# Jurnal Presipitasi

Media Komunikasi dan Pengembangan Teknik Lingkungan e-ISSN: 2550-0023

**Research Article** 

# The Use of Lumbricus Rubellus Earthworm Effect in Composting Process of *Musa Paradisiaca L. Peel* Waste

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# Abstract

Conventional organic waste composting is one of the processing of organic waste that produces fertilizer. However, the conventional composting process for organic waste lasts 1-3 months. Vermicomposting is composting that lasts a short time, and in addition, vermicomposting produces compost and worms with a high selling value. So, in this study, *Musa Paradisiaca L* (MPL) peel and sawdust waste were composted using the vermicomposting method into compost. The primary data in this study consisted of monitoring the C/N ratio, temperature, pH, moisture content, texture, the particle size of compost for 3 weeks of the composting process. Testing the analysis of the effect of using *Lumbricus Rubellus* (LR) earthworms in the composting process of MPL peel waste and sawdust by using LR earthworms. The study results showed that LR worms had no effect on temperature, pH, water content, and C/N ratio during the composting process of MPL peel waste but did affect the texture, particle size, and product of compost weight. pH, moisture content, and temperature of compos with adding LR earthworms and without LR worms was 7, less than 50%, 27-29 oC, respectively. The C/N ratio of compost that uses LR earthworms was 28, while the C/N ratio of composting that uses LR earthworms was 33.

Keywords: Musa Paradisiaca L waste; sawdust waste; vermicomposting

#### 1. Introduction

Banana (*Musa paradisiaca L.*) is the main fruit commodity in Southeast Asian countries, especially in Indonesia. In 2007, the total production of bananas in Indonesia was 5,270,131 tons (Suhartanto et al., 2012). In 2017, banana production increased, reaching 6.8 million tons (Mujiyo et al., 2017). Around 90% of the banana harvest in Indonesia gets a lot of demand from the domestic market, especially for star hotels and supermarkets (Suhartanto et al., 2012). This abundant banana production can cause new problems. Most of the wasted banana peels are agricultural waste that can cause environmental pollution (Hartono and Janu 2013). Besides being agricultural waste, banana peel waste is also part of household waste due to the high consumption of bananas (Nuriasih et al., 2019). Therefore, a technology to reduce the banana peel waste generation is needed. One method that can reduce banana peel waste generation is composting.

Aerobic composting can reduce the volume of organic waste by up to 50%. The aerobic composting process takes 20 to 30 days. The C/N ratio is an essential factor in the composting process. The optimum range of C/N ratio required for most organic waste is 20-25. The optimum moisture content for composting is around 50-60 percent (Tchobanoglous et al., 2002). C/N ratio for banana peel is 40 (Suprianto & Erlani, 2019). The water content in banana peels is 76% (Arthawidya et al., 2017). Because the C/N ratio of banana peels is high, it is necessary to carry out technological engineering to make them into compost. One such technology is vermicomposting.

Vermicomposting is one of the methods to decompose organic material for less than 30 days, decrease the C/N ratio, and retain nitrogen more than conventional composting (Wulandari, 2020). They added earthworms called *Lumbricus Rubellus* (LR) as decomposers increase composting rate process on organic solid waste (Rahmawati and Herumurti,2016). The growth of LR earthworms needs bedding, making organic waste fast degradation. Sawdust was needed as a bedding and bulking agent to increase the carbon value in vermicomposting process (Subandriyo et al., 2012). Sawdust contains water content 12.36%, N total (0.48%), C-organic (52.97%), C/N ratio (110).

Vermicomposting is a biotechnology method involving earthworms as a natural bioreactor to effectively recycle solid waste and organic wastewater (Bhandarkar, 2004). The novelty of this research is to increase the value of the composting product. In the previous research, the composting product was just the compost itself. The composting products are the composting itself and the bigger earthworm with vermicomposting. The nutrition of compost materials obtains the growth of earthworms. This research A nine grams earthworms *Lumbricus rubellus* on six hundred grams organic solid waste decomposed landscape waste up to 14.35% and increased the nitrate concentration up to 34% (Rahmawati and Herumurti, 2016). EM4 as a bio activator will increase the composting process rate and less odor (Natalina et al., 2017). This research aims to analyze the quality of compost products (color, texture, particle size, odor, C/N ratio, phosphor, potassium, pH) and the growth of earthworms because of the vermicomposting process MPL peel.

# 2. Methodology

Before vermicomposting was conducted, the C/N ratio of MPL peels and sawdust were analyzed to obtain the composition of compost material. C-organic and total Nitrogen of MPL peel and sawdust were analyzed by Walkey and Black method and Kjeldahl method, respectively. The result of C-organic and total Nitrogen value of MPL peel and sawdust were shown in Table 1.

