Technical College, the Wigwam already has composted more than 120 pounds of garbage and leftovers from the Student Lounge cafeteria. The worms eat about 30 pounds of food per day, such as fruit rinds. The Wigwam is an economical, odorless, vermicomposting system powered by worms.

In the diagram below (from www.wormwigwam.com), bedding and material are alternately layered by adding new layers on top. The worms continuously rise to feed on fresh layers, leaving a rich mixture of castings humus, worm cocoons, microorganisms and organic material in varying stages of decomposition behind. The end result – the nutrient-rich vermicompost – may eventually be reused as a form of garden fertilizer.

On top of bringing educational and environmental benefits, the Wigwam brings PTC financial benefits since the College pays less for waste removal services due to the work of the worms.

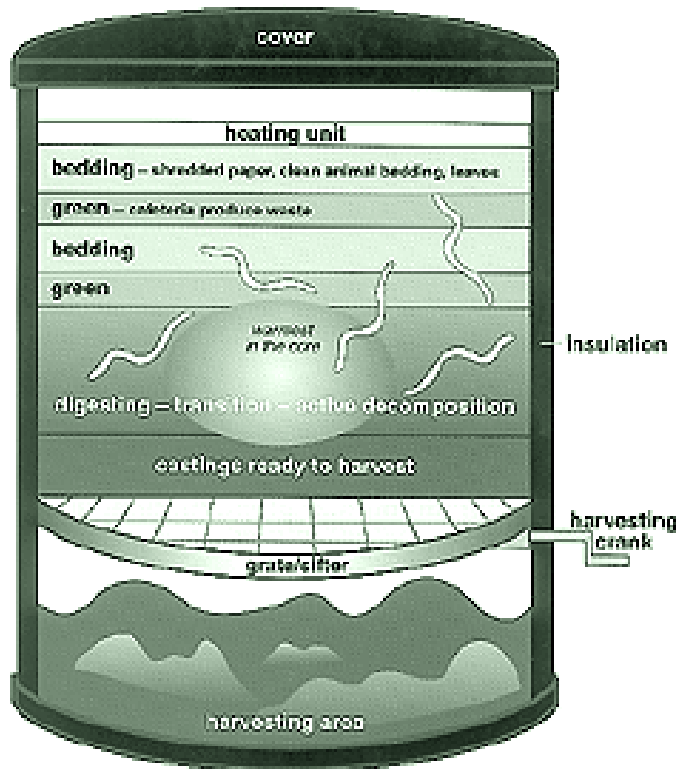


Photo: A Pine Technical College student lifts the lid on the new Worm Wigwam, exposing its contents.

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