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SUPERINTENDENCIA DE INDUSTRIA Y COMERCIO



No. 11-039040- -00007-0000

Fecha: 2014-01-13 15:39:26 Dep. 2020 DIR.NUEVASCR
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Act. 412 REPOSPRESRECU Folios: 35

P-2868

SUPERINTENDENCIA DE INDUSTRIA Y COMERCIO

DIVISION DE NUEVAS CREACIONES

E.

S.

D.

Re: Expediente No. **11-039.040**
Solicitud de patente a nombre de **BRASKEM AMERICA, INC.**

Yo, SILVANA MARIA LOPEZ DÍAZ, identificada como aparece al pie de mi firma, domiciliada en la carrera 11 A No. 86-53, piso 6, y actuando como apoderada sustituta de acuerdo con la sustitución presentada el 22 de octubre de 2013 de la sociedad BRASKEM AMERICA, INC., domiciliada en Estados Unidos de América, solicitante de la patente de la referencia, interpongo recurso de reposición contra la resolución No. **72934** emitida el 29 de noviembre de 2013 por el Superintendente de Industria y Comercio, por medio de la cual se niega el privilegio de patente de invención para la solicitud contenida en el expediente de la referencia.

1. FUNDAMENTOS DEL RECURSO

Con fundamento en la facultad que confiere el artículo 34 de la Decisión 486 al solicitante para modificar la solicitud de patente en cualquier momento del trámite, presento junto con este memorial un nuevo capítulo reivindicatorio, el cual consta de 15 reivindicaciones y reemplaza completamente el capítulo presentado anteriormente.

En cuanto a estas modificaciones, me permito decir que las mismas no amplían de ninguna manera la materia objeto de la presente solicitud y se realizaron con el ánimo de superar las objeciones de claridad y nivel inventivo planteadas por el examinador en la referida resolución. El nuevo capítulo reivindicatorio que consta de 15 reivindicaciones y la materia contenida en dichas reivindicaciones corresponde a la misma materia de las reivindicaciones allegadas en la solicitud original presentada el 30 de marzo de 2011, las cuales fueron modificadas en respuesta al oficio No. 13260 notificado por fijación en lista el 30 de julio de 2013, presentado a ese Despacho el 22 de octubre de 2013, con la diferencia que se modificaron nuevamente las reivindicaciones, con el fin de que el examinador pueda reconocer los requisitos de patentabilidad de la presente invención con base en argumentos que serán expuestos mas adelante.

Particularmente, es deseo del solicitante indicar la modificación realizada en las nuevas reivindicaciones 1, 2, 4 y 9, en las que el límite inferior de la proporción en peso de etileno en el copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno de 7.2% a ha sido reemplazado por 7.5%. A este respecto, es deseo del solicitante manifestar que, aunque es consciente que el límite inferior de 7.5% no se encuentra en forma literal descrito en el capítulo reivindicatorio, particularmente en los párrafos [0006], [0009] , [0013] , [0016] y [0020],

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donde se indica una modalidad preferida con una proporción de etileno en peso de 7.2% a 15%, dicho límite inferior se encuentra soportado por la información adicional incluida en el párrafo [0039], que hace referencia a que en ciertas modalidades de la invención, el copolímero puede contener 7.5%, 8%, 9%, 10%, 11%, 12%, 13%, 14% ó 15% de etileno. Adicionalmente, los ejemplos incluidos en el capítulo descriptivo, describen las ventajas de la presente invención para los polímeros B1 y B2, donde la proporción en peso de C2 es de 7.98% y 7.76%, respectivamente. Así, la modalidad no indicada como preferida en el capítulo descriptivo se encuentra descrita implícitamente como un componente lógico de las modalidades ejemplificadas y preferidas de la invención definida en dicho capítulo.

Atentamente nos permitimos decir que se adjunta recibo por tasa de modificación y no por reivindicaciones adicionales, toda vez que el nuevo capítulo reivindicatorio cuenta con menor número de cláusulas que el presentado en la solicitud original y en esencia es el mismo objeto pero más limitado.

Con relación a las objeciones de nivel inventivo, volvemos sobre el particular que el artículo 18 de la Decisión 486/00 determina que *“una invención tiene nivel inventivo, si para una persona del oficio normalmente versada en la materia técnica correspondiente, esa invención no hubiese resultado obvia ni se hubiese derivado de manera evidente del estado de la técnica”*. (El subrayado es nuestro).

Lo anterior significa que el análisis de nivel inventivo **NO** es una comparación de los objetos de las anterioridades y la solicitud en estudio. El análisis de nivel inventivo **debe demostrar** la obviedad de la invención y establecer cómo ésta no contiene un salto cualitativo, que demuestre su altura inventiva, teniendo en cuenta que se hace **necesario demostrar** que la invención analizada carece de nivel inventivo y hubiese sido obvia para una persona versada en la materia.

Considerando lo anterior y los argumentos presentados por el examinador en la resolución en contra del nivel inventivo de la presente invención a la luz de los documentos D1 (indicado en el oficio No. 13260 notificado por fijación en lista el 30 de julio de 2013 y en la resolución No. 72934 emitida el 29 de noviembre de 2013) y D2 (indicado en el oficio No. 13260 notificado por fijación en lista el 30 de julio de 2013), es deseo del solicitante que se tengan en cuenta los siguientes argumentos, los cuales demuestran el nivel inventivo de la composición de resina, el método para preparar un homopolímero, el método para preparar un polímero y la película de polipropileno, reclamados en la presente solicitud.

Como primera medida, es deseo del solicitante resaltar que el objeto de la presente invención es proporcionar una resina de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente que mantiene la procesabilidad de un alto contenido de solubles de xileno, pero presenta características mejoradas al procesarlo en una película de polipropileno. Los ejemplos incluidos en el capítulo descriptivo demuestran que el polímero de la presente invención es un sustituto adecuado para resina estándar de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente, que proporciona un desempeño mejorado en cuanto a mayor resistencia en los módulos MD y TD, sin sacrificar la procesabilidad de dicho material.

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Al realizar un análisis detallado del documento D1, se encuentra que dicha anterioridad se refiere a películas de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente que presentan una buena procesabilidad. La mezcla sugerida por D1 para la preparación del polipropileno orientado biaxialmente permite el uso de polipropileno homopolímeros que tienen una mayor cristalinidad (con menor contenido de solubles) que el que sería necesario para procesar una película de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente (D1, párrafo [0009]). Al modificar la tacticidad del componente homopolímero y el contenido de etileno en el copolímero aleatorio, y sus proporciones en cada composición, es posible producir mezclas adecuadas para películas claras u opacas. Así, D1 propone una película de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente que tienen una proporción en peso de etileno de 0.5% a 7%. El uso de 0.5% a 4% en peso de etileno tiene un buen desempeño en la producción de películas opacas, y de 4% a 7% en peso de etileno tiene un buen desempeño en la producción de películas claras (D1, párrafo [0070]).

De esta forma, una persona del oficio medianamente versada en la técnica podría derivar a partir de la información incluida en D1 que la variación del contenido de etileno puede influenciar las propiedades ópticas de la película resultante de polipropileno orientado biaxialmente. Sin embargo, dicho experto no podría encontrar motivación para buscar una mejora en las propiedades mecánicas como la resistencia, o siquiera pensar en variaciones al contenido de etileno en el copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno a partir de D1, con el fin de llegar a la invención reclamada en la presente solicitud, ya que dicho documento no proporciona una motivación para mejorar las propiedades de las resinas de polipropileno. Las enseñanzas descritas en el documento D1 en combinación con otros documentos pertinentes del estado de la técnica, o con el conocimiento estándar de una persona del oficio versada en la materia, no motivaría a dicha persona a mejorar las propiedades mecánicas de las resinas de polipropileno.

En ese orden de ideas, de manera respetuosa nos permitimos decir que los argumentos del señor examinador se encuentran basados en un análisis de tipo “hindsight” o de retrospectiva, toda vez que es evidente que una persona medianamente versada en la materia no habría podido encontrar la motivación para mejorar las propiedades mecánicas de las resinas de polipropileno o para combinar las enseñanzas incluidas en el documento D1 con las propiedades del polipropileno isotáctico.

En consecuencia, teniendo en cuenta lo anterior, es claro que la invención reclamada en la presente solicitud en las reivindicaciones 1 a 15 tienen nivel inventivo, según lo definido en el artículo 18 de la Decisión 486/00.

Adicional a los argumentos anteriormente presentados, es deseo del solicitante indicar a ese Despacho que la solicitud equivalente en Estados Unidos de América, que contiene parcialmente las mismas reivindicaciones que las contenidas en la presente solicitud, fue

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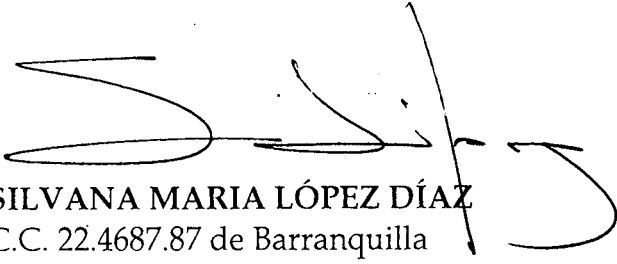
concedida bajo el número US 7750081 B2, reconociendo la Oficina de Patentes de dicho país, la novedad, el nivel inventivo y la aplicabilidad industrial de la presente invención. Asimismo, la solicitud equivalente en Europa, que contiene en esencia las mismas reivindicaciones que las contenidas en la presente solicitud, fue concedida también bajo el número EP 2334732 B1. Es relevante indicar, que la Oficina de Patentes en Europa considero durante la evaluación de patentabilidad de la presente invención, el mismo documento D1 citado por el examinador. Copia de dichas patentes se encuentran adjunto como anexo al presente memorial.

De esta forma, aunque mi solicitante reconoce el principio de independencia de las diferentes Oficinas de Propiedad Intelectual, resulta sorprendente que los requisitos de patentabilidad, los cuales son considerados conceptos universales, hayan sido reconocidos por dichas Oficinas de Patentes para la correspondiente invención, mientras que la Oficina Colombiana de Patentes se aparta de dicho criterio unánime.

Teniendo en cuenta lo dicho anteriormente, solicito a usted lo siguiente:

- a) Que de conformidad con lo previsto por los artículos 3 (inciso 3); 35 (inciso 2) y 59 (inciso 2) del Código Contencioso Administrativo se consideren y se resuelvan **TODOS** los argumentos y **TODAS** las cuestiones planteadas así como las que aparezcan con motivo de este recurso.
- b) Que se revoque la resolución No. **72934** del el 29 de noviembre de 2013 expedida por el Superintendente de Industria y Comercio, y se proceda a conceder el privilegio de patente de invención a la solicitud de mi mandante.

Señor Superintendente,


SILVANA MARIA LÓPEZ DÍAZ
C.C. 22.4687.87 de Barranquilla
T.P 147463 del CSJ
notificaciones@clarkemodet.com.co

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ANEXOS

- US 7750081 B2. *"Random Copolymer With Enhanced Ethylene Content"*.
- EP 2334732 B1. *"Random Copolymer With Enhanced Ethylene Content"*.

DIRECCIÓN DE NUEVAS CREACIONES
MODIFICACIONES Y/O CORRECCIONES

1. Identificación del Trámite

☐ Error material

☒ Modificación a una Solicitud en trámite

☒ Patente de Invención

☐ Patente de Modelo de Utilidad

☐ Registro de Diseño Industrial

☐ Esquema de Trazado de Circuitos Integrados

2. Datos del solicitante

Persona Natural ☐

Persona Jurídica ☒

BRASKEM AMERICA, INC.

