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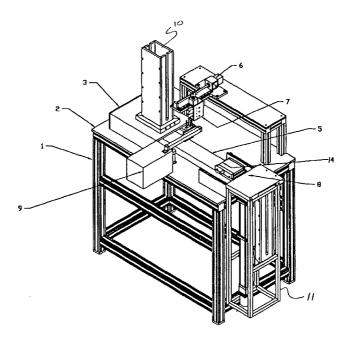
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(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR THE AUTOMATED PREPARATION OF BIOPOLYMER CRYSTALS WITH HIGH OUTPUT



(57) Abstract: A fully automated, high output robotic station for the crystallization of proteins and other biopolymers via the sitting drop vapor diffusion and micro-batch methods. This station performs microplate feeding, liquid aspiration, dilution, and dispensing, as well as microplate sealing and storage into a temperature controlled hotel. All functions are microprocessor controlled. The operator designs the process via graphical user interface, after which the station executes the process automatically to completion.





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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

### INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

onal Application No PCT/US 01/48151

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER IPC 7 C30B29/58 C30B7/00 C07K1/00 According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC B. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) IPC 7 C30B Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used) EPO-Internal C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Citation of document, with Indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages Relevant to daim No. P,X US 6 296 673 B1 (JAKLEVIC JOSEPH M ET AL) 1.3 - 142 October 2001 (2001-10-02) column 8, line 66 -column 10, line 44; figure 1 WO 93 07311 A (SCHERING CORP) 1 - 14X 15 April 1993 (1993-04-15) the whole document 15 Υ GB 2 249 492 A (DOUGLAS INSTR LTD 15 Y :IMPERIAL COLLEGE (GB)) 13 May 1992 (1992-05-13) the whole document Α US 5 013 531 A (SNYDER ROBERT S ET AL) 1 - 147 May 1991 (1991-05-07) column 5, line 44 -column 6, line 48; figure 2 Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C. Patent family members are listed in annex. Special categories of cited documents: \*T\* later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the \*A\* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance invention "E" earlier document but published on or after the international \*X\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to 'L' document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone \*Y\* document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such docu-ments, such combination being obvious to a person skilled 'O' document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means 'P' document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "&" document member of the same patent family Date of the actual completion of the international search Date of mailing of the international search report 15 July 2002 23/07/2002 Name and mailing address of the ISA Authorized officer European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,

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