

ABSTRACT

The present invention relates to a method for the continuous production of glycolide, comprising: a pre-polymerization step wherein glycolic acid or methyl glycolate is pre-polymerized into their respective oligomers; a depolymerization step wherein a reactive distillation system is utilized to depolymerize these oligomers into crude glycolide, characterized in that a small quantity of concentrated glycolic acid solution, concentrated methyl glycolate solution, or a combination thereof is introduced into the depolymerization reactor as part of the reaction feed; and a purification step wherein the obtained crude glycolide is processed into ultrapure glycolide through a melt crystallization system.