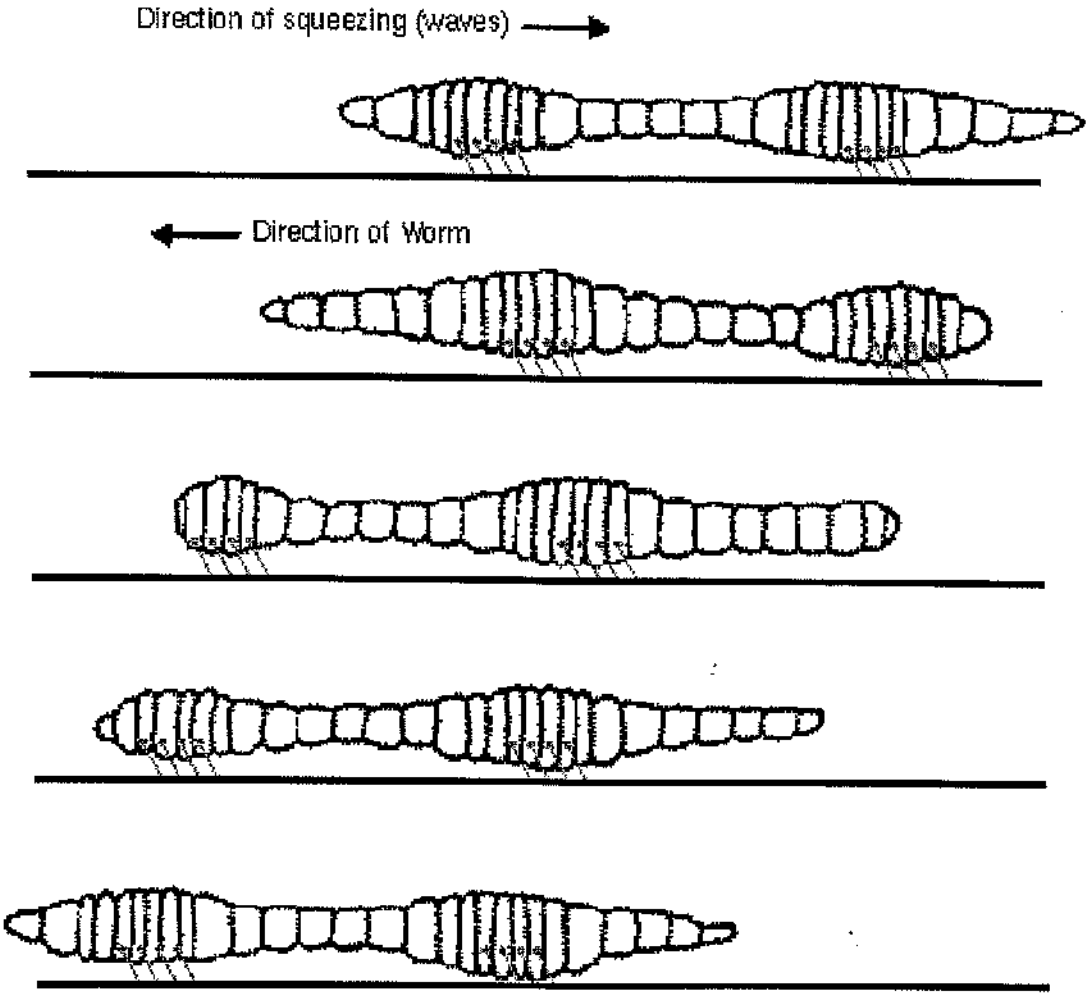
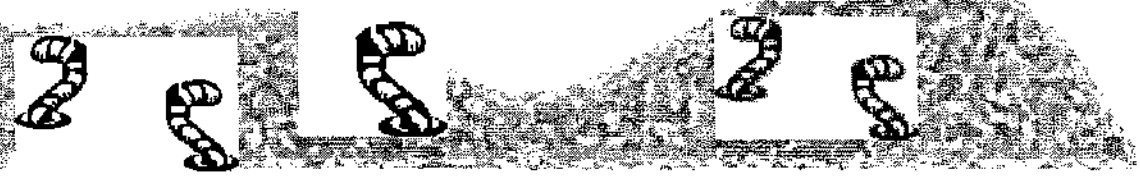
Worm Walk

When a worm wants to move forward, its powerful muscles contract and it squeezes itself around the middle (sort of like when you squeeze a tube of toothpaste). The worm's front gets long and thin and burrows ahead. Then another set of muscles squeezes and makes the worm fat. It pushes its setae (bristles) down and grips the burrow while the rear section catches up with the front section.

Worms can force their way through soft earth; they must eat their way through harder soil. Eaten earth passes through their intestines and is deposited on the ground's surface as castings.



Adapted from *The Reasons for Seasons*, by Linda Allison. Yolla Bolly Press/Little, Brown, and Co. Boston,1975.