Nombre o denominación / Nombre o razón social completa

Nombre representante legal

Tipo de empresa Micro ☐ Pequeña ☐ Mediana ☐ Otra ☐

Documento de identificación: ☐ C.C. ☐ C.E. ☐ NIT ☐ Otro Número _____

Nacionalidad/País de constitución	Dirección y domicilio del titular	Ciudad
Estados Unidos de América	1735 Market Street Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103, U.S.A.	Pennsylvania,

☐

Autorizo expresamente a la Superintendencia de Industria y Comercio para que todas las comunicaciones sean enviadas a través de la dirección de correo electrónico

3. Datos del apoderado:

SILVANA MARIA LÓPEZ DÍAZ

C.C. 22.468.787

147463 CSJ

Apellidos y Nombre

Documento de identificación

Tarjeta profesional

Dirección y domicilio		Ciudad
Carrera 11 No. 86-53, Piso 6, Bogotá D.C., Colombia		Bogotá D.C.
Dirección electrónica	No. Fax	Número telefónico
notificaciones@clarkemodet.com.co	6350824	6181088

En caso de haber presentado poder general para asuntos que se adelanten ante la Delegatura de Propiedad Industrial, sírvase indicar el número de su radicación o protocolo de poder general _____

4. Datos del trámite

Corrección:

Expediente No. 11-039.040

Aparece _____

Debe ser _____

Modificación:

☒ Presentación Solicitud Divisional.

Modificación al capítulo descriptivo.

Presento junto con este recurso nuevo capítulo reivindicatorio, el cual consta de 15 reivindicaciones.

☐ Modificación al capítulo Reivindicatorio

☐ Modificación al resumen.

☐ Modificación a los dibujos.

5. Anexos

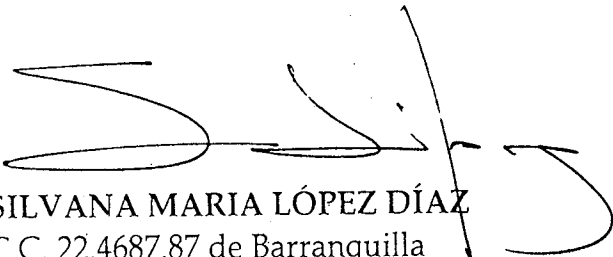
☒ Comprobante de pago de la tasa para la presentación de la corrección y/o modificación

☐ Poder, si fuere el caso.

☒ Documento que contiene las modificaciones o correcciones.

☐ Copia de la solicitud y sus anexos en formato magnético.

6. Firma



SILVANA MARIA LÓPEZ DÍAZ
C.C. 22.4687.87 de Barranquilla
T.P 147463 del CSJ
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SUPERINTENDENCIA DE INDUSTRIA Y COMERCIO

NIT : 800.176.089-2

- / -



Industria y Comercio
SUPERINTENDENCIA

RECIBO DE CAJA

No. 14 - 001088

Bogotá D.C., Enero 08 de 2014 - 15:18:09

RECIBIDO DE : CLARKE MODET

NI 830.008.643

***** Soporte del Pago *****

TIPO PAGO	BANCO	CUENTA	No. PAGO	FECHA PAGO	VR PAGO
CONSIGNACION	BANCO DE BOGOTA	062754387	569012835	08/01/2014	90.526.000.00

***** Conceptos Pagados *****

CANT.	RENTISTICO	CONCEPTO	Vr.UNDITARIO	Vr.CONCEPTO
1	50005-01-03 CAMBIO DE MODALIDAD Y MODIFICACIONES	EN CREACION CORRECCION A SOLICITUD EN TRAMITE / MODIFICA	128.000.00	128.000.00
				\$128.000.00

SON: **CIENTO VEINTIOCHO MIL PESOS MONEDA CORRIENTE**

Responsable: _____

Recibo de Caja Aplicado al Expediente No. _____

Sede Centro: Carrera 13 No. 27 - 00 Pisos 3,4,5 y 10 Bogotá, D.C.- Colombia

Web: www.sic.gov.co e-mail: info@sic.gov.co Conmutador: (571) 5870000 Fax: (571) 5870284 Línea: 018000-910165 Call Center: (571) 6513240

Enero 8 de 2014 - 15:18:30

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REIVINDICACIONES

1. Una composición de resina que comprende:
 - a. 70% a 95% en peso de un polipropileno homopolímero, dicho polipropileno homopolímero que tiene entre 0% y 3% en peso de solubles de xileno y una cristalinidad de 55%; y
 - b. 5% a 30% en peso de un copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno, dicho copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno contiene de 7.5% a 15% de etileno en peso.
2. Una composición de resina que comprende:
 - a. 70% a 85% de un polipropileno homopolímero que tiene entre 0% y 3% en peso de solubles de xileno y una cristalinidad de 55%; y
 - b. 15% a 30% en peso de un copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno, dicho copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno contiene de 7.5% a 15% de etileno en peso.
3. El polímero de acuerdo con cualquiera de las reivindicaciones 1 y 2, en donde el polímero comprende adicionalmente un aditivo seleccionado del grupo que consiste de nucleadores, antioxidantes, neutralizadores de ácido, agentes de deslizamiento, agentes de antibloqueo, agentes de antiempañamiento, pigmentos, y combinaciones de los mismos.
4. Un método para preparar un homopolímero mezclado en reactor que comprende 70% a 95% de un polipropileno homopolímero y 5% a 30% en peso de un copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno que comprende de 7.5% a 15% de etileno en peso, dicho método comprende:
 - a. polimerizar el propileno con un sistema de catalizador Ziegler-Natta en un reactor de bucle de fase líquida para producir dicho homopolímero; y
 - b. copolimerizar el propileno y el etileno en un reactor de fase de gas en la presencia de dicho homopolímero.
5. Un método para preparar un polímero mezclado mediante fusión que comprende



70% a 95% de un polipropileno homopolímero y 5% a 30% en peso de un copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno que comprende de 7.5% a 15% de etileno en peso, dicho método comprende:

- a. polimerizar el propileno con un sistema de catalizador Ziegler-Natta en un reactor de bucle de fase líquida para producir dicho homopolímero;
 - b. copolimerizar el propileno y etileno con un sistema de catalizador Ziegler-Natta en un reactor de fase de gas para producir dicho copolímero de etileno propileno; y
 - c. mezclar mediante fusión dicho homopolímero y dicho copolímero.
6. El método de la reivindicación 4 comprende adicionalmente componer dicho polímero mezclado en el reactor con uno o más aditivos.
 7. El método de la reivindicación 5 comprende adicionalmente mezclar mediante fusión uno o más aditivos con dicho homopolímero y copolímero.
 8. El método de cualquiera de las reivindicaciones 4 y 5 en donde dicho catalizador Ziegler-Natta comprende titanio y un donante externo.
 9. Una película de polipropileno orientada biaxialmente que comprende un polímero, dicho polímero comprende:
 - a. 70% a 95% en peso de un polipropileno homopolímero, dicho polipropileno homopolímero que tiene entre 0% y 3% en peso solubles de xileno, y una cristalinidad de 55%; y
 - b. 5% a 30% en peso de un copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno, dicho copolímero aleatorio de etileno/propileno contiene de 7.5% a 15% de etileno en peso.
 10. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde la temperatura de procesamiento ideal es 328° F.
 11. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde la opacidad es 0.57.

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12. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde el porcentaje de transmitancia 90% a 100%, o donde la claridad es de 95% a 100%.
13. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde dicho polímero comprende adicionalmente un aditivo seleccionado del grupo que consiste de nucleadores, antioxidantes, neutralizadores de ácido, agentes de deslizamiento, agentes de antibloque, agentes de antiempañamiento, pigmentos, y combinaciones de los mismos.
14. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde dicha película es opaca.
15. La película orientada biaxialmente de la reivindicación 9 en donde dicha película es transparente.



(11) **EP 2 334 732 B1**

(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT SPECIFICATION**

(45) Date of publication and mention
of the grant of the patent:
17.07.2013 Bulletin 2013/29

(51) Int Cl.:
C08L 23/00 (2006.01) **C08L 23/04** (2006.01)
C08J 5/18 (2006.01) **C08L 23/12** (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **09818376.7**

(86) International application number:
PCT/US2009/058798

(22) Date of filing: **29.09.2009**

(87) International publication number:
WO 2010/039715 (08.04.2010 Gazette 2010/14)

(54) **RANDOM COPOLYMER WITH ENHANCED ETHYLENE CONTENT**

STATISTISCH AUFGEBAUTES COPOLYMER MIT ERHÖHTEM ETHYLEN-GEHALT
COPOLYMÈRE STATISTIQUE AYANT UNE TENEUR D'ÉTHYLÈNE AMÉLIORÉE

(84) Designated Contracting States:

**AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR
HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO PL
PT RO SE SI SK SM TR**

Designated Extension States:
AL BA RS

(30) Priority: **01.10.2008 US 286834**
01.10.2008 US 286774
01.10.2008 US 286773

(43) Date of publication of application:
22.06.2011 Bulletin 2011/25

(73) Proprietor: **Braskem America, Inc.**
Philadelphia, PA 19103 (US)

(72) Inventors:

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• **MIGONE, Ruben, A.**
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• **KIM, Sehyun**
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(74) Representative: **Olgemöller, Luitgard Maria**
Patentanwältin
Lindenstraße 12a
81545 München (DE)

(56) References cited:

WO-A1-2004/020507 **WO-A1-2006/115768**
WO-A1-2008/112116 **US-A- 5 460 884**
US-A1- 2003 060 580 **US-A1- 2007 167 576**

Note: Within nine months of the publication of the mention of the grant of the European patent in the European Patent Bulletin, any person may give notice to the European Patent Office of opposition to that patent, in accordance with the Implementing Regulations. Notice of opposition shall not be deemed to have been filed until the opposition fee has been paid. (Art. 99(1) European Patent Convention).

DescriptionFIELD OF THE INVENTION

5 [0001] The present invention is drawn generally to the field of polypropylene resins. More specifically, the present invention is drawn to a polymer comprising high crystalline homopolymer polypropylene and a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The present application is also drawn to methods of making the same as well as novel compositions, such as, but not limited to, biaxially-oriented polypropylene ("BOPP") film comprising the polymer of the invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

10 [0002] One of the myriad of uses for polypropylene is for the production of BOPP film. BOPP is used to produce both clear and opaque film for numerous packaging applications. To gain wide commercial acceptance for BOPP film applications, though, a given polypropylene resin must provide uniform stretching under typical BOPP processing conditions. Not surprisingly, not all polypropylene resins exhibit favorable behavior under the mechanical and thermal stresses of the BOPP production process. One resin that tolerates BOPP production conditions is high xylene solubles homopolymer. This resin can be fractionated into three components: an isotactic component, a stereoblock component, and an atactic component.

20 [0003] The stereoblock component is crystalline and melts at a significantly lower temperature than the isotactic component. Film processing performance of the resin, as measured by T. M. Long draw stress, is correlated with the amount and quality of the stereoblock component. The stereoblock component is also believed to provide softening that enables solid-phase drawing to occur under the practical draw stresses observed on a BOPP processing line.

