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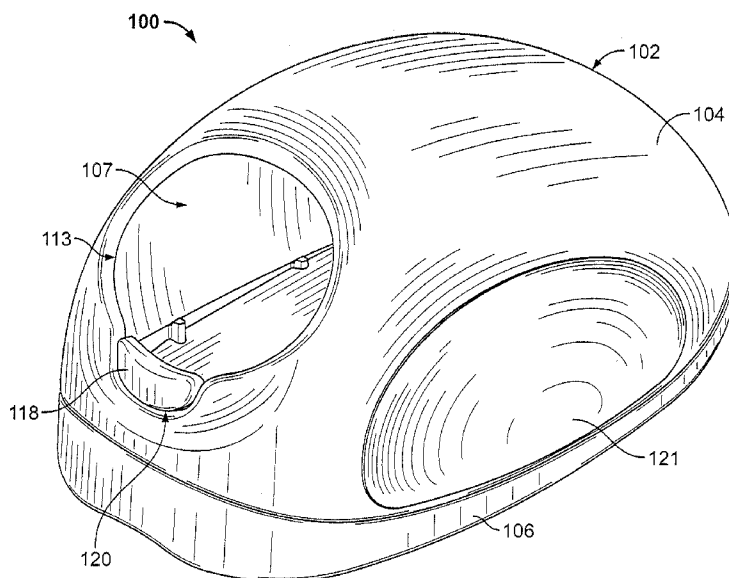


FIG. 1

(57) Abstract: A corn removal device including a housing constructed to be held by a user's hand and adapted to be moved along a surface of an ear of corn. The housing defines a cavity and an opening that accesses the cavity. The corn removal device also includes a blade attached to the housing adjacent to the opening. The blade is adapted to remove corn kernels from the surface of the ear of corn and guide the corn kernels through the opening and into the cavity for storage.

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CORN REMOVAL DEVICE

BACKGROUND

[0001] Corn is a common ingredient in many recipes. Specifically, corn
5 kernels are used to make a variety of foods, such as creamed corn and corn bread. In
order to prepare such foods, the kernels on an ear of corn must be removed. At home,
one way to remove the kernels from an ear of corn is to use a knife. A user holds the
knife and moves the knife so that it cuts slightly behind the kernels along the surface
of the ear of corn. Although this method accomplishes the task of removing the corn
10 kernels, it tends to cut away part of the corn husk when the cut is too deep or partially
remove the kernels when the cut is not deep enough. Some of the husk may be mixed
in with the removed corn kernels which is not desirable. Furthermore, this method is
dangerous as the user's fingers or hand may be cut by the knife during use.

[0002] Corn strippers are tools which are designed to safely remove corn
15 kernels from an ear of corn. Some corn strippers are free standing devices which have
several inwardly facing cutting surfaces or blades. These corn strippers define a
through hole that enables an ear of corn to be moved downward through the middle of
the corn stripper to remove the kernels from the ear of corn. These types of corn
strippers require the user to use both hands and are difficult to use.

20 [0003] Another type of corn stripper is a handheld stripper which typically has
a handle and a blade at one end of the handle. A user holds the handle and moves the
blade along the outer surface of an ear of corn to scrape away or remove the kernels.
Neither of the above-described corn strippers include a container to collect the kernels
after they have been removed or cut away from the ear of corn. Instead, the kernels
25 fall onto a surface such as that of a cutting board or countertop, and are then collected
by the user.

[0004] Certain corn strippers do have containers to store the removed kernels
from the ears of corn. Such a container is attached to an outer surface of the corn
stripper as shown in U.S. patent no. 2,326,873. However, the storage container either
30 has to be removed or opened to remove the kernels and to clean the container.

[0005] Accordingly, there is a need for an improved corn removal device which enables a user to manipulate the corn removal device to remove corn kernels from an ear of corn while collecting the removed corn kernels.

5

SUMMARY

[0006] The present invention is directed to a corn removal device which is holdable in a user's hand and which defines an internal compartment for storing corn kernels removed from an ear of corn.

10 [0007] One embodiment provides a corn removal device including a housing constructed to be held by a user's hand and adapted to be moved along a surface of an ear of corn. The housing defines a cavity and an opening that accesses the cavity. The corn removal device includes a blade attached to the housing adjacent to the opening. The blade is adapted to remove corn kernels from the surface of the ear of corn and guide the corn kernels through the opening and into the cavity.

