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(71) Applicant: KERRY LUXEMBOURG S.À.R.L.

[LU/LU]; 17, rue Antoine Jans, L-1820 Luxembourg (LU).

(72) Inventors: KLATT, Jennifer Jean; 7818 Canterbury

Ridge Drive, South Beloit, Illinois 61080 (US). COOP-

ER, Renetta; N7363 Lee Ann Lane, Elkhorn, Wisconsin

53121 (US). LANDORF, Angela Krystine; 1612 Gate-

way Blvd., Apt. #15, Beloit, Wisconsin 53511 (US). SHEE-

HAN, Vivien M.; 11485 Ridgecrest Drive, Roscoe, Illi-

nois 61073 (US). LU, Yingshuang; 1740 Gateway Blvd.,

Apt. 222, Beloit, Wisconsin 53511 (US). MAEGLI, Jack

William; 713 South Paddock Rd., Beloit, Wisconsin 53511

(US).

(74) Agent: SALIBA, Raja N. et al.; SUGHRUE MION, PLLC,

2100 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W., Suite 800, Washington,

District of Columbia 20037-3213 (US).

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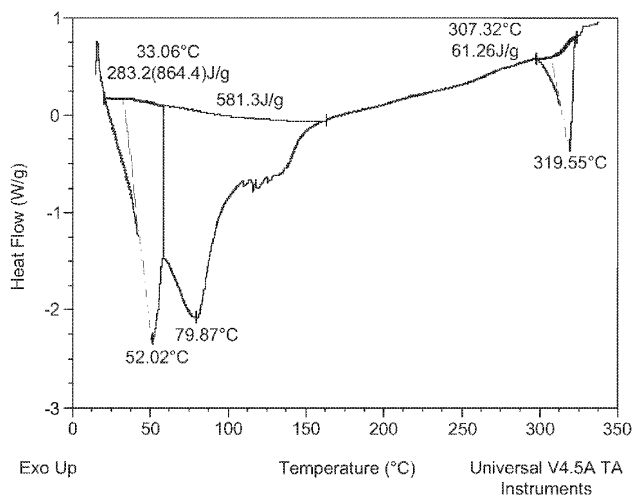


FIG. 5

(57) **Abstract:** An antimicrobial powder, which includes a low molecular weight antimicrobial organic acid and a hygroscopic ingredient, is prepared according to a process wherein the components are combined in a solution to form a liquid slurry composition prior to drying to form a powder, such that drying the liquid slurry composition involves co-drying the components. The low molecular weight antimicrobial organic acid in the antimicrobial powder can be present in a crystal phase of both anhydrous and hydrate forms. The antimicrobial powder exhibits excellent properties, such as shelf stability, without the requirement of encapsulating agents. Methods for preparing the antimicrobial powders as well as applications of the antimicrobial powders in food and beverage products are also disclosed.

[Continued on next page]

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