25 [0004] In high xylene solubles homopolymers, the stereoblock component is created by introducing defects which disrupt crystallization and provide a lower-melting component. These defects, however, compromise both the amount and the stereo regularity of the isotactic phase, reducing film strength. Traditionally, high stereo defect concentrations also lead to high xylene solubles content in the polymer which considerably narrows the resin manufacturing process window.

30 [0005] There thus exists a long felt, but unmet need in the art for a BOPP grade resin that maintains the processability of the high xylene solubles homopolymer, but exhibits enhanced characteristics when processed into a BOPP film.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

35 [0006] The present invention provides a polypropylene polymer suitable for use in producing BOPP film. The invention polymer comprises homopolymer polypropylene as well as a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The invention polymer preferably comprises from about 70% to about 95% by weight of the homopolymer. In preferred embodiments, the homopolymer has less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The invention polymer further comprises about 5% to about 30% by weight of the ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The ethylene/propylene random copolymer contains from 7.5% to about 15% random ethylene by weight.

40 [0007] The present invention also provides a method of manufacturing the invention polymer of the present invention. Preferably, the method of the invention comprises homopolymerizing propylene utilizing a Ziegler-Natta catalyst and one or more external donors. The method of preparing the invention polymer further comprises copolymerizing ethylene and propylene.

45 [0008] The present invention likewise teaches a BOPP film comprising the resin of the present invention. The film may be either translucent, transparent, or opaque.

[0009] In one embodiment, the invention is a resin composition comprising about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The resin composition further includes about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing from 7.5% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

50 [0010] In a sub-embodiment, the polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

[0011] In another embodiment, the invention is a resin composition comprising about 70% to about 85% of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The resin further includes about 15% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing from 7.5% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

55 [0012] In a sub-embodiment, the polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combina-

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tions thereof.

[0013] In another embodiment, the invention includes a method for preparing an in-reactor blended polymer comprising about 70% to about 95% of a polypropylene homopolymer and about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The ethylene/propylene random copolymer contains from 7.5% ethylene to about 15% ethylene by weight.

[0014] The method comprises the steps of polymerizing propylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one liquid phase loop reactors to produce said homopolymer; and copolymerizing propylene and ethylene in at least one gas phase reactor in the presence of the homopolymer.

[0015] In a sub-embodiment of this method, the method further comprises compounding said in-reactor blended polymer with one or more additives. In another sub-embodiment, the Ziegler-Natta catalyst comprises titanium and at least one external donor.

[0016] In another embodiment, the invention includes a method for preparing a melt blended polymer comprising about 70% to about 95% of a polypropylene homopolymer and about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The ethylene/propylene copolymer has from 7.5% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

[0017] In this embodiment, the method comprises polymerizing propylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one liquid phase loop reactor to produce the homopolymer; copolymerizing propylene and ethylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one gas phase reactor to produce the ethylene propylene copolymer; and melt blending the homopolymer and copolymer.

[0018] In a sub-embodiment of this method, the method further comprises melt blending one or more additives with said homopolymer and copolymer.

[0019] In a further sub-embodiment of this method, the Ziegler-Natta catalyst comprises titanium and at least one external donor.

[0020] In another embodiment, the invention provides a biaxially oriented polypropylene film comprising a polymer. The polymer comprises about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The polymer further includes about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing from 7.5% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

[0021] In a further embodiment, the biaxially oriented film has an ideal processing temperature of about 328 °F.

[0022] In another embodiment, the biaxially oriented film has a haze of about 0.57%.

[0023] In still another embodiment, the biaxially oriented film has a percent transmittance of greater than about 90%.

[0024] In another embodiment, the biaxially oriented film has a clarity of greater than about 95%.

[0025] In a further sub-embodiment, the polymer comprising the biaxially oriented film further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

[0026] In another embodiment of the invention, the biaxially oriented film may be transparent. In a further embodiment of the invention, the biaxially oriented film may be opaque.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0027]

Figure 1 depicts the process windows for polymers C, "75/25", and FF029A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0028] The polymer according to the current invention is a blend of high crystalline polypropylene homopolymer and a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The blend may be produced either by melt blending or by an in-reactor process.

[0029] Like high-xylene solubles BOPP film grade resin, the invention polymer fractionates into three components; an isotactic component; a stereoblock component, and an atactic component. Unlike high xylene solubles homopolymer, though, the isotactic component of the invention polymer is more crystalline.

[0030] The stereoblock fraction of the invention polymer is likewise crystalline, but has a melting temperature lower than the stereoblock component of high xylene solubles BOPP grade resin. The combination of the higher crystallinity of the isotactic fraction and the lower melting temperature of the stereoblock fraction of the invention polymer as compared to standard BOPP grade homopolymer imparts enhanced physical properties to products comprising the resin while simultaneously maintaining the processability of the resin. Examples of enhanced properties in products comprising the resin include, but are not limited to, higher film tensile modulus.

[0031] A further characteristic of the invention polymer is the random nature of ethylene dispersion throughout the random copolymer. In general, ethylene in a random copolymer of the present invention tends to be more random than

not. For example, in one embodiment of a polymer of the present invention wherein the ethylene in the random copolymer is about 8 wt%, the number of triple and double ethylene insertions are each about 17 mol % in the invention polymer. Single insertions in this embodiment thus account for about 66 mol % of all ethylene in the invention polymer. Without wishing to be bound to any particular theory, it is believed that the high percentage of single ethylene insertions in the ethylene/propylene random copolymer contribute to the unique properties of the invention polymer.

[0032] United States Patent 5,460,884 to Kobylivker describes a composition comprising a homopolymer and an ethylene/propylene random block copolymer. The patent describes the random block copolymer as comprising 3% random ethylene and about 9% block ethylene, for a total of about 12% ethylene content. Although these values appear to fall within the range presently described, further analysis of the disclosure of the 5,460,884 patent, particularly the NMR spectrum included as Figure 1 of that patent, shows that the ethylene/propylene block copolymer contains nearly 20% ethylene and is far blockier, i.e. contains more double and triple ethylene insertions, than it is random.

[0033] The invention polymer may be prepared as a reactor blend, in which case copolymer is polymerized in the presence of the homopolymer. Alternatively, the homopolymer and copolymer may be produced separately and compounded (melt blended) after polymerization. The homopolymer as well as the copolymer may be produced in one or more gas, liquid, or slurry phase reactors. Preferably, the homopolymer is prepared in one or more loop (liquid) reactors and the copolymer is prepared in one or more gas phase reactors. When more than one reactor is used for a given polymerization, the additional reactor may be used in parallel or in series with the previous reactor. Preferably, when more than one reactor is used for a given polymerization, the reactors are in series. Although the applicants prefer loop and gas phase reactors for the described process, the use of other types of reactors for a given polymerization step is believed to be within the scope of the invention.

[0034] The invention polymer preferably comprises about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer. In one embodiment, the blend comprises from about 75% to about 90% propylene homopolymer. In another embodiment, the blend comprises from about 80% to about 95% homopolymer.

[0035] In preferred embodiments, the polypropylene homopolymer has less than about 3% by weight xylene solubles as measured by ASTM 5492. In another embodiment, the xylene solubles are less than about 2%. In another alternative embodiment, the xylene solubles are less than about 1%.

[0036] Preferably, the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 55% as measured by Differential Scanning Calorimetry ("DSC"). Even more preferably the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 57%. Most preferably, the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 59% by DSC. DSC values are based on a total heat of fusion of 165 Joules/gram for 100% crystalline polypropylene according to B. Wunderlich, *Macromolecular Physics*, Volume 3, Crystal Melting, Academic Press, New York, 1980, pg. 63.

[0037] The homopolymer of the invention is further characterized by a melting temperature of greater than about 155 °C. More preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 160 °C. Even more preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 162 °C. Most preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 164 °C.

[0038] The pentad isotacticity of the xylene insoluble fraction of the homopolymer, as measured by ¹³C NMR, is greater than at least about 95%. More preferably, the pentad isotacticity is greater than about 96%. Even more preferably, the pentad isotacticity of the xylene insoluble fraction is greater than about 97%.

[0039] The invention polymer further comprises about 5% to about 30% by weight of a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. In one embodiment, the invention polymer comprises about 10% to about 25% copolymer. In another embodiment, the invention polymer comprises from about 15% to about 20% copolymer.

[0040] In certain embodiments, the copolymer may contain 7.5% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 8% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 9% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 10% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 11% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 12% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 13% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 14% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 15% ethylene.

[0041] The invention polymer may be produced with a melt flow rate (MFR) at any value in the range of from about 0.2 g/10 minutes to about 100 g/10 min. In preferred embodiments, the invention polymer preferably has a MFR of less than about 5 g/10 min, but more than about 1 g/10 min. More preferably the invention polymer MFR is less than about 4 g/10 min but more than about 1 g/10 min. The MFR of the invention polymer may, however, be less than about 3 g/10 min but more than about 1 g/10 min.

[0042] For biaxially oriented ("BOPP") films, the melt flow of the invention polymer is preferably from about 2 g/10 minutes to about 4 g/10 minutes. In another film application, the melt flow may be from about 4 g/10 minutes to about 6 g/10 minutes. In still another film application the melt flow may be from about 6 g/10 minutes to about 12 g/10 minutes. For injection molding or fiber spinning, the melt flow of the polymer is preferably about 12 g/10 minutes to about 100 g/10 minutes.

[0043] The MFR of the invention polymer may be controlled through the addition or removal of hydrogen from a given

polymerization process. Alternatively, or in conjunction with hydrogen MFR control, the desired MFR may be achieved through controlled rheology (visbreaking) via the addition of an appropriate amount of a suitable peroxide.

[0044] The overall xylene solubles for the invention polymer are preferably less than about 4 weight %. More preferably, the xylene solubles of the invention polymer are less than about 3 weight %. Even more preferably, the xylene solubles

are less than about 2 weight %.

[0045] In certain embodiments, the overall ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 1.5 weight %. In other embodiments, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 1.2 weight %. In still other embodiments, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 0.9 weight %. In another embodiment, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 0.6 to about 0.7% by weight.

[0046] The overall crystallinity of the invention polymer, as measured by DSC according to the procedure noted earlier herein, is greater than at least about 50%. More preferably, though, the crystallinity is greater than at least about 55%. In another embodiment, the crystallinity is greater than at least about 58%. In yet another embodiment, the crystallinity is greater than at least about 59%.

[0047] The invention polymer melts at a temperature of greater than about 155 °C. More preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 160 °C. Even more preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 162 °C. Most preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 164 °C.

[0048] The pentad isotacticity, as measured by ¹³C NMR, of the xylene insoluble fraction of the invention polymer is preferably greater than about 94%. Even more preferably, the pentad isotacticity is greater than about 95%.

[0049] The invention polymer may further comprise one or more additives selected from the group consisting of clarifiers, nucleators, acid scavengers (or neutralizers), antioxidants, slip or mold release agents, anti-static agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and peroxide. These additives are typically introduced to the invention polymer during an extrusion/processing stage for both the in-reactor blended and melt blended materials. It is within the ability of the ordinarily skilled artisan to determine the appropriate amount of a given additive to be added to the invention polymer.

[0050] The invention polymer may be prepared either via in-reactor blending or via melt blending. Preferably, the invention polymer is produced via in-reactor blending.

