

Putting worms to good use

BY CARA MACDONALD

Morning Star Writer

Venture Training Centre is on the composting edge with a production of a new, locally-designed vermiculture system.

It all started when Dave Weatherill attended a Boy Scout Jamboree in Kananaskis several years ago.

"You couldn't leave the recycle/reduce/reuse pavilion until you signed a pledge to do something to help your local environment," he said.

He looked at available indoor composting systems and found many of them were too large for smaller homes and awkward to use. He went to work and came up with the Biobin, a system of trays that allow the worms to move up, leaving fine compost and worm tea behind. There is never any need to sort through and separate the worms from the compost.

The Biobin is about one-foot square and four feet high and is home to 10,000 worms that eat their own weight in a day and produce compost in about 100 days. They can live up to 10 years and will happily reproduce when the food supply is generous and hold steady with less food so the bin can be left for several weeks at a time.

The worms eat all kinds of kitchen waste, including coffee grounds and egg shells and shredded paper. They can also be used for fishing worms.

"This is a product for its time. We hope we can get the solid waste



Venture Training Centre job coach Kerry Fairweather and supported work program employee Michael Belanger work on production of the locally-designed Biobin vermiculture composting system.

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department of the Regional District involved to help spare the landfills," said Weatherill.

"There could be long term savings and benefits for everyone. Some people are using them in areas where they can't have compost because of bears. This idea stayed with me over the years and I really believe in it. It's

convenient, it works and it's economical."

Venture Training Centre is putting the Biobin units together and the project could provide four jobs.

"I think this is a good opportunity. It will be good assembly-line job experience for our clients," said job coach Kurt Meuli.