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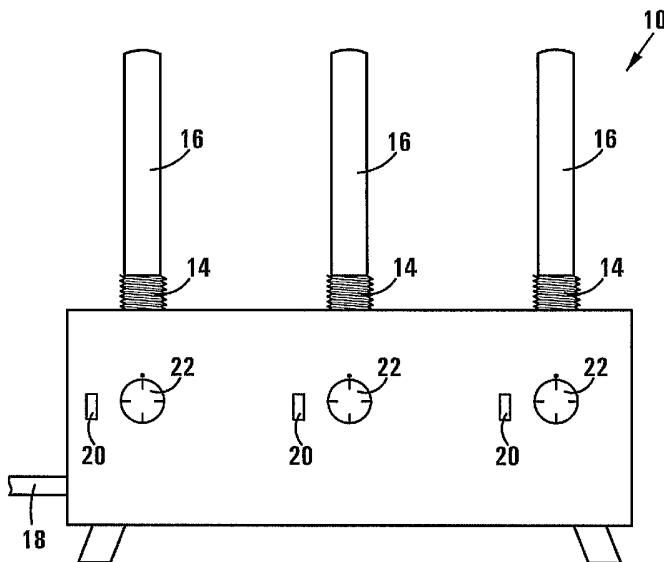
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(54) Title: AN APPARATUS FOR PREPARING FOODSTUFFS



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to an apparatus for preparing foodstuffs which includes a support body (12) that has at least one former member (14) removably secured thereon, the configuration of the former member and its configuration with respect to the support body being such that, through manipulation of a bread roll, it can penetrate the bread roll for forming a pocket therein in which a filter-type foodstuff is receivable. The apparatus includes also heating means (16), operatively located in the former member, for heating of a bread roll penetrated by the former member. The former member can be interchanged with another former member of a set to provide for the formation of a pocket in a different type bread roll.

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AN APPARATUS FOR PREPARING FOODSTUFFS

THIS INVENTION relates to an apparatus for preparing foodstuffs.

According to the invention there is provided an apparatus for preparing foodstuffs, which includes, in its operative configuration,

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a support body having at least one former member secured thereon in a configuration in which it projects from the body and, through manual manipulation of a bread roll, can penetrate the bread roll for forming a pocket therein in which a filler-type foodstuff is receivable; and

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heating means for heating the former member.

The former member of the apparatus of the invention may be removably secured on the support body, particularly via complementary securing formations defined respectively
15 by the support body and the former member. The complementary securing formations typically include a threaded bore defined in the former member and a complementary externally threaded spigot-like formation projecting from the support body.

The heating means of the apparatus of the invention may include an electrically
20 energisable heating element operatively located within the former member. As such, the heating element may extend from the support body and may be operatively located

in a complementary receiving formation defined therefor in the former member. Alternatively, the heating element may be permanently located within the former member and the former member and the body support may include complementary connector formations for electrically connecting the heating element to an electric
5 current supply with the former member secured on the support body.

The apparatus of the invention may thus include also connector means for connecting the heating element to an electric current supply. In addition, the apparatus may include control means located on the support body in a configuration in which it is manually
10 operable externally of the body for controlling electric current supply to the heating element.

The heating means of the apparatus of the invention also may include any alternative means that can provide for effective heating of the former member.
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The support body of the apparatus of the invention also may have a plurality of former members secured thereon in an equivalent configuration in which they project from the body and can each penetrate a bread roll for forming a pocket therein in which a filler-type foodstuff is receivable, the apparatus including heating means for heating all the
20 former members. It is particularly envisaged that the apparatus of the invention may include between two and five former members.

All the former members forming a part of the apparatus of the invention may define the same external configuration for penetrating a particular type bread roll for forming a
25 pocket therein or, alternatively, at least some former members may define different external configurations that permit different configuration bread rolls to be penetrated thereby for forming pockets therein. It will be understood also that the former members, when being removably secured on the support body, may be interchangeable with one another and, as such, the apparatus of the invention may include a set of additional
30 former members of different external configurations for penetrating different

configuration bread rolls for forming pockets therein and which are interchangeably securable on the support body of the apparatus. It must be understood in this regard also that any reference herein to a bread roll must be interpreted as a reference to a bread roll of a known or specially "designed" type and also as a reference to any food
5 product of a similar nature that can potentially be penetrated as envisaged to form a pocket for a filler type foodstuff therein.

