

Mealworms

A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

Immediate Care and Handling

As soon as your mealworms arrive, open the shipping container, remove the cups, and look inside. Depending on your order, you will receive larvae (mealworms), pupae, adults (darkling beetles), or a mixture of the 3. Once you have verified that the shipment is okay, the insects are ready to use.

Habitat Setup and Maintenance

Put 5 to 10 cm of bran meal, oatmeal, wheat germ, or whole-wheat flour in the bottom of a plastic pan. Add 25 to 50 beetles, larvae, or pupae and place a small slice of potato or apple or a banana peel on top of the meal for moisture. You can add a thin layer of shredded paper for the beetles to crawl on. Alternatively, culture mealworms in chicken mash that has been spread on layers of moistened burlap. Use a small slice of potato or apple or a banana peel, as before.

After 3 to 5 months, check the culture regularly for adults and pupae. Remove them and set up new cultures. The beetles have wings but seldom fly; still, it is a good idea to cover the culture container with a screen or perforated lid. As the name “darkling beetle” implies, these insects prefer the dark, so keep them in a cabinet or other darkened location. All stages of mealworms do well at normal room temperatures, but they will develop fastest at temperatures in the 25 to 30° C (77 to 86° F) range.

FAQ's

Do these insects bite?

No. They are completely harmless to people.

Can mealworms be refrigerated?

We recommend that you use all live materials as soon as possible; however, all stages of *Tenebrio* can be refrigerated. Do not freeze.

Are mealworms pests?

They can damage stored grain. Mealworms are generally beneficial because they feed on organic matter not usually eaten by other animals. They are also food for other animals. Some people raise mealworms as live food for pet reptiles or wild birds.

How can I tell the male beetles from the females?

Determining the sex involves dissection of specimens and detailed knowledge. Male and female beetles probably recognize each other with special scents or pheromones.

Problems? We hope not, but if so contact us. We want you to have a good experience.

Orders and replacements: 1-800-334-5551 then select Customer Service

Technical Support and Questions: caresheets@carolina.com

