compatible monomers. The copolymer can be a copolymer from different hydroxy-carboxylic acid monomers, *e.g.*, a mixture of lactic acid and another 3-hydroxy butyric acid. The copolymer can also be obtained from copolymerizing oligomers of different hydroxy-carboxylic acids.

[0008] In a particular embodiment, a method of making poly aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acids by the conversion of a crude aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic monomer to a poly aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acids, comprising the steps of:

a) providing a source of monomer as aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid in a hydroxylic medium;

b) concentrating the aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid in the hydroxylic medium by evaporating a substantial portion of the hydroxylic medium to form a concentrated acid solution;

c) oligomerizing the aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid to obtain an aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid oligomer with a degree of oligomerization from about 5 to about 50;

d) adding a polymerization catalyst to the hydroxyl-carboxylic acid oligomer;

e) polymerizing the aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid and aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid oligomer to obtain a poly aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid with a degree of polymerization of about 35 to about 500;

f) transferring the poly aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid to a thin film polymerization/ devolatilization device to obtain a degree of polymerization of about 300 to about 20,000;

g) isolating the poly aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid and

wherein for steps d, e, f, and g cyclic dimers derived from the aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acid are less than 10 weight percent based on the total mass of the aliphatic hydroxy-carboxylic acids monomers, oligomers and polymers, The thin film polymerization/devolatilization device is configured such that fluid polymer is conveyed to the device such that the film of the fluid polymer is less than 1 cm thick and provides a means for volatilizing the water formed in the reaction and other volatile components. The temperature of the thin film evaporator and polymerization/devolatilization device are from 100 to 240° C and the pressure of