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Make Your Own Bokashi Starter (Inoculant)¹

What you will need:

- 1 bag of cow manure
- 3 bags of rice bran
- 1 bag of rice straw biochar or crushed corn cob biochar
- 10 liters of warm water
- 200 milliliters (ml) of EM solution (14 tablespoons)
- 200 milliliters (ml) of molasses (14 tablespoons)
- A large, flat, smooth, dry surface for mixing
- Water
- A hoe
- Large, heavy duty plastic bags (enough to be able to hold everything above when you have mixed them all together)

What to do:

- Dump the cow manure, rice bran and biochar into a big pile
- Mix everything together well and spread the pile
- Mix the warm water, EM solution and molasses in a watering can, stir well
- Sprinkle the water/EM/molasses mix on the pile of manure, rice bran and biochar, mixing with your hoe the whole time so that everything gets damp
- Pick up a handful of the mix and squeeze. If you cannot form a ball that does not fall apart the moment you open your hand, sprinkle on more water.
- Sprinkle and mix. Sprinkle and mix. Do this slowly! You can always add **more** water. You **cannot** take water out!
- You have added enough water when you can pick up a handful of the mix, squeeze it and make a soft ball that holds together. You do **not** want to be able to squeeze water out of this ball! If you can – **too much water!**
- Shovel the completed mix into the plastic bags. Do not overfill. Sit on the bags to get **all** of the air out. Tie the bags shut to ensure that **no air** can get in.
- Inspect the bags to make sure that there are no holes – even tiny ones – and that there is no air left inside.
- Put the bags in a warm place that is out of the direct sun for two weeks.
- After two weeks, your bokashi starter (inoculant) is ready to use.

What to do next:

- You can use the bokashi starter as is in compost, garbage, the field.
- If you want to store it for future use, spread it out in the sun on a dry surface for two or three days until it is **absolutely dry**.
- Seal in plastic bags until ready to use.

¹ Thanks to Keith Mikkelsen, *Sustainable Agriculture in the Tropics: A Natural Farming System*, 2011.