As is apparent from the above, the former members of the apparatus of the invention are particularly formed to pierce into different configuration bread rolls, in order to form
10 pockets within the bread rolls, and to internally heat the bread rolls, the pockets being formed to conveniently receive suitable filler-type foodstuffs therein. Former members may thus include at least one member in the form of an elongate spike that can pierce longitudinally into an elongate bread roll of the type conventionally used for hotdogs. Still further, former members may include at least one tongue-like member that can pierce
15 and form a pocket within a bread roll of different types, the width, thickness and length of the tongue-like member again being variable and being determined by the particular rolls in conjunction with which the tongue-like former member is intended to be used.

The former members also may be removably secured to the support body thereof in
20 many different configurations, typically via suitable complementary clipping formations, complementary bayonet-type formations, and the like.

It is envisaged also that the apparatus may include a former member, or a set of the same former members, that render the apparatus particularly usable in conjunction with
25 a specific configuration bread roll. Such a specific configuration bread roll, it is envisaged, may include two bread roll parts that are easily severable from one another, e.g. by breaking the roll in two, each part being specifically configured to cooperate with a former member for conveniently forming a pocket therein.

Each former member of the apparatus of the invention may be of any suitable material, such as aluminium, having a high co-efficient of heat transfer and which may be "TEFLON" coated, in order to enhance the hygienic qualities thereof. Alternatively, each former member may be of a stainless steel metal material, or the like, which does not
5 require any coating.

It is still further envisaged that the apparatus of the invention can be configured to permit a former member thereof to be dipped into a vessel containing a batter, or the like, so that a layer of the batter is formed by setting about the former member while being
10 simultaneously cooked, thereby forming a hollow foodstuff body that can be filled with a suitable filler-type foodstuff.

The invention is now described with reference to an example of the invention, which is illustrated in the accompanying diagrammatic drawings, in which:
15

Figure 1 shows a schematic front view of an apparatus for preparing foodstuffs, in accordance with the invention, without having any former member secured thereon;

Figure 2 shows a partially sectioned view of a first embodiment of a former member of a set forming part of the apparatus of Figure 1;
20

Figure 3 shows a front view of a second embodiment of a former member of a set forming part of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 4 shows a top plan view of the former member of Figure 3;
25

Figure 5 shows a front view of a third embodiment of a former member of a set forming part of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 6 shows a top plan view of the former member of Figure 5; and
30

Figure 7 shows a plan view of a 'special' bread roll for use with the apparatus of the invention.

Referring initially to Figure 1 of the drawings, an apparatus for preparing foodstuffs, in accordance with the invention, and excluding any former member secured thereon, is generally designated by the reference numeral 10. The apparatus 10 generally includes a support body 12 having three securing formations 14 mounted thereon which are adapted to have three separate former members (not shown in Figure 1) replaceably secured thereto and thereby replaceably secured on the support body 12 while projecting vertically therefrom. In particular, the securing formations 14 act as securing means for the former members and define thread formations which permit former members to screw onto the securing formations to thereby be replaceably secured with respect to the body 12.

5 A heating element 16 projects through each securing formation 14 vertically from the body 12 and is complementary to a bore within each former member (as will be described in more detail hereinafter) to be secured onto the support body 12 via a securing formation 14.

15 The apparatus 10 is connectable via a suitable conductor 18 to an electric current supply, the conductor 18 being connected to each one of the heating elements 16 via a control switch 20 and temperature control means 22 whereby the magnitude of current conducted to the heating elements 16 can be controlled. The temperature control means 22 may conveniently be a variable rheostat, or the like, which is connected in series with the individual heating elements 16 and which can control the current supplied to the heating elements and thereby the actual heating of these elements when energised. It will be appreciated that the above configuration provides for the individual energising and control of the separate heating elements 16, although alternative embodiments of the invention are envisaged by the Applicant in which a single

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temperature control means may be provided for controlling all the heating elements simultaneously.