15 [0008] In an embodiment, the housing includes a top member and a bottom member, where the top member is removably connected to the bottom member.

[0009] In an embodiment, the top member defines a first slot at a first end of the housing and a second slot at an opposing second end of the housing, and the bottom member includes a first tab engagable with the first slot and a second tab engageable with the second slot, where the first tab engages the first slot and the
20 second tab engages the second slot when the first and second members are connected together.

[0010] In an embodiment, the housing includes a top member and a bottom member that are hingedly connected together, where the top member is pivotable
25 between an open position and a closed position.

[0011] In an embodiment, the housing includes a latch and an actuator associated with the latch. The latch is adapted to secure the top member to the bottom member and the actuator is operable to release the latch to move the top member to the open position.

30 [0012] In an embodiment, the housing defines an additional opening to allow the corn kernels in the cavity to be removed by the user.

[0013] In an embodiment, the housing includes at least one grip member.

[0014] In an embodiment, the blade includes a serrated edge.

[0015] In an embodiment, the housing includes a bottom surface defining a groove.

5 [0016] Another embodiment provides a corn removal device movable along a surface of an ear of corn. The corn removal device includes a housing including a top member removably connected to a bottom member. The top and bottom members define a cavity and the bottom member defines an opening that accesses the cavity. The corn removal device also includes a blade attached to the bottom member adjacent to the opening.

10 [0017] In an embodiment, the top member defines a first slot at a first end of the housing and a second slot at an opposing second end of the housing. The bottom member includes a first tab engagable with the first slot and a second tab engagable with the second slot, where the first tab engages the first slot and the second tab engages the second slot when the first and second members are connected together.

15 [0018] In an embodiment, the top member and the bottom member are hingedly connected together. The top member is pivotable between an open position and a closed position.

[0019] In an embodiment, the housing includes a latch and an actuator associated with the latch. The latch is adapted to secure the top member to the bottom member and the actuator is operable to release the latch to move the top member to the open position.

20 [0020] In an embodiment, the top member defines an opening to allow the corn kernels in the cavity to be removed by the user.

[0021] In an embodiment, the housing includes at least one grip member.

25 [0022] In an embodiment, the blade includes a serrated edge.

[0023] In an embodiment, the housing includes a bottom surface defining a groove.

[0024] It is therefore an advantage of the present invention to provide a corn removal device that is holdable in a user's hand and that has an internal compartment that stores corn kernels removed from an ear of corn.

30 [0025] Another advantage of the present invention is to provide a corn removal device including a housing having a top member that is removable from a

bottom member where the top member and bottom members join to define an internal compartment that stores corn kernels that have been removed from an ear of corn.

[0026] A further advantage of the present invention is to provide a corn removal device including a bottom surface having a groove that corresponds to a surface of an ear of corn to allow the corn removal device to easily move along the surface of the ear of corn.

[0027] Other objects, features and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed disclosure, taken in conjunction with the accompanying sheets of drawings, wherein like numerals refer to like parts, elements, components, steps and processes.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0028] Fig. 1 is a front perspective view of an embodiment of the corn removal device of the present invention.

[0029] Fig. 2 is a top view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1.

[0030] Fig. 3 is a bottom view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1.

[0031] Fig. 4 is a front view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1.

[0032] Fig. 5 is a rear view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1.

[0033] Fig. 6 is a side view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1.

[0034] Fig. 7 is an exploded perspective view of the corn removal device of Fig. 1 illustrating the top member of the housing separated from the bottom member of the housing.

[0035] Fig. 8 is a perspective view of another embodiment of the corn removal device where the housing includes a top member that is pivotably connected to a bottom member.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0036] The present invention is directed to a corn removal device that includes a housing that defines an internal compartment and includes a blade where the housing is moved along a surface of an ear of corn and the blade removes corn kernels and guides them into the internal compartment of the housing for storage.

