

STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MUSHROOM PRODUCTION

PREFORMED SAWDUST BLOCKS

METHOD BY: BEN COWAN, FITNESS FARM, INDIANAPOLIS, IN

Summary

This document outlines basic steps for the production of mushrooms on sawdust blocks ordered from a third-party. Indianapolis farms have successfully produced shiitake from pre-made sawdust blocks..

Materials

Ready-made sawdust blocks
Jig saw
Fruiting chambers
 IBC Tank, clean
 . Plastic
 Metal poles/stakes
Pond foggers
Water



**Fruiting blocks can be purchased from Sharondale Mushroom Farm, Field and Forest Products, Inc., or other mushroom production companies.

Steps

1. **BUILD FRUITING CHAMBERS.** Using a jig saw, cut out a square from the top portion of the IBC tote, leaving 1 to 1.5-feet of plastic on one side and 6-inches of tote on the opposite side. Turn tote on its side so that the cut portion is facing outward and the 1-1.5-foot plastic lip is closest to the floor and the 6-inch lip is at the top. To place metal poles for shelving, drill holes in both sides of tote at equal distances and heights. Make sure to place the shelves at distances that will adequately hold the size of preformed sawdust block you will be using (we placed poles ~6-inches apart and installed two shelves). Insert metal stakes through both sides. Attach plastic tarps to top front of IBC tote so that plastic can be lifted to access the shelving. Plastic helps to maintain humidity in the chamber.



2. **PLACE SAWDUST BLOCKS IN CHAMBER.** Make sure blocks are spaced at least 6-inches apart to make room for fruiting and air circulation.



Steps (cont'd)

3. **MIST BLOCKS TWO TIMES DAILY.** Mist until blocks begin to pin. Be sure to close plastic cover to maintain moisture on the blocks.

4. **ADD HUMIDITY.** Fill the bottom of the tote with water and float 1-2 pond foggers to add humidity to chamber. Close the plastic and check daily for fruiting.



5. **HARVEST MUSHROOMS.** The blocks will be ready to harvest in 1-2 weeks, depending on season. Harvest is done by pulling fruiting bodies off the block and trimming excess substrate from the stem base. After harvest the blocks are placed in the wood line for the second flush.



6. **CYCLING OF BLOCKS FOR REUSE.** Blocks typically get two flushes of fruits. Place 10 blocks in the fruiting chambers and harvest after 7-10 days. Remove and add the remaining unfruited 10 blocks to the fruiting chamber. The blocks that produced during the first flush should rest for 8-12 days, depending on the moisture content. After the blocks are rested are punctured 4-6 times with a sterilized probe to create holes for water to penetrate the block when soaked. The blocks are then soaked for 12 hours to reinvigorate the mycelium and placed in a shaded hoop house or in a wood line to wait for the second flush.