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Material	C-organic Value (%)	Total Nitrogen Value	C/N ratio		
		(%)			
MPL Peels	45.46	0.55	82		
Sawdust	52.97	0.48	110		
				_	

Table 1. C-organic and total nitrogen value of MPL peels and sawdust

After the C/N ratio of MPL peel and sawdust were calculated, the composition of compost material was calculated using Equation 1 (Tchobanoglous et al., 2002).

$$R_{m} = \frac{W_{C of banana peels} + X.W_{C of sawdust}}{W_{N of banana peels} + X.W_{N of sawdust}}$$
(1)

Where :

Rm= C/N ratio of the mixture of MPL peel and sawdust $W_c$ = Weight of carbon $W_N$ = Weight of nitrogenX= weight of sawdust mixed with 1 kg MPL peel waste

According to Biruntha et al. (2020), using the C/N ratio gave nutrition for LR earthworms on the vermicomposting process. With C/N ratio mix (Rm) was 82 obtained that the weight of sawdust (0.02

kg) was mixed with 1 kg of MPL peel waste so that the percentage composition of the composted waste in this study consisted of sawdust (2%) and MPL peel waste (98%).

In this study, the density of the compost materials was measured to calculate the volume of the compost mixture. The compositions used in this research are 98% MPL peel waste and 2% sawdust without LR earthworms (B1), and 250 gr LR earthworms /kg organic waste (B2). Measurement of the compost mixture density using the Indonesian National Standard number 19-3964-1994. Based on the measurement of the density of the compost materials, the density of the compost mixture and the mass of composted waste in reactors 1 and 2 were 572 kg/m3 and 12.24 kg/m3, respectively.

The type of reactor in this study was a cubical continuous flow bin type. This reactor was made of wood and surrounded by sacks and cloth, which maintains humidity and air circulation in the reactor. The reactor is covered with a para net so that oxygen availability is sufficient in the composting process. The volume of the composting reactor used in this study was 85504 cm<sub>3</sub>, four times bigger than the volume of compost material). The height and width of the reactor have the same length, which was 50 cm. The design of the reactor of vermicomposting is shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Reactor of vermicomposting

Banana peels were chopped into sizes 2-3 mm. After that, MPL peels were mixed with sawdust homogeneously. The MPL peel and sawdust mixture were put into reactors 1 and 2. Each reactor was added EM4 with a dosage of 30 mL/kg compost material. The 2.76 kg earthworms were added into reactor 2 (B2). Composting has been going for three weeks.

The composting process's pH, temperature, moisture content, texture, and color were monitored every day. Particle size, the growth of earthworms was measured after 3 weeks. C-organic, total nitrogen, phosphor, and potassium were analyzed at 1<sup>st</sup> week and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks. The methods that were used are shown in Table 2.

Tab	ole 2.	Physical	and	chemical	analysi	s methods
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Parameters	Measurement Method			
pH dan temperature	In situ			
Moisture content	Gravimetric			
Texture and color	In situ			
Particle size	In situ			
weight of LR earthworm and compost	In situ			
C-Organik	Walkey and Black			
Total N	Kjhedahl Nitrogen			
Phospor	Spectrophotometry			
Potassium	Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometry (AAS)			

The physical and chemical analysis results were analyzed statistically—the statistical analysis used ANOVA One Way. Before the statistic test was conducted, normality test with Anderson darling method and homogeneity test with Levene method were conducted first (as shown in Table 8). Parameters tested for their effect during the composting process were pH, temperature, moisture content, C/N ratio. The hypothesis of this research was as follows.

 $Ho_A$  = there was no effect of the use of LR earthworms in temperature of the composting process  $H_{1A}$  = there was the effect of the use of LR earthworms in temperature of the composting process  $Ho_B$  = there was no effect of the use of LR earthworms in pH of the composting process  $H_{1B}$  = there was the effect of the use of LR earthworms in t pH of the composting process

Hoc = there was no effect of the use of LR earthworms in moisture content of the composting process

 $H_{1C}$  = there was the effect of the use of LR earthworms in moisture content of the composting process

 $H_{DD}$  = there was no effect of the use of LR earthworms in the C/N ratio of composting  $H_{1D}$  = there was the effect of the use of LR earthworms in the C/N ratio of composting

# 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 Temperature of Compost

This study showed that the composting temperature occurred at a decrease to soil temperature (300 C) at B1 and B2. There was only a slight difference in the composting temperature of the two reactors. Figure 2 showed that the composting temperature in both reactors is in the range (27-370 C). The optimal temperature for earthworm growth was in the range of 15-370 C (Kendie, 2009, Manyuchi et al. 2012 and Chaoui, 2010). According to Meena et al. 2021, the composting process has a mesophilic phase (temperature rise to 450 C, thermophilic and hygienic (45-600 C), and mesophilic 2 (<400 C) and maturation (20-300 C).



