



Invasive Jumping Worms Stop the Spread!

What's the problem?

Jumping worms have arrived and are snaking their way across Ontario, devouring leaf litter and other organic matter, leaving behind bare, dry granular pellets. They threaten our gardens, lawns and forests, and the life they support.

What to do?

Do not buy or use jumping worms for bait, vermicomposting, or gardening.

Scout the Soil: Check new mulch, compost, and soil for jumping worms and inquire with providers if measures have been taken to reduce the spread.

Scan Purchased Plants: Check the soil and roots for jumping worms or castings before planting in your yard. Choose bare-root plants or grow from seeds when possible.

If you find jumping worms, kill the worms by freezing or leaving in a bag out in the sun, then discard. Alternatively, worms may be killed using vinegar or alcohol.

Infested soil can be placed in sealed plastic bags and left in the sun, so that temperatures reach a min. 40°C for at least 3 days before garden reuse.

Prevention is important!

There are no controls, pesticides, or treatments available to stop these worms at this time. Jumping worms die over winter, but their eggs survive in small cocoons. These can be carried in the tread of a shoe, in a potted plant, by vehicles or equipment. So if you have jumping worms, **clean boots, gear and even roots.**

Not sure if you have them?

These worms wiggle and jiggle unlike the common nightcrawler, and they live in the upper layers of soils. Look for large areas of granular soil that resembles coffee grounds. Use mustard powder to draw them to the surface: Mix 1 gallon of water with 1/3 cup of ground yellow mustard seed and pour slowly over 1 square foot of soil. This irritates the worms and they will come to the surface. Dispose of all worms.

REPORT WORMS:

Ontario's Early Detection & Distribution Mapping System: www.eddmaps.org/ontario/

Visit the Canadian Invasive Species Centre for general info: www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/invasive-species/meet-the-species/land-and-animal-invertebrates/jumping-worms/