

DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF FORMATION AID

Formation aid, also called 'neri', is technically a polyacrylamide. In powder form, it is a synthetic version of 'tororo-aoi', a plant grown in Japan for use in the 'nagashizuki' style of Japanese papermaking. It is used in the making of thin papers from long-fibered pulps, and is also invaluable in the techniques of pulp painting and pulp spraying.

Directions:

The powder should be mixed with cold water in the following proportion:

1 tablespoon of powder to 1 gallon of water

or

6 grams of powder to 4 liters of water

To prepare the formation aid, start with the container of water, then slowly add the powder, mixing constantly, thoroughly and vigorously. Or preferably, place the empty container under the water faucet, out of which a slow, steady stream of water should be flowing. Slowly add the powder with one hand, mixing constantly and thoroughly with your other hand. If there are lumps, then you are probably adding the formation aid too quickly. Let the solution sit for several hours before using it, stirring it occasionally. This ensures that the powder has been completely dissolved.

A faster method of preparation is to fill a blender with water, about 3/4 full; cover the top and turn on the blender; remove the lid and sprinkle in 1/2 teaspoon of formation aid while the blender is agitating; let the blender run for another five seconds. The formation aid should be completely dissolved at this point, and ready to use. If it is too thick, add more water.

We recommend mixing only the amount of formation aid that will be used that day, as it is possible that the viscosity of the solution will lessen over time.

Use:

The formation aid slows down the drainage of the pulp, thereby allowing the papermaker to form more even, consistent sheets. It is difficult to describe exactly how much to add to a pail of pulp, or add to the vat of pulp. Start with a small cup of it, and mix thoroughly into the pulp. See if you can tell a difference in the pulp - the pulp should have a slippery feel, and it should drain slowly through the screen or mesh of your mould. Add more formation aid as you feel is needed.