Figure 2. Temperature measurements in the composting process

#### 3.2 pH of Compost

In this study, there was no difference between the pH of the composting process in B1 and B2 (can be seen in Figure 3). There was no difference in the composition and type of compost material in B1 and B2 (Himanen and Hänninen, 2011). At the beginning of composting, the pH decreased, indicating the decomposition process of microorganisms produces organic acids and produces CO2 from the activities of microorganisms (González et al., 2019). On the 4th day of pH, composting rose to 7, and this was due to the activity of microorganisms in decomposing organic compounds into amides, amino acids, and ammonium into ammonia (Gusmawartati and Yusuf, 2015). According to Khaerunnisa and Rahmawati (2013) the increase of nitrogen compounds as ammonium (N-NH4<sup>+</sup>) indicates that the composting process is going well.

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#### 3.3 Color, Texture, and Particle Size of Compost

This study compared the physical condition of the compost from the results of composting using 250 grams of LR earthworm/kg waste and without LR earthworm. Worms used in composting can speed up the composting process. This was shown in the results of observations on both reactors. Compost began to form in the reactor that did not use worms on the 15<sup>th</sup> day. Compost began to form in the reactor that did. It was characterized by the color and texture of the compost, which began to turn blackish brown and smooth. The waste condition in the two reactors was the same, which was bright, fresh, and had a rough texture. Although the compost located in B2 was faster than in reactor B1, the color and texture had not changed again after the 21<sup>st</sup> day. The results of observing the color and texture of compost fertilizer can be seen in Table 3.

Dav	B-	Pa	Pic	Picture	
Day	DI	B2	Bı	B2	
	Bright and fresh color	Bright and fresh color			
1	Coarse texture	Coarse texture	1.		
-	Bright and fresh color and rough	Bright and fresh color		Sec. Contraction	
3	texture	Coarse texture			
6	Light brown color	Dark chocolate	1 Sugar		
0	Slightly rough texture	Coarse texture			
0	Dark brown color	Dark chocolate		0	
9	Slightly rough texture	Coarse texture			
12	Dark chocolate	Dark chocolate		and the second sec	
12	Slightly rough texture	Slightly smooth texture	$z = 4^{+}$	and the second second	
	Dark chocolate	Dark chocolate	and the second second		
15	Slightly smooth texture	Smooth texture			
-0	Dark chocolate	Dark chocolate		the second	
18	Smooth texture	Smooth texture			
21	Dark chocolate	Dark chocolate	and seattle	in the seal	
21	Smooth texture	Smooth texture	and the second		

There were differences in the particle size of the compost in B1 and B2. The particle size in the first and second reactors was compared with SNI 19-7030-2004 regarding compost quality. Fertilizer must have a particle size maximum of 25 mm of the weight of compost. The compost that was formed on the 21st day was harvested and sifted. Sifting was carried out to separate the finished compost from the waste that had not been composted or was still lumpy. The sieving in reactor B2 aims to separate the

compost from the LR earthworms. After sieving, the compost was analyzed for particle size. Based on the research results, the particle size of the compost in both reactors was 2 mm. The percentage of particle size of 2 mm in compost in B1 was 76%, while the percentage of 2 mm in compost in B2 was 85%. This proves that the use of LR earthworms in composting or vermicomposting can help reduce the particle size of the compost. The utilization of LR earthworms in the composting process can improve the compost's physical quality in terms of color, texture, and particle size. The results of the observation of the particle size of the compost using the vermicomposting method can be seen in Table 4.

Table .	<b>4</b> . The	particle	e size o	of the	compost
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	Reactor	Particle size (SNI 19-7030-2004)	The particle size of the compost
Bı		Maximum 25 mm	2 mm (76%)
B2			2 mm (85%)

3.4 C/N ratio, C-Organic, N, P, and K of Compost

Figure 5 described that the C/N ratio in the composting reactor B1 was higher than that of the B2 reactor. This was due to the higher nitrogen content in composting process with adding earthworms (Rahmatullah et al., 2013). According to Favoretto et al (2016), the decrease in nitrogen was due to the denitrification process into ammonium carried out by earthworms. When compared with SNI 19-7030 2004, the value of the C/N ratio in reactors B1 and B2 did not qualify SNI. This was because the raw material for this compost was MPL peel waste. Based on the study results, the initial C value of MPL peel waste was 45.46%, while the organic N value of MPL peel waste was 0.55%. The initial C/N ratio of MPL peel waste was 82 (Table 1). MPL peel waste contained high cellulose, so the C content was more significant than the N value, so the C/N ratio was large.



