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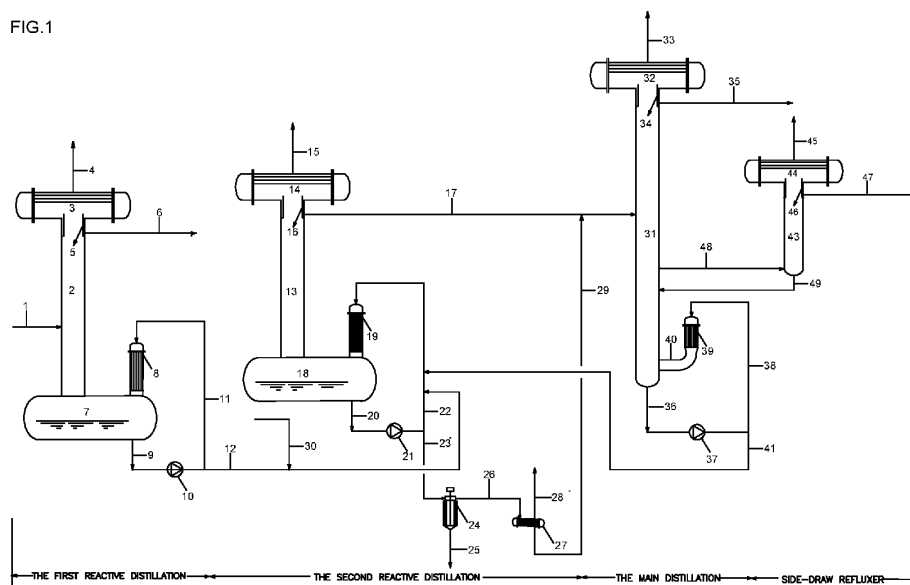
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- (54) Title: METHOD AND DEVICE FOR THE PRODUCTION OF LACTIDE

FIG.1



- (57) Abstract: This invention relates to a method for the continuous production of optically pure lactide comprising the first reactive distillation, the second reactive distillation, the main distillation and the side-draw refluxer. For each of the four systems a novel horizontally top-mounted condenser is used in order to decrease its total pressure drop and thus reduce side-reactions associated with high bottom temperature. In addition, a wiped film evaporator, a short path evaporator or a combination thereof is utilized for the concentration of the purge stream from the second reactive distillation, in a purpose of removing the metal contaminants contained in the purge stream and depolymerizing the contained unconverted lactic acid oligomers to crude lactide, all of which give additional advantages for the lactide production.

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