[0037] Referring now to Figs. 1-7, a corn removal device 100 of the present invention is illustrated wherein the corn removal device includes a body or housing 102 having a top member 104 and a bottom member 106. The housing 102, and more specifically, the top member 104 and the bottom member 106, define a cavity, receptacle or internal compartment 107. The internal compartment 107 stores corn kernels that have been removed from an ear of corn as described in more detail below. Bottom member 106 has a bottom surface 108 which includes a groove 110 and is contoured or shaped to correspond to the shape of the surface of an ear of corn. Specifically, the groove 110 has a rounded shape that corresponds to the generally, rounded outer surface of an ear of corn. A cutting member or blade 122 is attached to and extends generally outwardly from the bottom surface 108 of the bottom member 106. In an embodiment, the blade has a serrated edge. It should be appreciated that the blade may have any suitable edge or cutting surface. In the illustrated embodiment, the blade 122 has a generally curved shape that corresponds with the curved shape of the groove 110. This enables the blade 122 to closely engage the surface of an ear of corn.

[0038] As shown in Fig. 5, the bottom surface 108 and blade 122 are positioned to define a first opening 112 that provides access to the internal compartment 107. The first opening 112 enables corn kernels that are removed by the blade 122 to be guided into or moved into the internal compartment 107 of the housing 102. It should be appreciated that the opening 112 may be any suitable size and shape based on the overall size of the corn removal device 100 and the size of the corn kernels to be removed.

[0039] In the illustrated embodiment, the top member 104 and the bottom member 106 of the housing 102 are removably connected together. Specifically, the

bottom member 106 includes a first tab 114 at one end and a second tab 118 at an opposing second end. The tab 114 is made of a flexible, resilient material which enables it to flex forwardly and rearwardly. The top member 104 defines a first slot 116 and a second slot 120. The slots 116 and 120 are of a size and shape that correspond to the size and shape of the ends of the first and second tabs 114 and 118, respectively. The top member 104 and the bottom member 106 are joined together by placing the top member 104 on the bottom member 106 (see Fig. 7), or vice versa, and moving the top member and bottom member together until the first tab 114 engages or snaps into the first slot 116 and the second tab 118 engages or snaps into the second slot 120.

[0040] To remove the top member from the bottom member, a user presses or pushes inwardly on the second tab 118 until the top member 104 is released from the bottom member 106 on that side of the housing 102. The user then moves or pivots the top member 104 upwardly away from the bottom member 106 which causes the first tab 114 to disengage from the first slot 116. The top and bottom members are now removed from each other or separated so that the corn removal device 100 can be easily cleaned or so that the corn kernels stored in the internal compartment 107 can be easily removed such as by tilting the container and dumping the corn kernels in a bowl or other container. It should be appreciated that any suitable connector, connectors or connection methods may be used to join the top member and the bottom member of the housing.

[0041] In an embodiment, the housing 102, and more specifically, the top member 104, defines a second opening 113. The second opening 113 is a generally circular-shaped opening which enables the corn kernels that have been removed from an ear of corn and that are stored in the internal compartment 107 to be removed from the corn removal device 100 without having to separate the top and bottom members. In use, the user simply tilts the corn removal device 100 on end so that the corn kernels stored in the internal compartment 107 fall out of the internal compartment through the second opening 113 and onto a plate or container. It should be appreciated that the second opening 113 may be any suitable size and shape.

[0042] In an embodiment, the housing 102 includes at least one grip member or grip 121 that is positioned on a side of and is integrally formed with the housing

102. Specifically, the grips 121 are protruding surfaces which generally extend from the sides of the top member 104. As shown in Figs. 1 and 2, a first grip member or grip 121 is positioned on one side of the housing 102 and another grip member or grip 121 is positioned on an opposing side of the housing 102. The grips 121 are shown as
5 generally elongated oval-shaped members but may be any suitable size and shape. In use, a user places one or more fingers of their hand on one or more grips 121 as the user grasps or holds the corn removal device 100. The grips 121 makes the corn removal device 100 easier to hold and manipulate.

[0043] In all of the above embodiments, the corn removal device, and more
10 specifically, all the parts of the corn removal device, are made of a suitable, durable material such as a plastic or plastics. The different components of the corn removal device would be injection molded and then connected together as necessary to form the corn removal device 100.