Figure 5. C/N ratio of the composting process

Compost's C, N, P, and K values qualified SNI 19-7030 2004. However, the C/N ratio in compost did not qualify SNI 19-7030 2004. It is because the C value was still relatively high. Therefore, the composting process needs to be carried out for more than three weeks so that the C value can be further decreased so that the C/N ratio can qualify the requirements. Although the C/N ratio did not qualify the requirements, the compost product produced has met the requirements when viewed from its physical characteristics (color, odor, texture, and particle size). This research should be vermicomposting process long time than 3 weeks. According to Purnomo et al (2017), Chaniago and Yulita (2020) and Bakar et al (2014), C/N ratio compost meets SNI because of vermicomposting for eight weeks. The longer the vermicomposting process, the greater the decomposition of carbon compounds into CO2 gas. This causes the C- Organic content to decrease and the C/N ratio to decrease. The composition of the waste and the time of composting improved the quality of worms, reducing C-organic as the N value increases rapidly. Therefore, the best C/N ratio in vermicomposting was 15 (Jamaludin et al., 2010).



The composting time factor can be considered one of the factors that affect the difference in the concentration of N, P, and K. A longer composting period gave a longer treatment process. This caused the concentration values of N, P, and K to increase along with the length of the composting process. The longer the time required for vermicomposting, the greater the N, P, and K concentration obtained. For comparison, in Othman et al. (2021) study, the N, P, and K values in vermicomposted compost for 14 consecutive days were 0.197%; 0.0285%; and 0.0136%. The content of N, P, and K in the compost produced in B1 and B2 complies with SNI 19-7030 2004. This indicates that the compost produced in reactors B1 and B2 can be used for plant growth (Table 5).

	2		1	
Element	SNI 19-7030 2004 (minimum)	Bı	B2	Analyzis
Nitrogen (%)	0.4	1.17	0.96	Qualified
$P_2O_5(\%)$	0.1	0.57	0.5	Qualified
K <sub>2</sub> O (%)	0.2	0.52	0.5	Qualified

Table 5. NPK m	neasurement results in	compost
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# 3.5 Test the Effect of Using LR Earthworms on pH, Temperature, Moisture Content, and C/N Ratio in Composting Process

The test results of the effect of using LR earthworm (250 gr/Kg compost material) LR were as follows.

Test	Normality Test		Homogeneity Test		Statistic Test	
Test	Method	P-Value	Method	P-value	Method	P-value
Temperature	Anderson Darling	0.005	Levene	0.671	One Way Anova	0.469
рН	Anderson Darling	0.005	Levene	1	One Way Anova	1
Moisture Content	Anderson Darling	0.008	Levene	0.653	One Way Anova	0.862
C/N Ratio	Anderson Darling	0.335	Levene	0.642	One Way Anova	0.547

Table 6. The test of the effect of using LR earthworm

Table 6 showed that the addition of LR earthworms (250 gr/Kg compost material) had no effect (P-value >  $\alpha$  0,05) on temperature, pH, moisture content, and C/N ratio of composting. This was because the composting process was not long (only 3 weeks), and the levels of earthworms in the composting process were not high enough. It did not affect the temperature, pH, or water content C/N ratio of MPL peel waste composting. The results of this study were different from the results of research by González et al (2019) where the pineapple peel composting process with the vermicomposting method lasts for 9 weeks so that it affects the pH, temperature, and water content of the compost.

#### 3.6 Weight of LR Earthworm and Compost

In this study, the weight of MPL peel waste and composted sawdust was 12.24 kg. In reactor B2, the weight of the worm added was 2.76 kg. After composting for 3 weeks, there was a decrease in the waste and an increase in the weight of the LR earthworms. The percentage of waste shrinkage in reactor B1 reached 66.5%, and the percentage of waste shrinkage in reactor B2 reached 70.59%. Compost shrinkage in reactor B2 was more significant than the shrinkage of waste in reactor B1. This shows that the LR earthworms added in B2 could consume waste well, so the depreciation value was large. The graph of compost shrinkage and worm weight gain can be seen in Figure 6.

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Figure 6. Weight of compost and LR earthworms before and after the composting process (21 days)

#### 4. Conclusion

After conducting research, it can be concluded that the addition of LR earthworms of 250 g/Kg of compost material in composting MPL peel waste does not affect temperature, pH, water content, and C/N ratio. However, it affects the resulting compost's texture, particle size, and weight. The characteristic of compost with adding LR earthworms and without LR worms was almost the same pH average 7, moisture content less than 50%, and temperature of compost 27 -29 oC, respectively. The C/N ratio of compost that uses LR earthworms was 28, while the C/N ratio of composting that uses LR earthworms was 33. Further research should be vermicomposting process should be a longer time than 3 weeks to affect temperature, pH, water content, and C/N ratio compost and could meet SNI 19-7030-2004. In addition, the vermicomposting process should be use LR worms less than 1 year old.

# Acknowledgment

Thank you to the Direktorat Riset dan Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat of Institute Tecnology of Sepuluh Nopember (ITS) supported fee of Pengabdian Masyarakat in 2021.

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