

CHIP SPACING MAINTAINING APPARATUS

ABSTRACT

A chip spacing maintaining apparatus for maintaining the spacing between any adjacent ones of a plurality of chips obtained by dividing a workpiece attached to an expand sheet, the expand sheet being supported at its peripheral portion to an annular frame is provided. The chip spacing maintaining apparatus includes a far-infrared radiation applying unit for applying far-infrared radiation toward the expand sheet expanded in a target area between the outer circumference of the workpiece and the inner circumference of the annular frame, thereby shrinking the expand sheet in the target area, and an air layer forming unit provided adjacent to the far-infrared radiation applying unit, the air layer forming unit having a nozzle hole for discharging a gas toward the workpiece in applying the far-infrared radiation from the far-infrared radiation applying unit toward the expand sheet, thereby forming an air layer above the workpiece.

(Figure 2)