[0051] In either a melt-blending or in-reactor blended process, homopolymer is preferably produced in one or more liquid phase loop reactors. Homopolymer may, however, be prepared in one or more slurry type reactors or in one or more gas phase reactors. When more than one reactor is used, the reactors are preferably in series. In all cases, homopolymer is produced using a Ziegler-Natta (ZN) catalyst system comprising titanium and an external electron donor. The homopolymerization reactor or reactors are preferably maintained at about 65 °C to about 80 °C throughout homopolymerization, most preferably at about 70 °C.

[0052] For preparation of an in-reactor blended invention polymer, the homopolymer produced in the one or more liquid phase reactors, along with the active catalyst from the homopolymerization, is passed to a gas phase reactor.

[0053] In the gas phase reactor, ethylene and propylene are fed into the reactor to produce and maintain an atmosphere wherein ethylene is present in from about 2 to about 6 mole % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Preferably, the ethylene content of the gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3 to about 4 mol % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Most preferably, the ethylene content of the first gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3.5% based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. The reactor is run at about 70 °C to about 100 °C. Hydrogen is introduced into the reactor such that the molar ratio of hydrogen to ethylene is controlled to obtain the desired melt flow.

[0054] After copolymerization, the resultant polymer mixture may be passed to a second gas phase reactor for a second copolymerization. In the second gas phase reactor, if used, ethylene and propylene are fed into the reactor to produce and maintain an atmosphere wherein ethylene is present in from about 2 to about 6 mole % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Preferably, the ethylene content of the gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3 to about 4 mol % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present and the reactor is run at about 90 °C to about 100 °C. Hydrogen is introduced into the reactor such that the molar ratio of hydrogen to ethylene is controlled to obtain the desired melt flow.

[0055] In the in-reactor process described above, the homopolymerization and copolymerization reactions are taught as each taking place in a series of reactors. It is, however, within the scope of this invention that homopolymerization takes place in one reactor, followed by copolymerization taking place in a second reactor such that only two reactors are used for the entire process.

[0056] Once polymerization has concluded, the invention polymer is isolated from the reaction mixture for further processing. Specifically, and as noted previously, one or more of a number of additives may be added to the invention polymer in a compounding step. Subsequent to compounding, the invention polymer is pelletized and processed into a final product, such as a BOPP film.

[0057] For preparation of a melt-blended invention polymer, homopolymer produced according to the procedure noted

above is melt blended with random copolymer. Random copolymer is produced according to the procedure set forth above, except that no homopolymer is present in the copolymer reactor. As with the in-reactor blended variation, the melt blended invention polymer may be compounded with one or more different additives. Subsequent to melt blending and compounding, the invention polymer is pelletized and processed into a final product, such as a BOPP film.

5 [0058] BOPP film prepared from the invention polymer typically exhibits processing characteristics nearly identical to those of standard BOPP grade resins. Unlike standard BOPP grade resins, though, a BOPP film prepared from the invention polymer exhibits unexpectedly enhanced physical properties.

[0059] In a preferred embodiment, a BOPP film comprising the invention polymer exhibits a haze value of about 0.6%. The haze values of a film comprising the invention polymer may however, range from about 0.5% to about 2.0% such
10 that the haze may be about 0.5%, about 0.6%, about 0.7%, about 0.8%, about 0.9%, about 1.0%, about 1.1%, about 1.2%, about 1.3%, about 1.4%, about 1.5%, about 1.6%, about 1.7%, about 1.8%, about 1.9% or about 2.0%.

[0060] Preferably, the percent transmittance of the film is greater than about 90%. This value, however, may range from about 85% to about 100% such that the percent transmittance may be at least about 85%, about 86%, about 87%,
15 about 88%, about 89%, about 90%, about 91%, about 92%, about 93%, about 94%, about 95%, about 96%, about 97%, about 98%, or at least about 99% depending upon the desired opacity or transparency.

[0061] In a preferred embodiment, the BOPP film of the invention has a clarity of at least about 95%. This clarity value may, however, range from about 93% to about 99% such that the clarity of the BOPP film may be about 93%, about 94%, about 95%, about 96%, about 97%, about 98%, or about 99%. Haze and clarity were measured using a BYK-Gardner Haze Gard Plus.

20 [0062] Invention polymer that is optimized for production of clear or opaque films may be prepared by varying the tacticity of the propylene homopolymer component and the ethylene content of the random copolymer. Opaque films may also be produced by a process known as cavitating or cavitation. In cavitation, an organic or inorganic cavitating agent is dispersed within the invention polymer matrix prior to stretching. The presence of the cavitating agent in the matrix during stretching induces the formation of voids or cavities. After stretching the voids scatter light passing through
25 the film, causing the film to appear opaque. Cavitation may occur in the absence of a cavitating agent, but is generally induced by the addition of a cavitating agent. Typical cavitating agents include, but are not limited to, polyethylene terephthalate, polybutylene terephthalate and calcium carbonate.

[0063] In addition to the above, the BOPP film of the invention exhibits excellent mechanical properties. For example, a BOPP film of the invention preferably exhibits a TD modulus of greater than about 800,000 psi. In certain embodiments,
30 the TD modulus is greater than about 825,000. In other embodiments, the TD modulus is greater than about 850,000 psi. Similarly, a BOPP film of the invention exhibits excellent MD modulus values. Preferably, the MD modulus of the film is greater than about 400,000 psi. In certain embodiments, the MD modulus may be greater than about 405,000 psi. In other embodiments, the MD modulus may be greater than about 410,000 psi. In still another embodiment, the MD modulus may be greater than about
35 450,000 psi.

[0064] The BOPP films comprising the invention polymer of the invention may be prepared according to any known commercial process for producing films comprising standard BOPP grade resins. Two prevalent commercial processes include the tenter frame process and the "bubble" or blown film process.

40 [0065] In a typical tenter frame process, molten polymer is supplied to a flat slot die, from which a cast sheet or film is extruded. This cast sheet or film is then conveyed to a chill roller where it is cooled to a suitable temperature. The cast sheet or film is then conveyed to a pre-heat roller where it is heated to an appropriate stretching temperature.

[0066] Once at temperature, the cast sheet or film is subject to stretching. The cast sheet or film is first stretched in the "machine direction." Stretching in the machine direction is performed by a pair of rollers, in series. The first roller spins at a speed one quarter to one eighth of the speed of the second roller. The speed differential between the two
45 rollers causes a 4-8 fold stretching of the cast sheet or film when the cast sheet or film is passed through the roller sequence.

[0067] After stretching in the machine direction, the film is conveyed to an oven that heats the film to a temperature appropriate for stretching on a tenter frame disposed within the oven. Once the film is at temperature, the film is subject to stretching in the transverse direction, i.e. orthogonal to the machine direction. The film is stretched when a plurality
50 of tenter clips are attached to opposite sides of the film and a force is applied to the clips. Once stretched, the film may be annealed.

[0068] In the bubble or blown film process, the typical steps include extruding molten polymer through an annular die. The extrudate is then rapidly cooled in water to form a calibrated tube. The tube is then conveyed to an orientation tower where one end of the tube is squeezed with a first stretching nip to produce an airtight seal. The partially sealed tube is then heated and inflated with high-pressure air to form a large diameter bubble. The bubble orients the film in the
55 transverse direction. Simultaneously, the bubble is stretched in the machine direction. The oriented bubble is then collapsed by one or more converging rolls. After being collapsed, the BOPP film is annealed and cut into two webs. Finally, each web is corona or flame treated and wound for storage.

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[0069] Those skilled in the art will recognize that these examples of a tenter frame and bubble process are for illustrative purposes only. Variations of either process are within the knowledge of one skilled in the art and are considered to be within the scope of the present invention. Moreover, films produced using the invention polymer of the invention are not limited to those produced by either the tenter frame or bubble process.

Examples:

[0070] Two batches of invention polymer (an in-reactor blend) were prepared using the parameters, P1 and P2, set forth in Table 1. For each polymerization, high crystalline homopolymer, H, was prepared in two liquid phase loop reactors (LRx1 and LRx2 in Table 1) in series using a Ziegler-Natta catalyst and an external donor. Homopolymer and the active catalyst were then fed into a first gas phase reactor (Gas-Phase Reactor 1) for copolymerization. Upon completion the reaction mixture was transferred to a second gas phase reactor (Gas-Phase Reactor 2) for a subsequent copolymerization.

Table 1

Loop Reactor 1 (LRx1) and 2 (LRx2)		P1	P2
Temperature of LRx1 & LRx2 (°C)		70	70
LRx1 H2 (ppm)		993	1049
LRx1 C3 feed rate (T/hr)		33.25	34.91
LRx2 H2 concentration (ppm)		876	902
LRx2 C3 feed rate (T/hr)		12.15	12.41

(continued)

Gas-Phase Reactor 1		
Temperature (°C)	90	90
Pressure (kg/cm ²)	11.8	11.8
C2/(C2+C3) (mole ratio)	0.035	0.034
H2/C2 (mole ratio)	0.046	0.050
C2 feed (kg/hr)	168	172
C3 feed (T/hr)	1.58	1.65
C2 (mole%)	3.17	3.1
C3 (mole%)	86.43	86.49
Gas-Phase Reactor 2		
Temperature (°C)	100	100
Pressure (kg/cm ²)	11.4	12.0
C2/(C2+C3) (mole ratio)	0.033	0.038
H2/C2 (mole ratio)	0.063	0.038
C2 feed (kg/hr)	105	109
C3 feed (T/hr)	1.31	1.43
C2 (mole%)	3	2.92
C3 (mole%)	90.6	89.5

[0071] Two samples of homopolymer H, H1 and H2, produced according to parameters P1 and P2, respectively, were analyzed prior to copolymerization. The properties of the homopolymers are shown in Table 2. Table 2 also shows the properties of the invention polymers B1 and B2 that resulted after the second copolymerization.

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Table 2

	H1	H2	B1	B2
MFR	N/A	N/A	2.2	2.1
Xylene solubles (wt.%)	N/A	N/A	1.72	1.63

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(continued)

		H1	H2	B1	B2
	C2 content in invention polymer (wt.%)*	N/A	N/A	0.64	0.67
5	C2 content in random copolymer (wt.%)**	N/A	N/A	7.98	7.76
	Random Copolymer content of Invention Polymer (wt.%)***	N/A	N/A	8.02	8.75
	Mn/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	65.9	59.5
10	Mn/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	16.8	14.4
	Mw/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	291	284
	Mw/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	96	98
	MWD (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	4.42	4.77
15	MWD (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	5.7	6.8
	Mz/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	1063	992
	Mz/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	340	377
20	%X _C	61.0	59.5	57.7	56.6
	T _m (°C)	165.3	164.9	164.0	164.1
	T _c (°C)	114.8	113.5	112.7	112.9
25	Pentad isotacticity of XI (%)*	96.80	97.08	95.41	95.36
	* By ¹³ C NMR				
	** From a mass balance of the manufacturing process.				
	*** From mass balance calculation using C2 content in polymer and C2 content in copolymer.				

[0072] Samples B1 and B2 were subsequently mixed and compounded with an additives package to give compounded material, C. Material C was then compared to two other resins: 1) a melt blended compound comprising 75% C and 25% H ("75/25"); and 2) Sunoco polymer FF029A, a BOPP grade resin. The properties of C, 75/25, and FF029A are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

	Property	C	75/25	FF029A
	MFR	2.5	2.6	2.9
40	%XS	2.76	2.3	4.1
	Mn/1000	67.1	68.1*	65.2
	Mw/1000	313	321*	334
	Mz/1000	1509	1428*	1228
45	MWD	4.7	5.2	5.1
	T _m (°C)	165.3	166.2	162.3
	T _c (°C)	119	120.2	112.1
50	%X _C	59.0	60.5	55.3
	* Calculated value.			

