

# Sarcophaga

## A CAROLINA™ CareSheet

### Immediate Care and Handling

Sarcophaga larvae can be used as live food for large fish, amphibians, and many reptiles. They pupate in a few days at room temperature. Pupae are largely used as hosts for Jewel Wasp (*Nasonia*) or WOWBUGS (*Melittobia*), *Sarcophaga* pupae should be placed in a refrigerator immediately upon receipt and left there until they are put with the wasps. For best results we recommend placing the pupae in a shallow cardboard box. Spread the pupae and provide enough ventilation to keep the box dry and prevent mold.

### Hatching Pupae

To hatch pupae, place them in a warm room (about 27° C; 80° F). Flies emerge about seven days later. *Sarcophaga* normally pupate in the ground where the moisture content is high. An occasional light misting will provide sufficient moisture. If in doubt, you can check development periodically by breaking open one or two pupae. If the flies are developing normally, their eyes begin to darken (red) within one or two days. Then, the setae on the thorax turn black, and finally the body darkens. Adults emerge two or three days after turning black. If sufficient moisture is not present, the pupae will shrink and become quite angular in appearance. Moisture is essential for hatching.

### Habitat for Adults & Culturing

A screen wire cage 60 x 60 x 60 cm with an access door is a suitable home for an adult colony of *Sarcophaga*. Feed them dry sugar in a shallow dish. To provide a constant water source, add a shallow tray (about 20 x 30 x 5 cm) containing a bed of wood shavings and water. When the flies are ready to lay eggs (about a week after emergence), put about 200 g of scored liver on the shavings in the water tray. A new tray of shavings and liver are required daily when the flies are laying well.

Set up a tray (about 45 x 25 x 8 cm) partially filled with about 1.5 kg of thinly sliced liver as a rearing platform for larvae. Spread the scored liver on which the flies have laid along with the water and wood shavings over the surface of the fresh liver. Place the tray of larvae in a warm, dark, humid room. Maintain a high humidity in the room so the development tray does not become dry.

To collect the mature larvae, place the larval development tray in a large wooden box with openings at the bottom corners. The larvae drop from the development tray into the wooden box and migrate to the corners where they fall into jars placed below the openings.

### FAQs

*How long can I store Sarcophaga pupae in a refrigerator?*

*Sarcophaga* pupae keep well under refrigeration (2-5° C) for a month or more.

*How do I dispose of them?*

You may either freeze-kill them (place in freezer for three days) or place them in a 10% alcohol solution. Seal in a plastic bag and dispose of in the trash.

*What are the pill-like objects I received?*

Those are the fly puparia. Each puparium is a hardened larval skin which envelops the fly pupa.

**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](mailto:caresheets@carolina.com)



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