

Process for Producing Gamma-butyrolactone

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Abstract

Gamma-butyrolactone is produced by catalytic hydrogenation of maleic anhydride in the vapor phase in the presence of catalysts on the basis of copper chromite in reduced form. The reaction is carried out using a substantially uniform catalyst derived substantially from the 3 components cupric oxide, chromic oxide, and silicon dioxide. The ratio of CuO to Cr₂O₃ to SiO₂ is preferably about 78:20:2. It can prove advantageous to use an inert gas such as nitrogen as a diluent.