Referring now also to Figure 2 of the drawings, a first embodiment of a former member
5 of a set for the apparatus of Figure 1 comprises an elongate spike 24 having a bore 26
therein which can fit onto either one of the heating elements 16, the bore 26 being
partially threaded as shown so that it can screw onto a securing formation 14 to be
replaceably secured on the support body 12. When secured on the support body 12,
through manual manipulation of an elongate bread roll, the spike 24 can penetrate/
10 pierce the roll, to form an elongate pocket therein. By heating the spike 24 via the
heating element 16, a heated roll is thus provided which has an elongate pocket therein
which can be filled with an elongate sausage, vienna, or any other filler-type foodstuff,
together with any other required garnishes.

15 The spike 24 clearly is particularly suitable for providing pockets in elongate rolls as are
generally used for hotdogs. Alternative configuration former members also can be
provided as part of a set for the apparatus of Figure 1, two particular embodiments of
such former members being shown in Figures 3 to 6. In Figures 3 and 4, a first tongue-
like former member 28 is shown, the former member 28 again having a bore 30 therein
20 which is partially threaded so that it is securable on the support body 12 similar to the
spike 24 as above described. The former member 28 defines an effective cutting edge
which can cut and pierce into a roll of the type that is typically used for hamburgers,
once again to form a pocket within such a roll which can either be filled with a
hamburger patty or, alternatively, with any alternative filler-type foodstuff. Also, when
25 replaceably secured on the support body 12 and through energising the heating element
then disposed within the bore 30, the former member can again be heated so that a
bread roll pierced by the former member 28 and located thereon can be internally
heated.

Figures 5 and 6 show a typical third embodiment of a former member 34, the member 34 again having a bore 36 therein to permit it to be removably secured on the support body 12 of the heating apparatus 10 in the same manner as can the former members 24 and 28. The former member 34 again defines a tongue-like formation and a cutting edge 36, the cutting edge 36 being particularly adapted to cut into and pierce a roll so that a pocket can be formed in the roll which can be internally heated by heating the former member 34 via a heating element 16 of the apparatus 10.

Clearly, all the former members 24, 28 and 34 are specifically adapted for different types and shapes of rolls and by being removably securable on the support body of the apparatus 10 as above described, provision is made for a single apparatus that can be used for forming pockets in various different type rolls and for heating such rolls. It will be understood that various different embodiments of former members can also be provided to be used in conjunction with alternative types of rolls that may be available, or that may become available specifically for use in conjunction with the apparatus 10. It is envisaged in the latter regard that the apparatus of the invention may be provided only with a single former member, or with a plurality of the same former members, permanently or removably secured on the support body thereof, hence providing for 'special' rolls to be used therewith. A typical roll may include two severable parts that permit the formation of a pocket in each part from the region where severed from the other part. Figure 7 illustrates a typical configuration of such a roll 50 that is severable into two parts 52 along the line as shown.

The Applicant believes that by providing for the formation of pockets within bread rolls and for the heating of such bread rolls, new opportunities are provided for the preparation of novel kinds of foodstuffs, insofar as the pockets will be specifically suitable to receive filler-type foodstuffs of different kinds therein.

Also, through the use of the apparatus 10 in an inverted mode, or by providing a similar type apparatus in which the former members will project vertically downwardly from the

support body thereof, the former members can be dipped into a bowl having a batter, or the like, therein, so that by being heated, a layer of batter will form about the former members by setting as a result of the heating, while simultaneously being cooked. As such, a new type of hollow foodstuff body is provided which can be filled with a filler-type
5 foodstuff.

The Applicant believes that the apparatus 10 as above described can be useful for various different applications, both domestically or by restaurants and/or fast food suppliers. It will be appreciated that different apparatus may be provided having a
10 different number of heating elements projecting therefrom and also that the configuration of the apparatus 10 can be significantly altered while still providing for the same function as described hereinabove. For example, instead of having the heating elements 16 forming an effective part of the support body 12, heating elements may be located within former members while suitable current connector means may be provided
15 for connecting a current supply to the heating elements provided within the former members. The present invention clearly also extends to such alternative embodiments of the invention.

CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for preparing foodstuffs, which includes, in its operative configuration,
- 5 a support body having at least one former member secured thereon in a configuration in which it projects from the body and, through manual manipulation of a bread roll, can penetrate the bread roll for forming a pocket therein in which a filler-type foodstuff is receivable; and
- 10 heating means for heating the former member.
2. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 1, in which the former member is removably secured on the support body via complementary securing formations defined respectively by the support body and the former member.
- 15 3. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 2, in which the complementary securing formations include a threaded bore defined in the former member and a complementary externally threaded formation projecting from the support body.
- 20 4. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 2 or Claim 3, in which the heating means includes an electrically energiseable heating element operatively located within the former member.
- 25 5. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 4, in which the heating element extends from the support body and is operatively located in a complementary receiving formation defined therefor in the former member.
- 30 6. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 4, in which the heating element is permanently located within the former member and the former member and the support body

include complementary connector formations for electrically connecting the heating element to an electric current supply with the former member secured on the support body.

- 5 7. An apparatus as claimed in any one of Claims 4 to 6, which includes connector means for connecting the heating element to an electric current supply.
8. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 7, which includes control means located on the support body in a configuration in which it is manually operable externally of the
10 body for controlling electric current supply to the heating element.
9. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, in which the support body has a plurality of former members secured thereon in an equivalent configuration in which they project from the body and can each penetrate a bread roll for forming a pocket therein in which a filler-type foodstuff is receivable and
15 which includes heating means for heating all the former members.
10. Apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, in which all the former members define the same external configuration for penetrating a particular type bread roll for forming a
20 pocket therein.
11. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 9, in which at least some former members define different external configurations that permit different configuration bread rolls to be penetrated thereby for forming pockets therein.
25
12. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 10 or Claim 11, in which the former members are removably secured on the support body and are interchangeable with one another.

13. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 12, which includes a set of additional former members of different external configurations for penetrating different configuration bread rolls for forming pockets therein and which are interchangeably securable on the support body.

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14. An apparatus for preparing foodstuffs as claimed in Claim 1, substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

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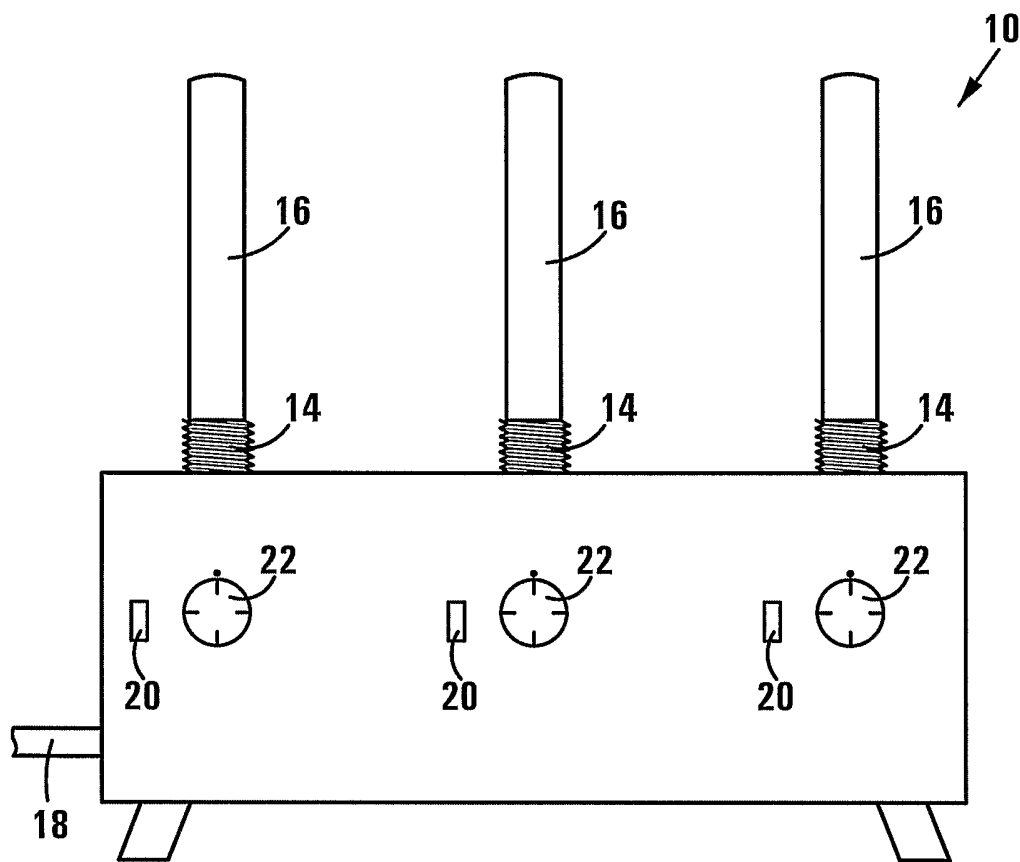