[0044] In use, a user grasps or holds the housing 102 by positioning his/her
15 hand over the top of the housing 102 so that certain of the fingers engage grip 121 on one side of the housing, and their other fingers (i.e., their thumb) engage the grip 121 on the other side of the housing to firmly hold the housing 102. The user then positions the bottom surface 108 of the corn removal device over or on a surface of an ear of corn. Specifically, the groove 110 is configured or shaped to correspond to and
20 engage the surface of the ear of corn. The corn removal device 100 is then moved along the surface of the ear of corn so that the blade 122 removes the corn kernels from the ear of corn. As the blade 122 cuts or removes the corn kernels from the ear of corn, the blade 122 also guides the removed corn kernels into the internal compartment or cavity 107 to be stored for later use. When the user is finished
25 cutting and/or removing the corn kernels from the ear of corn, the user separates the top member from the bottom member by pressing on tab 118 to disengage it from the slot 120. (see Fig. 7) The top member is pivoted upwardly away from the bottom member 106 to release the first tab 114 from the first slot 116. After the top member and bottom member are separated, the user can scoop up the corn kernels that were
30 removed from the ear of corn or tilt the housing to dump the corn kernels onto a plate or into a storage container.

[0045] Referring now to Fig. 8, another embodiment of a corn removal device 200 is illustrated where the corn removal device includes a housing 202 having a top member 204 and a bottom member 206 that are pivotably connected together. The top and bottom members 204 and 206 are not completely removable or separable from each other. Instead, a hinge assembly 208 having a hinge 210 is connected to the top and bottom members at one end of the housing 102. The hinge 210 enables the top member 204 to be pivoted or moved away from the bottom member 206 so that a user can access the cavity or internal compartment of the housing. Specifically, the bottom member 206 includes tab 212 and the top member 204 defines a slot 214 where the tab 212 engages the slot 214 when the top member 204 and bottom member 206 are pivoted into engagement with each other. To release the top member 204 from the bottom member 206 (so that the top member can pivot to an opened position), a user simply presses or pushes inwardly on the tab 212 to disengage it from the slot 214. This allows the top member 204 to move outwardly away from the bottom member 206.

[0046] As described above, the corn removal device 100 of the present invention enables a user to securely and safely hold the corn removal device 100 in their hand and move it along a surface of an ear of corn to efficiently and effectively remove the corn kernels from the ear of corn. The corn removal device 100 also enables the removed corn kernels to be stored in a compartment for removal at a later time. This enables the user to more easily and efficiently remove corn kernels from an ear of corn because they don't have to deal with assembling or handling the different components or parts of traditional corn strippers which can be burdensome and difficult to use.

[0047] While the present invention is described in connection with what is presently considered to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it should be appreciated that the invention is not limited to the disclosed embodiments, and is intended to cover various modifications and equivalent arrangements included within the spirit and scope of the claims. Modifications and variations in the present invention may be made without departing from the novel aspects of the invention as defined in the claims, and this application is limited only by the scope of the claims.

CLAIMS

The invention is claimed as follows:

1. A corn removal device comprising:

5 a housing constructed to be held by a user's hand and adapted to be moved along a surface of an ear of corn, said housing defining a cavity and an opening that accesses said cavity; and

a blade attached to said housing and positioned adjacent to said opening, said blade adapted to remove corn kernels from the surface of the ear of corn and guide the corn kernels through said opening and into said cavity.

10

2. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said housing includes a top member and a bottom member, said top member being removably connected to said bottom member.

15

3. The corn removal device of claim 2, wherein said top member defines a first slot at a first end of said housing and a second slot at an opposing second end of said housing, and said bottom member includes a first tab engagable with said first slot and a second tab engageable with said second slot, wherein said first tab engages said first slot and said second tab engages said second slot when said first and second members are connected together.

20

4. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said housing includes a top member and a bottom member that are hingedly connected together, said top member being pivotable between an open position and a closed position.

25

5. The corn removal device of claim 4, wherein said housing includes a latch and an actuator associated with said latch, said latch adapted to secure said top member to said bottom member and said actuator being operable to release said latch to enable said top member to be moved to the open position.

30

6. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said housing defines an additional opening to allow the corn kernels in said cavity to be removed by the user.

7. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said housing includes at
5 least one grip member.

8. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said blade includes a serrated edge.

10 9. The corn removal device of claim 1, wherein said housing includes a bottom surface defining a groove.

10. A corn removal device movable along a surface of an ear of corn, said corn removal device comprising:

15 a housing including a top member removably connected to a bottom member, said top and bottom members defining a cavity and said bottom member defining an opening that accesses said cavity; and

a blade attached to said bottom member adjacent to said opening.

