

Abstract**Optimized process for preparing methacrylic acid**

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The present invention relates to an optimized process for preparing methacrylic acid, wherein methacrolein is prepared in a first stage from propionaldehyde and formaldehyde by means of a Mannich reaction and oxidized in a second stage to methacrylic acid. More particularly, the present invention relates to the reduction in the amounts of catalyst to be used in the first stage, especially to the reduction in the amounts of acid to be used here, by virtue of the additional installation of recycling streams suitable for the purpose.