FIG 1

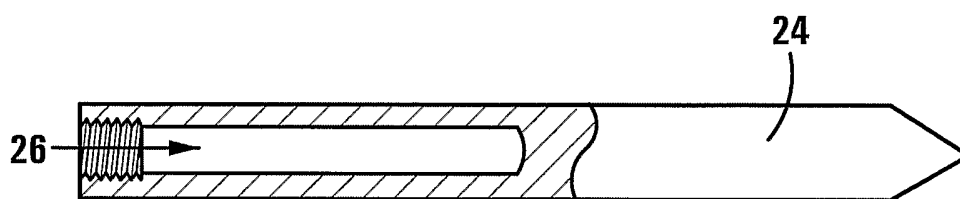


FIG 2

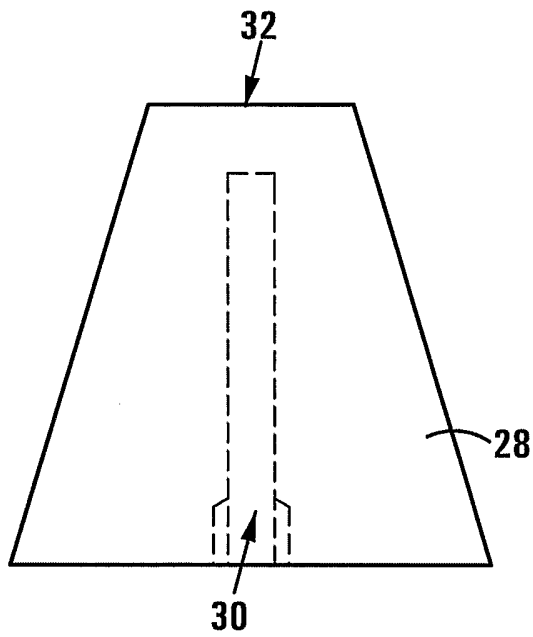


FIG 3

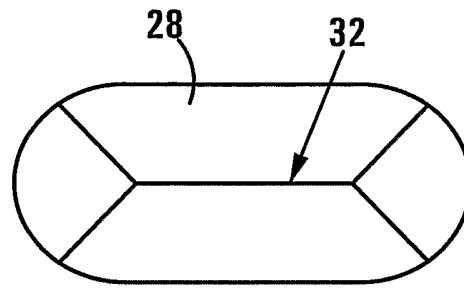


FIG 4

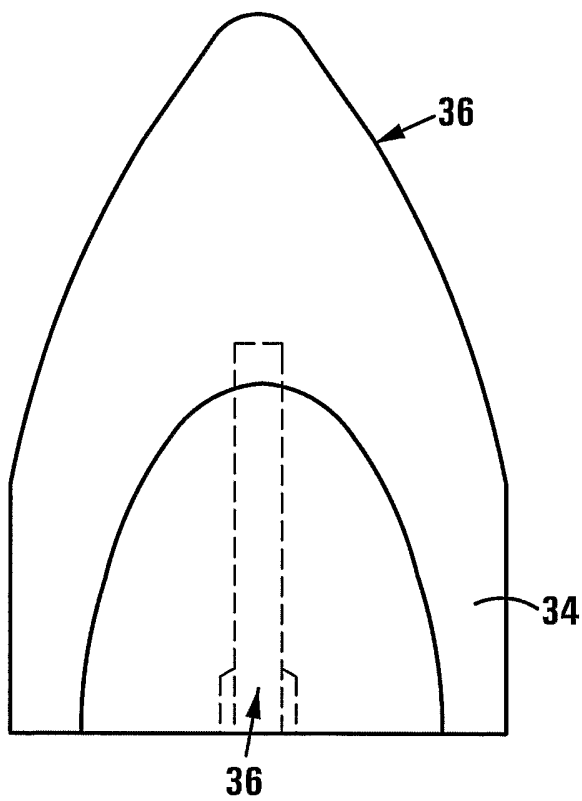


FIG 5

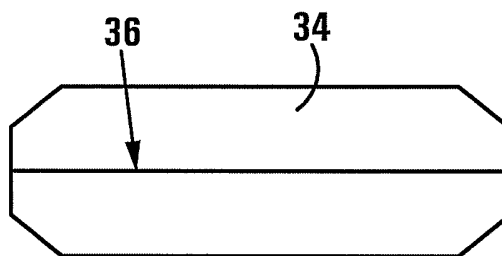


FIG 6

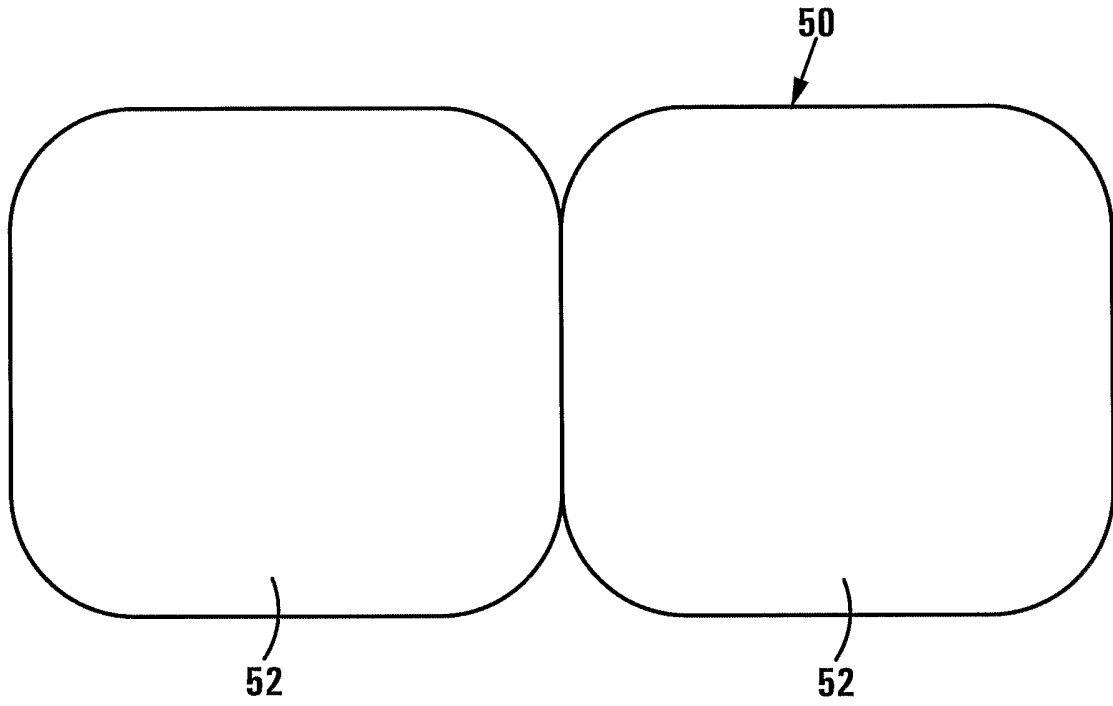


FIG 7

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No

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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. A47J37/08

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

A47J

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

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X	GB 1 308 419 A (NOUVEAUX APPAREILLAGES PRATIQUES HOLDING SA) 21 February 1973 (1973-02-21) page 1, line 44 - page 2, line 3; figures	1-4, 6-10, 12, 14
X	US 4 272 669 A (YAMANAKA ET AL) 9 June 1981 (1981-06-09) column 2, line 12 - column 4, line 16; figures	1-4, 6-14
X	US 3 965 808 A (CHOMETTE ET AL) 29 June 1976 (1976-06-29) column 2, line 4 - column 3, line 24; figures	1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 14
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 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/IB2006/001113

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
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