[0073] For further comparison, compounds C, 75/25, and FF029A were each extruded and formed into cast sheets approximately 24 mils thick and 11" wide. In this process, the extruded polymer melt was quenched onto a chill roll maintained at 70 °F. The cast sheets were then further processed into film having a width of 60" and an exit thickness of approximately 0.0007" using a draw ratio of 5.0 x 8.0 (MD x TD). Complete processing conditions are shown in Table 4.

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Table 4: Extrusion and Tenter Line Processing Conditions

Extruder Temperatures (F)		C	75/25	FF029A
	Melt Temp	490	492	491
	Zone 1	450	450	450
	Zone 2	480	480	480
	Zone 3	480	480	480
	Zone 4	480	480	480
	Die Temp	480	480	480
	Screw RPM	55	60	61
	Chill Roll Temp (F)	70	70	70
MDO Roll (F)	Cast Line FPM	15.48	15.44	15.54
	Cast Sheet Thickness	24 Mils	24 Mils	24 Mils
	Cast Sheet Width	11"	11"	11"
	MDO Stretch Ratio	5	5	5
	Preheat 1	250	250	250
TDO OVEN (F)	Preheat 2	250	250	250
	Slow Draw	250	250	250
	Fast Draw	229	229	229
	Anneal 1	219	219	219
	Cooling	120	120	120
	TDO Stretch Ratio	8	8	8
	Oven Zone 1	328	334	330
	Oven Zone 2	326	334	328
	Oven Zone 3	320	330	320
	TDO Exit Thickness	0.0007"	0.0007"	0.0007"
	TDO Exit Width	60"	60"	60"

[0074] Table 5 shows the physical properties of the resulting films. Tensile modulus values were generated at the products' ideal processing temperature. Ideal processing temperatures are considered to be the center of a product's process window wherein the low end of the process window is determined by web breaks and the high end of the process window is determined by high haze. The processing windows for C, 75/25, and FF029A are shown in Figure 1.

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Table 5: Physical Properties

	C	75/25	FF029A
Ideal Process Temperature	328 F	332 F	325 F
Film thickness (inches)	0.00061	0.00069	0.00068
Haze (%)	0.57	0.63	0.84
Transmittance (%)	94.08	94.13	94.05
Clarity (%)	98.93	98.65	98.88
TD Modulus (psi)	845,000	870,000	770,000
MD Modulus (psi)	410,000	445,000	401,000

[0075] These examples demonstrate that the invention polymer is a ready substitute for standard BOPP grade resin, providing enhanced performance in the form of improved strength in both MD and TD moduli, without sacrificing processability.

[0076] The present invention has thus been described in general terms with reference to specific examples. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention is not limited to the specific embodiments disclosed in the examples. Those skilled in the art will understand the full scope of the invention from the appended claims.

[0077] All references contained herein are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

Claims

1. A resin composition comprising:
 - a. about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer, said polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%; and
 - b. about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer, said ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing 7.5% to 15% ethylene by weight.
2. A resin composition comprising:
 - a. about 70% to about 85% of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%; and
 - b. about 15% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer, said ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing 7.5% to 15% ethylene by weight.
3. The polymer according to any of claims 1 and 2, wherein the polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.
4. A method for preparing an in-reactor blended polymer comprising about 70% to about 95% of a polypropylene homopolymer and about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer comprising 7.5% to 15% ethylene by weight, said method comprising:
 - a. polymerizing propylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one liquid phase loop reactor to produce said homopolymer; and
 - b. copolymerizing propylene and ethylene in at least one gas phase reactor in the presence of said homopolymer.
5. A method for preparing a melt blended polymer comprising about 70% to about 95% of a polypropylene homopolymer and about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer comprising 7.5% to 15% ethylene by weight, said method comprising:
 - a. polymerizing propylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one liquid phase loop reactor to produce said homopolymer;
 - b. copolymerizing propylene and ethylene with a Ziegler-Natta catalyst system in at least one gas phase reactor

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to produce said ethylene propylene copolymer; and
c. melt blending said homopolymer and said copolymer.

- 5 6. The method of claim 4 further comprising compounding said in-reactor blended polymer with one or more additives.
7. The method of claim 5 further comprising melt blending one or more additives with said homopolymer and copolymer.
8. The method of any of claims 4 and 5 wherein said Ziegler-Natta catalyst comprises titanium and at least one external donor.
- 10 9. A biaxially oriented polypropylene film comprising a polymer, said polymer comprising:
- 15 a. about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer, said polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles, and a crystallinity of at least 55%; and
- b. about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer, said ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing 7.5% to 15% ethylene by weight.
10. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein the ideal processing temperature is about 328 °F.
- 20 11. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein the haze is about 0.57.
12. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein the percent transmittance is greater than about 90%, or wherein the clarity is greater than about 95%.
- 25 13. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein said polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.
- 30 14. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein said film is opaque.
15. The biaxially oriented film of claim 9 wherein said film is transparent.

Patentansprüche

- 35 1. Harzzusammensetzung, umfassend:

40 a. etwa 70 bis etwa 95 Gew.-% eines Polypropylen-Homopolymeren, wobei dieses Polypropylen-Homopolymer weniger als 3 Gew.-% Xylol-lösliche Bestandteile und eine Kristallinität von mindestens 55% besitzt; und

b. etwa 5 bis etwa 30 Gew.-% eines statistischen Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymeren, wobei das statistische Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymer 7,5 bis 15 Gew.-% Ethylen enthält.

2. Harzzusammensetzung, umfassend:

45 a. etwa 70 bis etwa 85% eines Polypropylen-Homopolymeren mit weniger als drei Gew.-% Xylol-löslichen Bestandteilen und einer Kristallinität von mindestens 55%; und

b. etwa 15 bis etwa 30 Gew.-% eines statistischen Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymeren, wobei das statistische Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymer 7,5 bis 15 Gew.-% Ethylen enthält.

- 50 3. Polymer nach einem der Ansprüche 1 und 2, worin das Polymer weiterhin mindestens einen Zusatz aufweist, ausgewählt aus der Gruppe, die aus Keimbildnern, Antioxidantien, sauren Neutralisatoren, Gleitmitteln, Antihafmitteln, Beschlagverhinderungsmitteln, Pigmenten und Kombinationen davon besteht.
- 55 4. Verfahren zum Herstellen eines im Reaktor gemischten Polymeren, umfassend etwa 70 bis etwa 95 % eines Polypropylen-Homopolymeren und etwa 5 bis etwa 30 Gew.-% eines statistischen Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymeren mit 7,5 bis 15 Gew.-% Ethylen, wobei das Verfahren umfasst:

a. das Polymerisieren von Propylen mit einem Ziegler-Natta-Katalysatorsystem in mindestens einem Flüssig-

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phasen-Ringreaktor zur Erzeugung des genannten Homopolymeren; und

b. das Copolymerisieren von Propylen und Ethylen in mindestens einem Gasphasen-Reaktor in Gegenwart des genannten Homopolymeren.

- 5 5. Verfahren zum Herstellen eines schmelzgemischten Polymeren mit etwa 70 bis etwa 95% eines Polypropylen-Homopolymeren und etwa 5 bis etwa 30 Gew.-% eines statistischen Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymeren mit 7,5 bis 15 Gew.-% Ethylen, wobei das Verfahren umfasst:

- 10 a. das Polymerisieren von Propylen mit einem Ziegler-Natta-Katalysatorsystem in mindestens einem Flüssigphasen-Ringreaktor zur Erzeugung des genannten Homopolymeren;
b. das Copolymerisieren von Propylen und Ethylen mit einem Ziegler-Natta-Katalysatorsystem in mindestens einem Gasphasen-Reaktor zur Erzeugung des genannten Ethylen-Propylen-Copolymeren; und
c. das Schmelzmischen des Homopolymeren und des Copolymeren.

- 15 6. Verfahren nach Anspruch 4, weiterhin umfassend das Vereinigen des im Reaktor vermischten Polymeren mit einem oder mehreren Zusätzen.

- 20 7. Verfahren nach Anspruch 5, weiterhin umfassend das Einmischen eines oder mehrerer Zusätze in die Schmelze des Homopolymeren und des Copolymeren.

8. Verfahren nach einem der Ansprüche 4 und 5, worin der Ziegler-Natta-Katalysator Titan und mindestens einen externen Donor umfasst.

- 25 9. Biaxial orientierter Polypropylen-Film, umfassend ein Polymer, wobei das Polymer aufweist:

- 30 a. etwa 70 bis etwa 95 Gew.-% eines Polypropylen-Homopolymeren, wobei dieses Polypropylen-Homopolymere weniger als 3 Gew.-% Xylol-lösliche Bestandteile und eine Kristallinität von mindestens 55% besitzt; und
b. etwa 5 bis etwa 30 Gew.-% eines statistischen Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymeren, wobei das statistische Ethylen-/Propylen-Copolymer 7,5 bis 15 Gew.-% Ethylen enthält.

10. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, dessen ideale Verarbeitungstemperatur bei etwa 328 °F liegt.

11. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, dessen Trübung bei etwa 0,57 liegt.

- 35 12. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, worin die prozentuale Durchlässigkeit bei mehr als 90% liegt, oder worin die Bildschärfe größer als etwa 95% ist.

- 40 13. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, worin das genannte Polymer weiterhin mindestens einen Zusatz enthält, ausgewählt aus der Gruppe, die aus Keimbildnern, Antioxidantien, sauren Neutralisatoren, Gleitmitteln, Antihafmitteln, Beschlagverhinderungsmitteln, Pigmenten und Kombinationen davon besteht.

14. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, wobei dieser Film opak ist.

- 45 15. Biaxial orientierter Film nach Anspruch 9, wobei dieser Film transparent ist.

Revendications

- 50 1. Composition de résine comprenant :

- 55 a. d'environ 70 % à environ 95 % en poids d'un homopolymère de polypropylène, ledit homopolymère de polypropylène ayant moins de 3 % en poids de solubles dans le xylène et une cristallinité d'au moins 55 % ; et
b. d'environ 5 % à environ 30 % en poids d'un copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène, ledit copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène contenant de 7,5 % à 15 % d'éthylène en poids.

2. Composition de résine comprenant :

- a. d'environ 70 % à environ 85 % d'un homopolymère de polypropylène ayant moins de 3 % en poids de solubles

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dans le xylène et une cristallinité d'au moins 55 % ; et

b. d'environ 15 % à environ 30 % en poids d'un copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène, ledit copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène contenant de 7,5 % à 15 % d'éthylène en poids.

5 3. Polymère selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 et 2, dans lequel le polymère comprend en outre au moins un additif choisi dans le groupe constitué des agents de nucléation, des antioxydants, des neutralisateurs d'acides, des agents de glissance, des agents anti-adhérents, des agents anti-buée, des pigments et de leurs combinaisons.

10 4. Procédé de préparation d'un polymère mélangé en réacteur comprenant d'environ 70 % à environ 95 % d'un homopolymère de polypropylène et d'environ 5 % à environ 30 % en poids d'un copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène comprenant de 7,5 % à 15 % d'éthylène en poids, ledit procédé comprenant :

a. la polymérisation du propylène avec un système catalytique de Ziegler-Natta dans au moins un réacteur en boucle à phase liquide pour produire ledit homopolymère ; et

15 b. la copolymérisation du propylène et de l'éthylène dans au moins un réacteur en phase gazeuse en présence dudit homopolymère.

