

ABSTRACT

METHOD OF, AND APPARATUS FOR, SEPARATING WAFERS FROM A WA-
FER STACK

In a method of separating wafers (12) from a vertical wafer stack (16), the wafers (12) are transported away individually from above via movement means (23) which act from above. The movement means (23) are designed as circulating belts (24), with a suction surface (25) against which the uppermost wafer (12) is made abut, wherein the abutment of the wafer (12) against the suction surface (25) is enhanced by negative pressure suction. In order to separate a plurality of wafers (12) located one upon the other, the movement means (23) are subjected to at least one of the following two steps:

- a) water (30) is jetted with force against the leading edge of the uppermost wafer (12), the water being directed obliquely from beneath the latter,
- b) the movement means (23) guide the wafer (12) over a stripping device (32) which butts against the underside of the moving wafer (12) from beneath and both forces the wafer (12) against the suction surface (25) and generates a braking action thereon.

Thereafter, the wafer (12) is moved on to a transporting path (35, 37) in order to be transported on for further processing.

(cf. fig. 1)
