BASF Aktiengesellschaft

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Abstract

In the process for the continuous preparation of alkyl esters of (meth)acrylic acid by reacting (meth)acrylic acid with monohydric alkanols having from 1 to 8 carbon atoms in the presence of an acid esterification catalyst in a reaction zone, there is discharged from the reaction zone a product mixture which comprises the alkyl (meth)acrylate formed, the catalyst and the by-products formed during the course of the esterification having boiling points higher than that of the alkyl (meth)acrylate, and from which the alkyl (meth)acrylate is separated by distillation in a separation zone. The product mixture discharged from the reaction zone is fed to a rectification unit (I), in this unit the product mixture discharged is separated by rectification into at least one product (I) comprising the alkyl ester of (meth)acrylic acid and a product (II) comprising the catalyst, the product (I) is fed to a further rectification unit (II) and in this the alkyl ester of (meth)acrylic acid is separated off by rectification.

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