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(54) **Title:** PROCESS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ETHYL ACETATE

(57) **Abstract:** A process for the production of ethyl acetate by reacting ethylene with acetic acid and water in the presence of a heteropolyacid catalyst in which the concentrations of reactants in the feed stream to the reactor are such that the mole ratio of ethylene to acetic acid lies in the range 6.0 to 12.2, the mole ratio of ethylene to water lies in the range 8.0 to 17.0 and the mole ratio of acetic acid to water lies in the range 1.25 to 1.40. It has been found that by careful control of the relative concentration of the reactants and of the process operating conditions the relative amounts of methyl ethyl ketone (MEK, 2-butanone) coproduced with the desired ethyl acetate can be reduced and the catalyst life can thereby be extended.

