HYCON®

Agar Strips

Commercial Size and Packing

1.44253.0050	TC	50 pcs.
1.44226.0040	TC-γ	40 pcs.
1.44240.0050	TSM	50 pcs.
1.44228.0040	TCI-γ	40 pcs.
1.44255.0050	PEN	50 pcs.
1.44109.0040	PEN-γ	40 pcs.
1.44108.0040	LAC-γ	40 pcs.
1.44242.0050	YM	50 pcs.
1.44243.0050	SDX	50 pcs.
1.44244.0040	SDX-γ	40 pcs.
1.44245.0025	DG18	25 pcs.
1.44102.0025	S	25 pcs.
1.44099.0025	C	25 pcs.

Ingredients

The composition and application of agar strips is outlined in the respective Certificate of Analysis. Certificates are available from the website (www.merck-chemicals.com).

Characteristics

Ready-to-use culture media for assessment of airborne microorganisms with HYCON® Microbial Air Samplers, i.e. RCS® High Flow Touch, RCS® High Flow, RCS® Plus, RCS® Plus Ex, RCS® Standard, and RCS® Isolator. The portfolio includes agar strips for determination of the total colony counts as well as yeasts and molds (also in gamma-irradiated, double-wrapped packaging, respectively), and staphylococci and coliform bacteria. Agar strips for the detection of airborne microorganisms are individually sealed, flexible plastic strips filled with different types of media.

Handling

1. Prior to use the agar strip should be equilibrated to room temperature.
2. Open the wrapper approximately at 1/3 by pealing back the plastic seal at the rounded side of the wrapper. Remove the agar strip with the coated side facing downwards.
3. Insert the agar strip into the opening of the rotor, or the impeller drum according to the directions outlined in the user manual of the respective microbial air sampler.
4. Place the instrument into required position, choose the appropriate sample volume and start the air sampling procedure.
5. When sampling is finished, remove the agar strip and place it back into the original wrapper. Seal the wrapper with an adhesive tape or Cover Slides (Art. No. 1.44111.0100).
6. Label the wrapper e.g. with a waterproof pen for identification.
7. Proceed with incubation according to the following conditions:

Determination of	*Incubation Time*	*Temperature*
Total count	1–5 days	30 °C–35 °C
Yeasts and molds	3–7 days	20 °C–25 °C
Staphylococci, coliforms	1–3 days*	30 °C–35 °C

* During incubation of agar strips type S the typical growth pattern for staphylococci (color change of colonies to yellow due to fermentation of mannitol) is usually achieved after 18-24 hours. Prolonged incubation times may yield to higher colony counts, yet growth might be less specific.

Important Notes

- Prior to use the unopened strip should be subjected to a visual inspection for dehydration or contamination. Dehydrated or contaminated agar strips should be discarded.
- Practice aseptic technique when handling agar strips.
- The coated surface of the agar strips should face down during incubation in order to avoid the formation of satellites by condensing water.
- Country-specific or internal guidelines may indicate incubation times and temperatures that differ from those outlined above.

Evaluation

After incubation, the colony-forming units (CFUs) are analyzed by visual inspection directly through the sealed wrapper.

Storage and Shelf Life

- The expiration date can be derived from the Certificate of Analysis, the box label, and the tab of each agar strip.
- Agar strips are stored in original packaging (Styrofoam box).
- Agar strips are stored protected from light. In particular type YM, C and S should be stored protected from light to avoid the inactivation of supplements and dyes.
- Agar strips type S and C are stored cooled at 2 °C to 15 °C. All other agar strips are stored at 2 °C to 25 °C.

Examples of possible storage conditions:
- Room Temperature (20 °C to 25 °C). Storage under these conditions does not require equilibration prior to use.
- Refrigerator (2 °C to 8 °C).
- Beverage Cooler (8 °C to 15 °C).

Important Notes

- To prevent condensation effects avoid frequent changes between temperature conditions.
- Upon storage agar strips should not be placed near heat sources such as refrigerators with heat-emitting condensators.
- Boxes should be stored with the coated side of the agar strip facing downwards (label is readable on boxes with 50 pieces; label is facing downwards on boxes with 25 pieces).

Disposal

Living microorganisms grown on agar strips must be inactivated prior to disposal. Agar strips can be autoclaved, burned, or treated with biocides. Where stipulated, the country-specific or internal guidelines must be followed.

Further HYCON® Products for Environmental Monitoring

- HYCON® RCS Air Sampler, i.e. RCS® High Flow Touch, RCS® Isolator, RCS® Plus Ex and RCS® Standard for determining the microbial count in the surrounding air.
- Wide range of accessories such as the RCS® Compressed Gas Adapter for microbial monitoring of compressed gasses.
- HYCON® Airborne Particle Counters i.e. APC SmartTouch, ErgoTouch and ErgoTouch Pro 2.
- HYCON® Validation and Qualification Handbooks.
- HYCON® Contact Slides for surface monitoring.

For further information please refer www.merck-chemicals.com.

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