

PolySeed®

Technical Report

Natural Seed

Why not natural seed?

Has your lab considered using Natural seed to reduce costs? If the answer is “yes”, make sure you do your homework before making any changes. “Free” seed may sound good, but it is important to remember the biggest problem with natural seed is its lack of standardization.

Natural seed is constantly changing...and it is very difficult to get consistent test results when your standard is never the same twice.

To illustrate the problems associated with natural seed's lack of standardization, imagine this scenario:

You have decided to use natural seed to run your BOD's, your seed samples always contain lots of filament and you are using 2 mL in every test. In addition, your seed samples are always FREE, so despite the fact that you have to handle potentially toxic raw sewage on a regular basis, you're hopeful and smiling.

After a while, you begin noticing inconsistent test results! To determine if the new problems are due to your new “free” seed source, you go through this dialog: *“How many active bacteria do my natural seed samples typically contain? What types of bacteria are in my samples? Will these types of bacteria work in the BOD test? Are the types of bacteria in today's sample the same as the types of bacteria in yesterday's samples? Does my facility have young sludge or very old sludge? What is the TSS? Does the TSS change from day to day? What has the weather been like?”*

Yikes! Maybe this scenario is familiar to you...maybe its not. The point is natural seed is pulled from an ever-changing source. Even if all other testing variables are consistent, this variable, the backbone of the test will not be. Your test results will be inconsistent because your testing standard is by nature, inconsistent. If you are using natural seed, the success of your testing will be largely dependent upon the current bacterial status of your treatment facility.

So, if your lab is trying to reduce costs and has considered using natural seed to save money, think again. Natural seed may be free upfront, but its lack of standardization causes time-consuming, costly problems in the long run.