CLAIMS

1. Method of separating cocoa mass or products of which the pressing and filtration behaviour is comparable to cocoa mass into liquid fat and cake, by means of a press (1) comprising one or more pressing elements (6) in turn comprising a pot (7) having a cavity (8) for receiving mass to be pressed, a squeezer (9) located at least partially in the cavity (8), and at least one filter (11) disposed in front of the squeezer (9) and/or on the side of the cavity (8) opposite the squeezer (9), which method comprises the steps of

filling the cavity or cavities (8) with cocoa mass or products of which the pressing and filtration behaviour is comparable to cocoa mass,

exerting pressure on the pressing element(s) (6) thus pressing liquid fat through the filter(s) (11),

releasing pressure from the pressing element(s) (6), and

opening the pot(s) (7) to remove the cake(s) from the cavity or cavities (8),

characterised in that,

prior to releasing the pressure from the pressing element(s) (6), liquid fat is purged from at least the space(s) (13) behind the filter(s) (11).

2. Method according to claim 1, wherein, prior to releasing the pressure from the pressing element(s) (6), liquid fat is purged from the filter(s) (11).

3. Method according claim 1 or 2, wherein the liquid fat is purged by means of a flowable medium.

4. Method according to claim 3, wherein, during purging, a pressurized medium is fed to the space(s) (13) behind the filter(s) and/or the medium and the liquid fat are withdrawn from said space(s) (13).

5. Method according to claim 4, wherein a flow of the pressurized medium is generated in the space(s) (13) behind the filter(s) (11), preferably with a pressure

difference between inlet and outlet of at least 0,2 bar, preferably at least 0,4 bar.

6. Method according to claim 5, wherein a flow of the pressurized medium is generated with a pressure difference between inlet and outlet of at least 0,2 bar, preferably at least 0,4 bar.

7. Press (1) for separating cocoa mass or products of which the pressing and filtration behaviour is comparable to cocoa mass into liquid fat and cake, comprising a frame (2), one or more pressing elements (6) disposed in the frame (2), and means (3, 4, 5) for exerting pressure on the pressing element or elements (6), wherein the pressing element or elements (6) comprise a pot (7) having a cavity (8) for receiving mass to be pressed, a squeezer (9) located at least partially in the cavity (8), at least one filter (11) disposed in front of the squeezer (9) and/or on the side of the cavity (8) opposite the squeezer (9), and an outlet (16) for liquid fat, **characterised in that** at least one, preferably all of the pressing elements (6) is respectively are provided with an inlet (17) for a flowable medium for purging liquid fat from at least the space(s) (13) behind the filter(s) (11).

8. Press (1) according to claim 7, wherein said inlet(s) (17) is (are) connected to a source of the medium, which source comprises a pump and/or is at an elevated pressure.

9. Press (1) according to claim 7 or 8, wherein said outlet(s) (16) for liquid fat is (are) connected to a low pressure source, preferably a vacuum pump (20).

10. Press (1) according to any one of claims 7-9, wherein the inlet(s) (17) for a medium for purging liquid fat is (are) provided in the squeezer(s) (9).

11. Press (1) according to any one of claims 7-10, wherein the inlet(s) (17) and the outlet(s) (16) are positioned substantially diametrically.

12. Press (1) according to any one of claim 7-11, wherein at least one preferably all of the squeezers (9) comprise at least one channel (13), preferably a network of channels e.g. concentric rings of interconnected channels, for collecting liquid fat pressed through the respective filter (11).

13. Press (1) according to any one of claims 7-12 comprising means arranged for operating the press to perform the method of any one of claims 1-6.

14. Press (1) according to any one of claims 7-13, wherein the cavity (8) is cylindrical, said filters (11) are flat or substantially flat and/or wherein the side of the cavity (8) opposite said squeezer (9) is formed by the back of an adjoining squeezer (9).

15. Press (1) according to any one of claims 7-14, wherein in at least one, preferably all of the pressing elements (6) filters (11) are disposed in front of the squeezer (9) and on the side of the cavity (8) opposite the squeezer (9) and wherein, when the press (1) is in the filling position, the distance between the filters (11) is smaller than 85 mm, preferably smaller than 75 mm, preferably smaller than 65 mm, preferably in a range from 60 to 30 mm, preferably smaller than 60 mm and larger than 30 mm.