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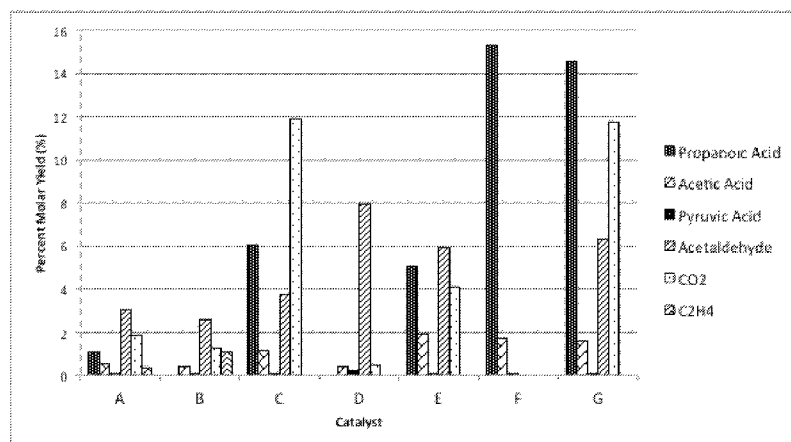


Fig. 1

(57) Abstract: Disclosed herein is the catalytic dehydration of lactic acid to acrylic acid, which is characterized by a high conversion of lactic acid, a high selectivity for acrylic acid, a high yield of acrylic acid, and correspondingly low selectivity and molar yields for undesired by-products. This is achieved with a particular class of catalysts defined by a mixture of metal-containing phosphate salts that together provide the catalyst with a very high basicity density and low acidity density. Further, the catalyst is believed to be stable and active for lengthy periods heretofore unseen in the art for such dehydration processes.