20 5. Procédé de préparation d'un polymère mélangé à l'état fondu comprenant d'environ 70 % à environ 95 % d'un homopolymère de polypropylène et d'environ 5 % à environ 30 % en poids d'un copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène comprenant de 7,5 % à 15 % d'éthylène en poids, ledit procédé comprenant :

a. la polymérisation du propylène avec un système catalytique de Ziegler-Natta dans au moins un réacteur en boucle à phase liquide pour produire ledit homopolymère ;

25 b. la copolymérisation du propylène et de l'éthylène avec un système catalytique de Ziegler-Natta dans au moins un réacteur en phase gazeuse pour produire ledit copolymère d'éthylène et de propylène ; et

c. le mélange à l'état fondu dudit homopolymère et dudit copolymère.

30 6. Procédé selon la revendication 4 comprenant en outre le malaxage dudit polymère mélangé en réacteur avec un ou plusieurs additifs.

7. Procédé selon la revendication 5 comprenant en outre le mélange à l'état fondu d'un ou plusieurs additifs avec ledit homopolymère et ledit copolymère.

35 8. Procédé selon l'une quelconque des revendications 4 et 5 dans lequel ledit catalyseur de Ziegler-Natta comprend du titane et au moins un donneur externe.

9. Film de polypropylène à orientation biaxiale comprenant un polymère, ledit polymère comprenant :

40 a. d'environ 70 % à environ 95 % en poids d'un homopolymère de polypropylène, ledit homopolymère de polypropylène ayant moins de 3 % en poids de solubles dans le xylène, et une cristallinité d'au moins 55 % ; et

b. d'environ 5 % à environ 30 % en poids d'un copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène, ledit copolymère statistique éthylène/propylène contenant de 7,5 % à 15 % d'éthylène en poids.

45 10. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel la température de traitement idéale est d'environ 328 °F.

11. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel le trouble est d'environ 0,57.

50 12. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel le pourcentage de transmittance est supérieur à environ 90 %, ou dans lequel la clarté est supérieure à environ 95 %.

55 13. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel ledit polymère comprend en outre au moins un additif choisi dans le groupe constitué des agents de nucléation, des antioxydants, des neutralisateurs d'acides, des agents de glissance, des agents anti-adhérents, des agents anti-buée, des pigments et de leurs combinaisons.

14. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel ledit film est opaque.

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15. Film à orientation biaxiale selon la revendication 9 dans lequel ledit film est transparent.

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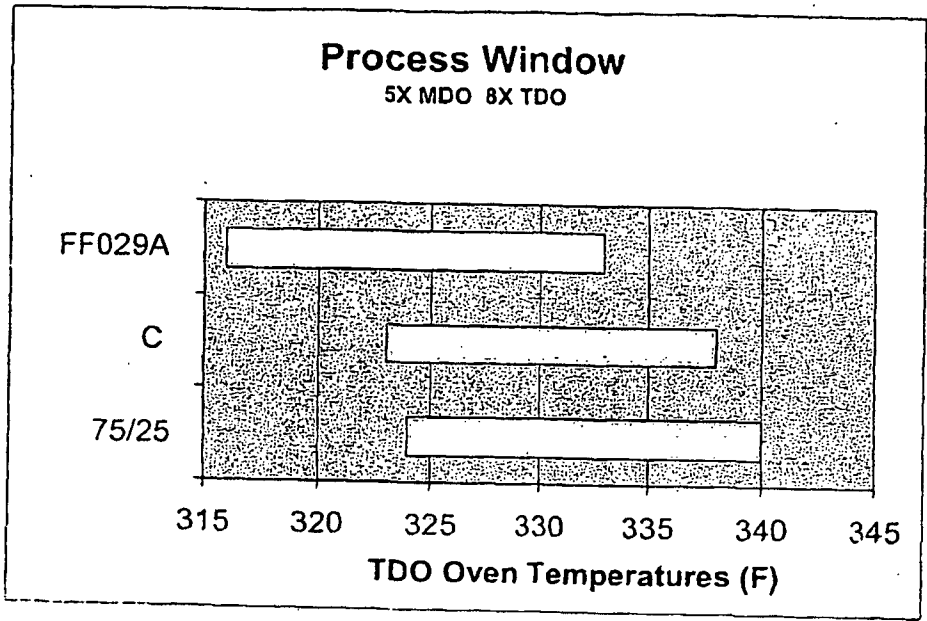
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Figure 1. Process Window



REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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US007750081B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Rhee et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,750,081 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Jul. 6, 2010**

(54) **RANDOM COPOLYMER WITH ENHANCED ETHYLENE CONTENT**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/286,774**

(22) Filed: **Oct. 1, 2008**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2010/0081756 A1 Apr. 1, 2010

(51) Int. Cl. **C08F 8/00** (2006.01)

(52) U.S. Cl. **525/191; 525/240; 526/351; 526/352**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **525/191, 525/240; 526/351, 352**

See application file for complete search history.

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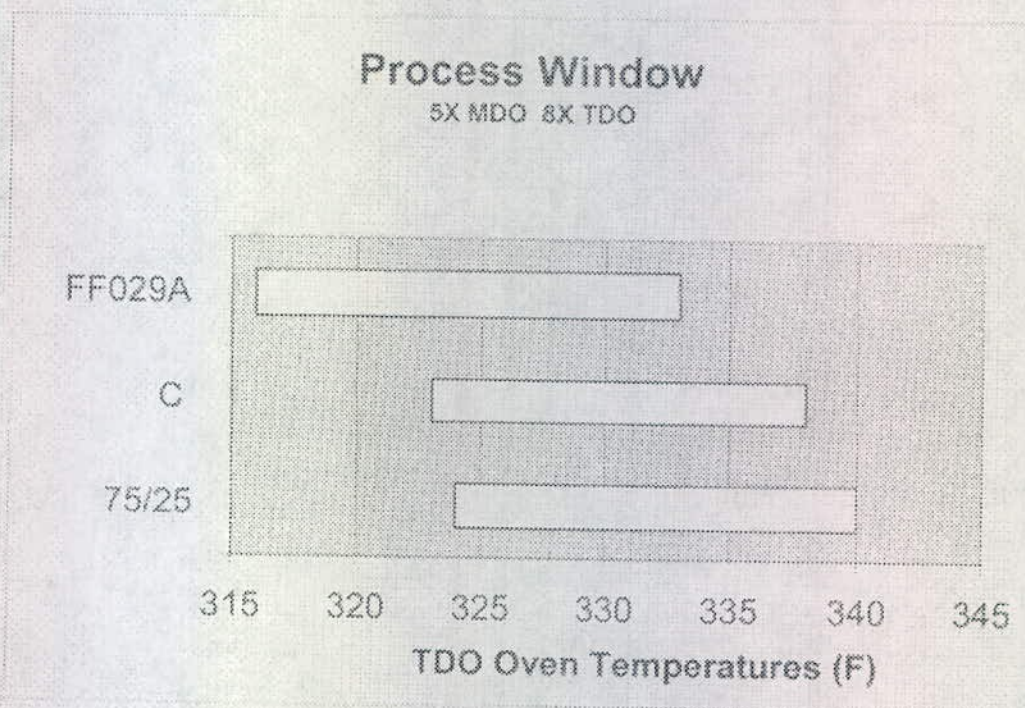
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A polypropylene resin, useful for the production of biaxially oriented polypropylene (BOPP) film, is provided. The polymer of the present invention is a blend of high crystalline polypropylene homopolymer and a high ethylene ethylene/propylene random copolymer (RCP). The present invention also provides a method of preparing the novel resin as well as a novel BOPP film comprising the resin.

4 Claims, 1 Drawing Sheet

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Figure 1. Process Window



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RANDOM COPOLYMER WITH ENHANCED ETHYLENE CONTENT

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is drawn generally to the field of polypropylene resins. More specifically, the present invention is drawn to a polymer comprising high crystalline homopolymer polypropylene and a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The present application is also drawn to methods of making the same as well as novel compositions, such as, but not limited to, biaxially-oriented polypropylene ("BOPP") film comprising the polymer of the invention.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

One of the myriad of uses for polypropylene is for the production of BOPP film. BOPP is used to produce both clear and opaque film for numerous packaging applications. To gain wide commercial acceptance for BOPP film applications, though, a given polypropylene resin must provide uniform stretching under typical BOPP processing conditions. Not surprisingly, not all polypropylene resins exhibit favorable behavior under the mechanical and thermal stresses of the BOPP production process. One resin that tolerates BOPP production conditions is high xylene solubles homopolymer. This resin can be fractionated into three components: an isotactic component, a stereoblock component, and an atactic component.

The stereoblock component is crystalline and melts at a significantly lower temperature than the isotactic component. Film processing performance of the resin, as measured by T. M. Long draw stress, is correlated with the amount and quality of the stereoblock component. The stereoblock component is also believed to provide softening that enables solid-phase drawing to occur under the practical draw stresses observed on a BOPP processing line.

In high xylene solubles homopolymers, the stereoblock component is created by introducing defects which disrupt crystallization and provide a lower-melting component. These defects, however, compromise both the amount and the stereo regularity of the isotactic phase, reducing film strength. Traditionally, high stereo defect concentrations also lead to high xylene solubles content in the polymer which considerably narrows the resin manufacturing process window.

There thus exists a long felt, but unmet need in the art for a BOPP grade resin that maintains the processability of the high xylene solubles homopolymer, but exhibits enhanced characteristics when processed into a BOPP film.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a polypropylene polymer suitable for use in producing BOPP film. The invention polymer comprises homopolymer polypropylene as well as a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The invention polymer preferably comprises from about 70% to about 95% by weight of the homopolymer. In preferred embodiments, the homopolymer has less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The invention polymer further comprises about 5% to about 30% by weight of the ethylene/propylene random copolymer. Preferably, the ethylene/propylene random copolymer contains greater than about 7.2% to about 15% random ethylene by weight.

The present invention also provides a method of manufacturing the invention polymer of the present invention. Preferably, the method of the invention comprises homopolymerizing propylene utilizing a Ziegler-Natta catalyst and one or more external donors. The method of preparing the invention polymer further comprises copolymerizing ethylene and propylene.

The present invention likewise teaches a BOPP film comprising the resin of the present invention. The film may be either translucent, transparent, or opaque.

In one embodiment, the invention is a resin composition comprising about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The resin composition further includes about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing greater than about 7.2% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

In a sub-embodiment, the polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, anti-block agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

In another embodiment, the invention is a resin composition comprising about 70% to about 85% of a polypropylene homopolymer having less than 3% by weight xylene solubles and a crystallinity of at least 55%. The resin further includes about 15% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene random copolymer containing greater than about 7.2% to about 15% ethylene by weight.

In a sub-embodiment, the polymer further comprises at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, anti-block agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIG. 1 depicts the process windows for polymers C, "75/25", and FF029A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The polymer according to the current invention is a blend of high crystalline polypropylene homopolymer and a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. The blend may be produced either by melt blending or by an in-reactor process.

Like high-xylene solubles BOPP film grade resin, the invention polymer fractionates into three components: an isotactic component; a stereoblock component, and an atactic component. Unlike high xylene solubles homopolymer, though, the isotactic component of the invention polymer is more crystalline.

The stereoblock fraction of the invention polymer is likewise crystalline, but has a melting temperature lower than the stereoblock component of high xylene solubles BOPP grade resin. The combination of the higher crystallinity of the isotactic fraction and the lower melting temperature of the stereoblock fraction of the invention polymer as compared to standard BOPP grade homopolymer imparts enhanced physical properties to products comprising the resin while simultaneously maintaining the processability of the resin. Examples of enhanced properties in products comprising the resin include, but are not limited to, higher film tensile modulus.

A further characteristic of the invention polymer is the random nature of ethylene dispersion throughout the random

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copolymer. In general, ethylene in a random copolymer of the present invention tends to be more random than not. For example, in one embodiment of a polymer of the present invention wherein the ethylene in the random copolymer is about 8 wt %, the number of triple and double ethylene insertions are each about 17 mol % in the invention polymer. Single insertions in this embodiment thus account for about 66 mol % of all ethylene in the invention polymer. Without wishing to be bound to any particular theory, it is believed that the high percentage of single ethylene insertions in the ethylene/propylene random copolymer contribute to the unique properties of the invention polymer.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,460,884 to Kobylivker describes a composition comprising a homopolymer and an ethylene/propylene random block copolymer. The patent describes the random block copolymer as comprising 3% random ethylene and about 9% block ethylene, for a total of about 12% ethylene content. Although these values appear to fall within the range presently described, further analysis of the disclosure of the U.S. Pat. No. 5,460,884 patent, particularly the NMR spectrum included as FIG. 1 of that patent, shows that the ethylene/propylene block copolymer contains nearly 20% ethylene and is far blockier, i.e. contains more double and triple ethylene insertions, than it is random.

The invention polymer may be prepared as a reactor blend, in which case copolymer is polymerized in the presence of the homopolymer. Alternatively, the homopolymer and copolymer may be produced separately and compounded (melt blended) after polymerization. The homopolymer as well as the copolymer may be produced in one or more gas, liquid, or slurry phase reactors. Preferably, the homopolymer is prepared in one or more loop (liquid) reactors and the copolymer is prepared in one or more gas phase reactors. When more than one reactor is used for a given polymerization, the additional reactor may be used in parallel or in series with the previous reactor. Preferably, when more than one reactor is used for a given polymerization, the reactors are in series. Although the applicants prefer loop and gas phase reactors for the described process, the use of other types of reactors for a given polymerization step is believed to be within the scope of the invention.

The invention polymer preferably comprises about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer. In one embodiment, the blend comprises from about 75% to about 90% propylene homopolymer. In another embodiment, the blend comprises from about 80% to about 95% homopolymer.

In preferred embodiments, the polypropylene homopolymer has less than about 3% by weight xylene solubles as measured by ASTM 5492. In another embodiment, the xylene solubles are less than about 2%. In another alternative embodiment, the xylene solubles are less than about 1%.

Preferably, the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 55% as measured by Differential Scanning Calorimetry ("DSC"). Even more preferably the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 57%. Most preferably, the homopolymer has a crystallinity of at least about 59% by DSC. DSC values are based on a total heat of fusion of 165 Joules/gram for 100% crystalline polypropylene according to B. Wunderlich, *Macromolecular Physics*, Volume 3, Crystal Melting, Academic Press, New York, 1980, pg. 63.

The homopolymer of the invention is further characterized by a melting temperature of greater than about 155° C. More preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 160° C. Even more preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about

162° C. Most preferably, the homopolymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 164° C.

The pentad isotacticity of the xylene insoluble fraction of the homopolymer, as measured by ¹³C NMR, is greater than at least about 95%. More preferably, the pentad isotacticity is greater than about 96%. Even more preferably, the pentad isotacticity of the xylene insoluble fraction is greater than about 97%.

The invention polymer further comprises about 5% to about 30% by weight of a high ethylene content ethylene/propylene random copolymer. In one embodiment, the invention polymer comprises about 10% to about 25% copolymer. In another embodiment, the invention polymer comprises from about 15% to about 20% copolymer.

Preferably, the ethylene content of the ethylene/propylene random copolymer is greater than about 7.2% to about 15% ethylene by weight. In certain embodiments, the copolymer may contain about 7.5% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 8% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 9% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 10% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 11% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 12% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 13% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 14% ethylene. In another embodiment, the copolymer may contain about 15% ethylene.

The invention polymer may be produced with a melt flow rate (MFR) at any value in the range of from about 0.2 g/10 minutes to about 100 g/10 min. In preferred embodiments, the invention polymer preferably has a MFR of less than about 5 g/10 min, but more than about 1 g/10 min. More preferably the invention polymer MFR is less than about 4 g/10 min but more than about 1 g/10 min. The MFR of the invention polymer may, however, be less than about 3 g/10 min but more than about 1 g/10 min.

For biaxially oriented ("BOPP") films, the melt flow of the invention polymer is preferably from about 2 g/10 minutes to about 4 g/10 minutes. In another film application, the melt flow may be from about 4 g/10 minutes to about 6 g/10 minutes. In still another film application the melt flow may be from about 6 g/10 minutes to about 12 g/10 minutes. For injection molding or fiber spinning, the melt flow of the polymer is preferably about 12 g/10 minutes to about 100 g/10 minutes.

The MFR of the invention polymer may be controlled through the addition or removal of hydrogen from a given polymerization process. Alternatively, or in conjunction with hydrogen MFR control, the desired MFR may be achieved through controlled rheology (visbreaking) via the addition of an appropriate amount of a suitable peroxide.

The overall xylene solubles for the invention polymer are preferably less than about 4 weight %. More preferably, the xylene solubles of the invention polymer are less than about 3 weight %. Even more preferably, the xylene solubles are less than about 2 weight %.

In certain embodiments, the overall ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 1.5 weight %. In other embodiments, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 1.2 weight %. In still other embodiments, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 0.9 weight %. In another embodiment, the ethylene content of the invention polymer is about 0.6 to about 0.7% by weight.

The overall crystallinity of the invention polymer, as measured by DSC according to the procedure noted earlier herein, is greater than at least about 50%. More preferably, though,

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the crystallinity is greater than at least about 55%. In another embodiment, the crystallinity is greater than at least about 58%. In yet another embodiment, the crystallinity is greater than at least about 59%.

The invention polymer melts at a temperature of greater than about 155° C. More preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 160° C. Even more preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 162° C. Most preferably, the invention polymer has a melting temperature of greater than about 164° C.

The pentad isotacticity, as measured by ¹³C NMR, of the xylene insoluble fraction of the invention polymer is preferably greater than about 94%. Even more preferably, the pentad isotacticity is greater than about 95%.

The invention polymer may further comprise one or more additives selected from the group consisting of clarifiers, nucleators, acid scavengers (or neutralizers), antioxidants, slip or mold release agents, anti-static agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and peroxide. These additives are typically introduced to the invention polymer during an extrusion/processing stage for both the in-reactor blended and melt blended materials. It is within the ability of the ordinarily skilled artisan to determine the appropriate amount of a given additive to be added to the invention polymer.

The invention polymer may be prepared either via in-reactor blending or via melt blending. Preferably, the invention polymer is produced via in-reactor blending.

In either a melt-blending or in-reactor blended process, homopolymer is preferably produced in one or more liquid phase loop reactors. Homopolymer may, however, be prepared in one or more slurry type reactors or in one or more gas phase reactors. When more than one reactor is used, the reactors are preferably in series. In all cases, homopolymer is produced using a Ziegler-Natta (ZN) catalyst system comprising titanium and an external electron donor. The homopolymerization reactor or reactors are preferably maintained at about 65° C. to about 80° C. throughout homopolymerization, most preferably at about 70° C.

For preparation of an in-reactor blended invention polymer, the homopolymer produced in the one or more liquid phase reactors, along with the active catalyst from the homopolymerization, is passed to a gas phase reactor.

In the gas phase reactor, ethylene and propylene are fed into the reactor to produce and maintain an atmosphere wherein ethylene is present in from about 2 to about 6 mole % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Preferably, the ethylene content of the gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3 to about 4 mol % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Most preferably, the ethylene content of the first gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3.5% based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. The reactor is run at about 70° C. to about 100° C. Hydrogen is introduced into the reactor such that the molar ratio of hydrogen to ethylene is controlled to obtain the desired melt flow.

After copolymerization, the resultant polymer mixture may be passed to a second gas phase reactor for a second copolymerization. In the second gas phase reactor, if used, ethylene and propylene are fed into the reactor to produce and maintain an atmosphere wherein ethylene is present in from about 2 to about 6 mole % based on the total number of moles of ethylene and propylene monomer present. Preferably, the ethylene content of the gas phase reactor is maintained at about 3 to about 4 mol % based on the total number of moles

of ethylene and propylene monomer present and the reactor is run at about 90° C. to about 100° C. Hydrogen is introduced into the reactor such that the molar ratio of hydrogen to ethylene is controlled to obtain the desired melt flow.

In the in-reactor process described above, the homopolymerization and copolymerization reactions are taught as each taking place in a series of reactors. It is, however, within the scope of this invention that homopolymerization takes place in one reactor, followed by copolymerization taking place in a second reactor such that only two reactors are used for the entire process.

Once polymerization has concluded, the invention polymer is isolated from the reaction mixture for further processing. Specifically, and as noted previously, one or more of a number of additives may be added to the invention polymer in a compounding step. Subsequent to compounding, the invention polymer is pelletized and processed into a final product, such as a BOPP film.

For preparation of a melt-blended invention polymer, homopolymer produced according to the procedure noted above is melt blended with random copolymer. Random copolymer is produced according to the procedure set forth above, except that no homopolymer is present in the copolymer reactor. As with the in-reactor blended variation, the melt blended invention polymer may be compounded with one or more different additives. Subsequent to melt blending and compounding, the invention polymer is pelletized and processed into a final product, such as a BOPP film.

BOPP film prepared from the invention polymer typically exhibits processing characteristics nearly identical to those of standard BOPP grade resins. Unlike standard BOPP grade resins, though, a BOPP film prepared from the invention polymer exhibits unexpectedly enhanced physical properties.

In a preferred embodiment, a BOPP film comprising the invention polymer exhibits a haze value of about 0.6%. The haze values of a film comprising the invention polymer may however, range from about 0.5% to about 2.0% such that the haze may be about 0.5%, about 0.6%, about 0.7%, about 0.8%, about 0.9%, about 1.0%, about 1.1%, about 1.2%, about 1.3%, about 1.4%, about 1.5%, about 1.6%, about 1.7%, about 1.8%, about 1.9%, or about 2.0%.

Preferably, the percent transmittance of the film is greater than about 90%. This value, however, may range from about 85% to about 100% such that the percent transmittance may be at least about 85%, about 86%, about 87%, about 88%, about 89%, about 90%, about 91%, about 92%, about 93%, about 94%, about 95%, about 96%, about 97%, about 98%, or at least about 99% depending upon the desired opacity or transparency.

In a preferred embodiment, the BOPP film of the invention has a clarity of at least about 95%. This clarity value may, however, range from about 93% to about 99% such that the clarity of the BOPP film may be about 93%, about 94%, about 95%, about 96%, about 97%, about 98%, or about 99%. Haze and clarity were measured using a BYK-Gardner Haze Gard Plus.

Invention polymer that is optimized for production of clear or opaque films may be prepared by varying the tacticity of the propylene homopolymer component and the ethylene content of the random copolymer. Opaque films may also be produced by a process known as cavitating or cavitation. In cavitation, an organic or inorganic cavitating agent is dispersed within the invention polymer matrix prior to stretching. The presence of the cavitating agent in the matrix during stretching induces the formation of voids or cavities. After stretching the voids scatter light passing through the film, causing the film to appear opaque. Cavitation may occur in

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the absence of a cavitating agent, but is generally induced by the addition of a cavitating agent. Typical cavitating agents include, but are not limited to, polyethylene terephthalate, polybutylene terephthalate and calcium carbonate.

In addition to the above, the BOPP film of the invention exhibits excellent mechanical properties. For example, a BOPP film of the invention preferably exhibits a TD modulus of greater than about 800,000 psi. In certain embodiments, the TD modulus is greater than about 825,000. In other embodiments, the TD modulus is greater than about 850,000 psi. Similarly, a BOPP film of the invention exhibits excellent MD modulus values. Preferably, the MD modulus of the film is greater than about 400,000 psi. In certain embodiments, the MD modulus may be greater than about 405,000 psi. In other embodiments, the MD modulus may be greater than about 410,000 psi. In still another embodiment, the MD modulus may be greater than about 450,000 psi.

The BOPP films comprising the invention polymer of the invention may be prepared according to any known commercial process for producing films comprising standard BOPP grade resins. Two prevalent commercial processes include the tenter frame process and the "bubble" or blown film process.

In a typical tenter frame process, molten polymer is supplied to a flat slot die, from which a cast sheet or film is extruded. This cast sheet or film is then conveyed to a chill roller where it is cooled to a suitable temperature. The cast sheet or film is then conveyed to a pre-heat roller where it is heated to an appropriate stretching temperature.

Once at temperature, the cast sheet or film is subject to stretching. The cast sheet or film is first stretched in the "machine direction." Stretching in the machine direction is performed by a pair of rollers, in series. The first roller spins at a speed one quarter to one eighth of the speed of the second roller. The speed differential between the two rollers causes a 4-8 fold stretching of the cast sheet or film when the cast sheet or film is passed through the roller sequence.

After stretching in the machine direction, the film conveyed to an oven that heats the film to a temperature appropriate for stretching on a tenter frame disposed within the oven. Once the film is at temperature, the film is subject to stretching in the transverse direction, i.e. orthogonal to the machine direction. The film is stretched when a plurality of tenter clips are attached to opposite sides of the film and a force is applied to the clips. Once stretched, the film may be annealed.

In the bubble or blown film process, the typical steps include extruding molten polymer through an annular die. The extrudate is then rapidly cooled in water to form a calibrated tube. The tube is then conveyed to an orientation tower where one end of the tube is squeezed with a first stretching nip to produce an airtight seal. The partially sealed tube is then heated and inflated with high-pressure air to form a large diameter bubble. The bubble orients the film in the transverse direction. Simultaneously, the bubble is stretched in the machine direction. The oriented bubble is then collapsed by one or more converging rolls. After being collapsed, the BOPP film is annealed and cut into two webs. Finally, each web is corona or flame treated and wound for storage.

Those skilled in the art will recognize that these examples of a tenter frame and bubble process are for illustrative purposes only. Variations of either process are within the knowledge of one skilled in the art and are considered to be within the scope of the present invention. Moreover, films produced using the invention polymer of the invention are not limited to those produced by either the tenter frame or bubble process.

EXAMPLES

Two batches of invention polymer (an in-reactor blend) were prepared using the parameters, P1 and P2, set forth in Table 1. For each polymerization, high crystalline homopolymer, H, was prepared in two liquid phase loop reactors (LRx1 and LRx2 in Table 1) in series using a Ziegler-Natta catalyst and an external donor. Homopolymer and the active catalyst were then fed into a first gas phase reactor (Gas-Phase Reactor 1) for copolymerization. Upon completion the reaction mixture was transferred to a second gas phase reactor (Gas-Phase Reactor 2) for a subsequent copolymerization.

TABLE 1

Loop Reactor 1 (LRx1) and 2 (LRx2)	P1	P2
Temperature of LRx1 & LRx2 (° C.)	70	70
LRx1 H ₂ (ppm)	993	1049
LRx1 C ₃ feed rate (T/hr)	33.25	34.91
LRx2 H ₂ concentration (ppm)	876	902
LRx2 C ₃ feed rate (T/hr)	12.15	12.41
Gas-Phase Reactor 1		
Temperature (° C.)	90	90
Pressure (kg/cm ²)	11.8	11.8
C ₂ /(C ₂ + C ₃) (mole ratio)	0.035	0.034
H ₂ /C ₂ (mole ratio)	0.046	0.050
C ₂ feed (kg/hr)	168	172
C ₃ feed (T/hr)	1.58	1.65
C ₂ (mole %)	3.17	3.1
C ₃ (mole %)	86.43	86.49
Gas-Phase Reactor 2		
Temperature (° C.)	100	100
Pressure (kg/cm ²)	11.4	12.0
C ₂ /(C ₂ + C ₃) (mole ratio)	0.033	0.038
H ₂ /C ₂ (mole ratio)	0.063	0.038
C ₂ feed (kg/hr)	105	109
C ₃ feed (T/hr)	1.31	1.43
C ₂ (mole %)	3	2.92
C ₃ (mole %)	90.6	89.5

Two samples of homopolymer H1, H2 and H2, produced according to parameters P1 and P2, respectively, were analyzed prior to copolymerization. The properties of the homopolymers are shown in Table 2. Table 2 also shows the properties of the invention polymers B1 and B2 that resulted after the second copolymerization.

TABLE 2

	H1	H2	B1	B2
MFR	N/A	N/A	2.2	2.1
Xylene solubles (wt. %)	N/A	N/A	1.72	1.63
C ₂ content in invention polymer (wt. %)*	N/A	N/A	0.64	0.67
C ₂ content in random copolymer (wt. %)*	N/A	N/A	7.98	7.76
Random Copolymer content of Invention Polymer (wt. %)**	N/A	N/A	8.02	8.75
Mn/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	65.9	59.5
Mn/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	16.8	14.4
Mw/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	291	284
Mw/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	96	98
MWD (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	4.42	4.77
MWD (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	5.7	6.8
Mz/1000 (Xylene Insolubles)	N/A	N/A	1063	992
Mz/1000 (Xylene Solubles)	N/A	N/A	340	377
% X _c	61.0	59.5	57.7	56.6
T _m (° C.)	165.3	164.9	164.0	164.1

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TABLE 2-continued

	H1	H2	B1	B2
T _g (° C.)	114.8	113.5	112.7	112.9
Pentad isotacticity of XI (%) [*]	96.80	97.08	95.41	95.36

^{*} By ¹³C NMR^{**} From a mass balance of the manufacturing process.^{***} From mass balance calculation using C2 content in polymer and C2 content in copolymer.

Samples B1 and B2 were subsequently mixed and compounded with an additives package to give compounded material, C. Material C was then compared to two other resins: 1) a melt blended compound comprising 75% C and 25% H ("75/25"); and 2) Sunoco polymer FF029A, a BOPP grade resin. The properties of C, 75/25, and FF029A are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

Property	C	75/25	FF029A
MFR	2.5	2.6	2.9
% XS	2.76	2.3	4.1
Mn/1000	67.1	68.1 [*]	65.2
Mw/1000	313	321 [*]	334
Mz/1000	1509	1428 [*]	1228
MWD	4.7	5.2	5.1
T _m (° C.)	165.3	166.2	162.3
T _g (° C.)	119	120.2	112.1
% X _c	59.0	60.5	55.3

^{*} Calculated value.

For further comparison, compounds C, 75/25, and FF029A were each extruded and formed into cast sheets approximately 24 mils thick and 11" wide. In this process, the extruded polymer melt was quenched onto a chill roll maintained at 70° F. The cast sheets were then further processed into film having a width of 60" and an exit thickness of approximately 0.0007" using a draw ratio of 5.0×8.0 (MD×TD). Complete processing conditions are shown in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Extrusion and Tenter Line Processing Conditions		C	75/25	FF029A
Extruder Temperatures (F.)	Melt Temp	490	492	491
	Zone 1	450	450	450
	Zone 2	480	480	480
	Zone 3	480	480	480
	Zone 4	480	480	480
	Die Temp	480	480	480
	Screw RPM	55	60	61
	Chill Roll Temp (F.)	70	70	70
	Cast Line FPM	15.48	15.44	15.54
	Cast Sheet Thickness	24 Mils	24 Mils	24 Mils
MDO Roll (F.)	Cast Sheet Width	11"	11"	11"
	MDO Stretch Ratio	5	5	5
	Preheat 1	250	250	250
	Preheat 2	250	250	250
	Slow Draw	250	250	250
	Fast Draw	229	229	229
	Anneal 1	219	219	219
TDO OVEN (F.)	Cooling	120	120	120
	TDO Stretch Ratio	8	8	8
	Oven Zone 1	328	334	330
	Oven Zone 2	326	334	328
	Oven Zone 3	320	330	320
	TDO Exit Thickness	0.0007"	0.0007"	0.0007"
	TDO Exit Width	60"	60"	60"

Table 5 shows the physical properties of the resulting films. Tensile modulus values were generated at the products' ideal processing temperature. Ideal processing temperatures are considered to be the center of a product's process window wherein the low end of the process window is determined by web breaks and the high end of the process window is determined by high haze. The processing windows for C, 75/25, and FF029A are shown in FIG. 1.

TABLE 5

Physical Properties		C	75/25	FF029A
Ideal Process Temperature		328 F.	332 F.	325 F.
	Film thickness (inches)	0.00061	0.00069	0.00068
	Haze (%)	0.57	0.63	0.84
Transmittance (%)		94.08	94.13	94.05
	Clarity (%)	98.93	98.65	98.88
TD Modulus (psi)		845,000	870,000	770,000
MD Modulus (psi)		410,000	445,000	401,000

These examples demonstrate that the invention polymer is ready substitute for standard BOPP grade resin, providing enhanced performance in the form of improved strength in both MD and TD moduli, without sacrificing processability.

The present invention has thus been described in general terms with reference to specific examples. Those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention is not limited to the specific embodiments disclosed in the examples. Those skilled in the art will understand the full scope of the invention from the appended claims.

All references contained herein are hereby incorporated by reference in their entirety.

What is claimed is:

1. A resin composition comprising:

a. about 70% to about 95% by weight of a polypropylene homopolymer, said polypropylene homopolymer having a xylene solubles content of less than 3% by weight and a crystallinity of at least 55%; and

b. about 5% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene copolymer, said ethylene/propylene copolymer containing ethylene of greater than 8% to about 15% by weight, wherein a majority of said ethylene in said ethylene/propylene copolymer is random.

2. The resin composition according to claim 1, further comprising at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

3. A resin composition comprising:

a. about 70% to about 85% of a polypropylene homopolymer having a xylene solubles content of less than 3% by weight and a crystallinity of at least 55%; and

b. about 15% to about 30% by weight of an ethylene/propylene copolymer, said ethylene/propylene copolymer containing ethylene of greater than about 8% to about 15% by weight, wherein a majority of said ethylene in said ethylene/propylene copolymer is random.

4. The resin composition according to claim 3, further comprising at least one additive selected from the group consisting of nucleators, antioxidants, acid neutralizers, slip agents, antiblock agents, antifogging agents, pigments, and combinations thereof.

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