20 11. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said top member defines a first slot at a first end of said housing and a second slot at an opposing second end of said housing, and said bottom member includes a first tab engagable with said first slot and a second tab engageable with said second slot, wherein said first tab engages said first slot and said second tab engages said second slot when said first and second
25 members are connected together.

12. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said top member and said bottom member are hingedly connected together, said top member being pivotable between an open position and a closed position.

30

13. The corn removal device of claim 12, wherein said housing includes a latch and an actuator associated with said latch, said latch adapted to secure said top

member to said bottom member and said actuator being operable to release said latch to move said top member to the open position.

14. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said top member defines an opening to allow the corn kernels in said cavity to be removed by the user.

5

15. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said housing includes at least one grip member.

16. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said blade includes a
10 serrated edge.

17. The corn removal device of claim 10, wherein said housing includes a bottom surface defining a groove.

15

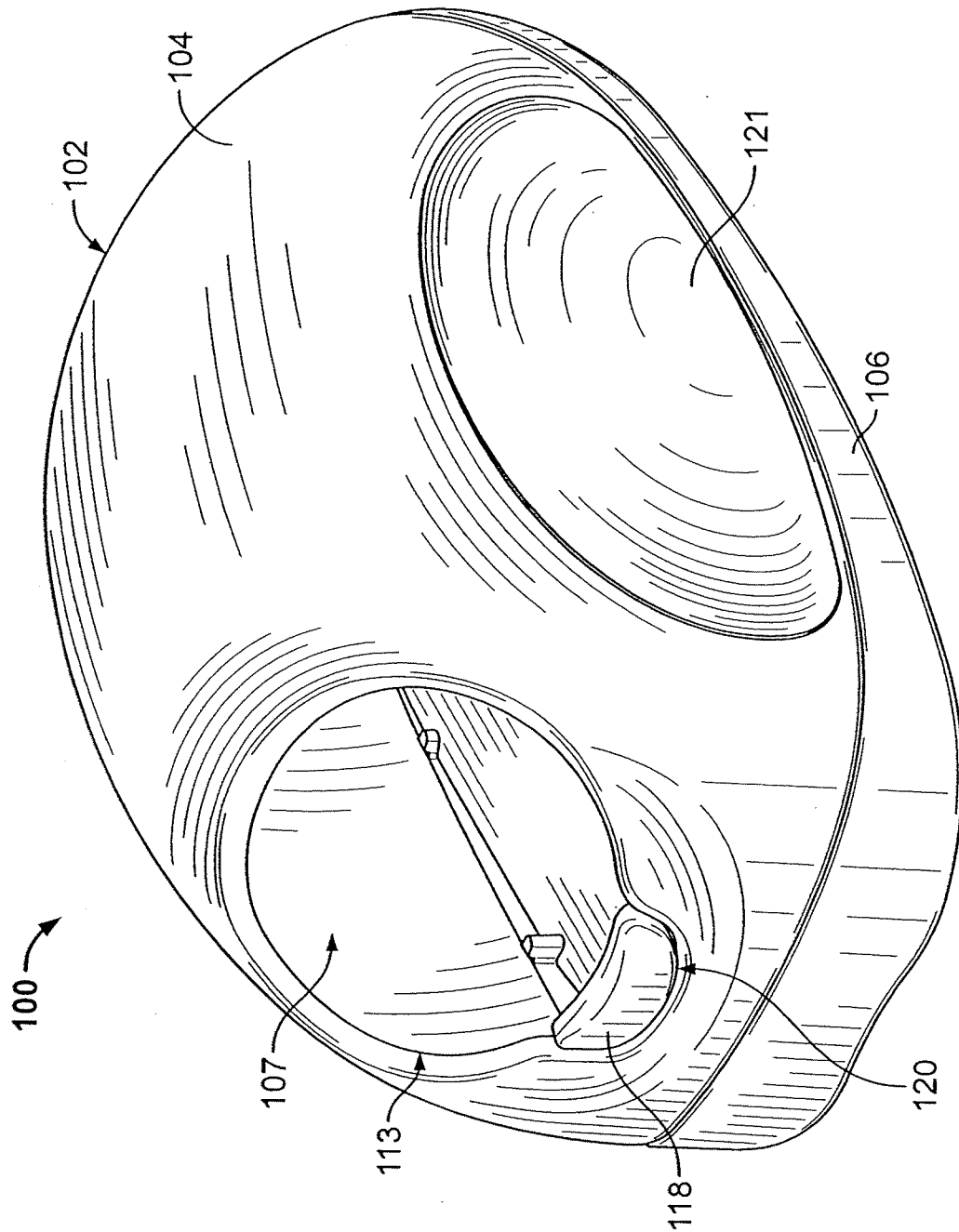


FIG. 1

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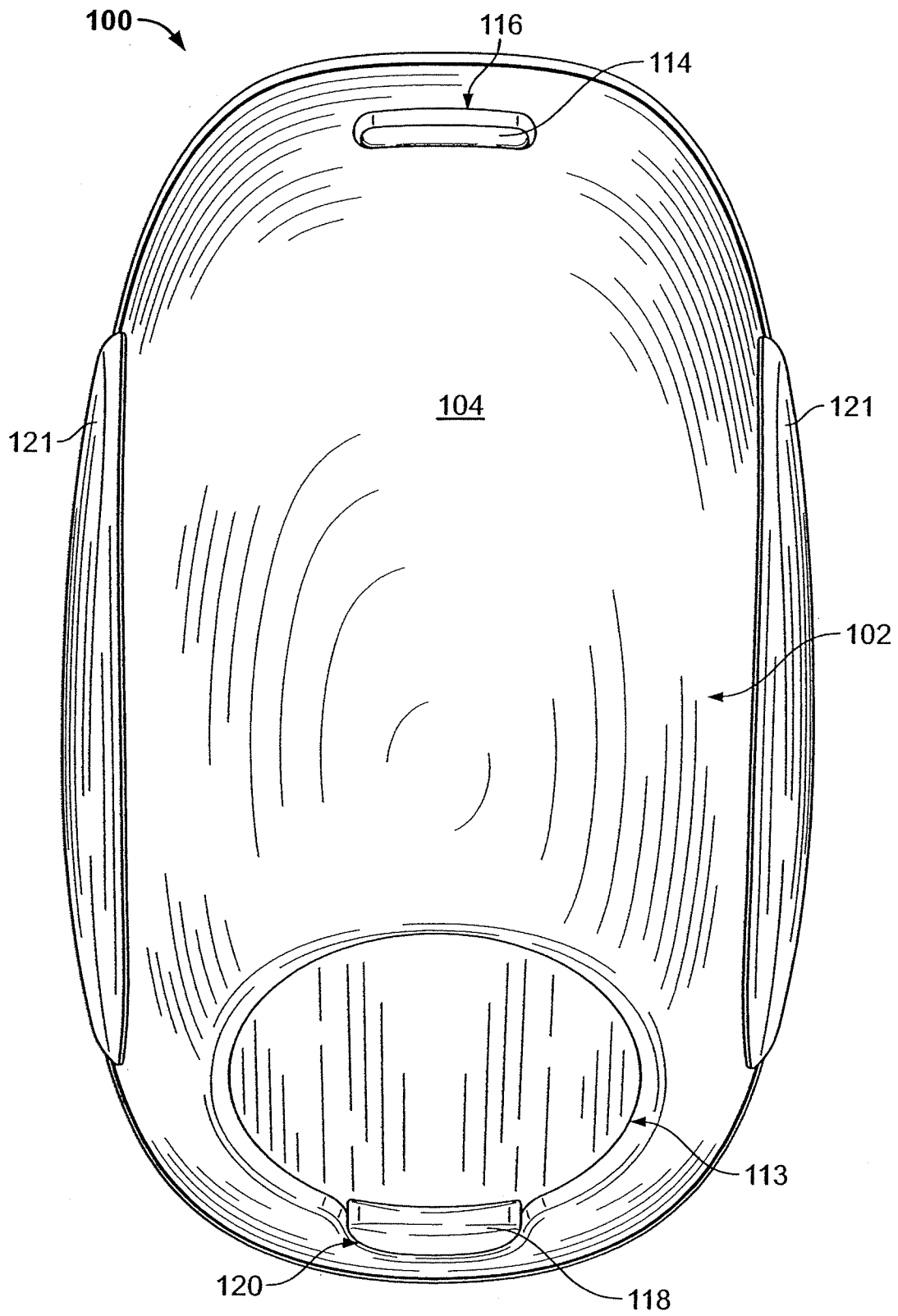


FIG. 2

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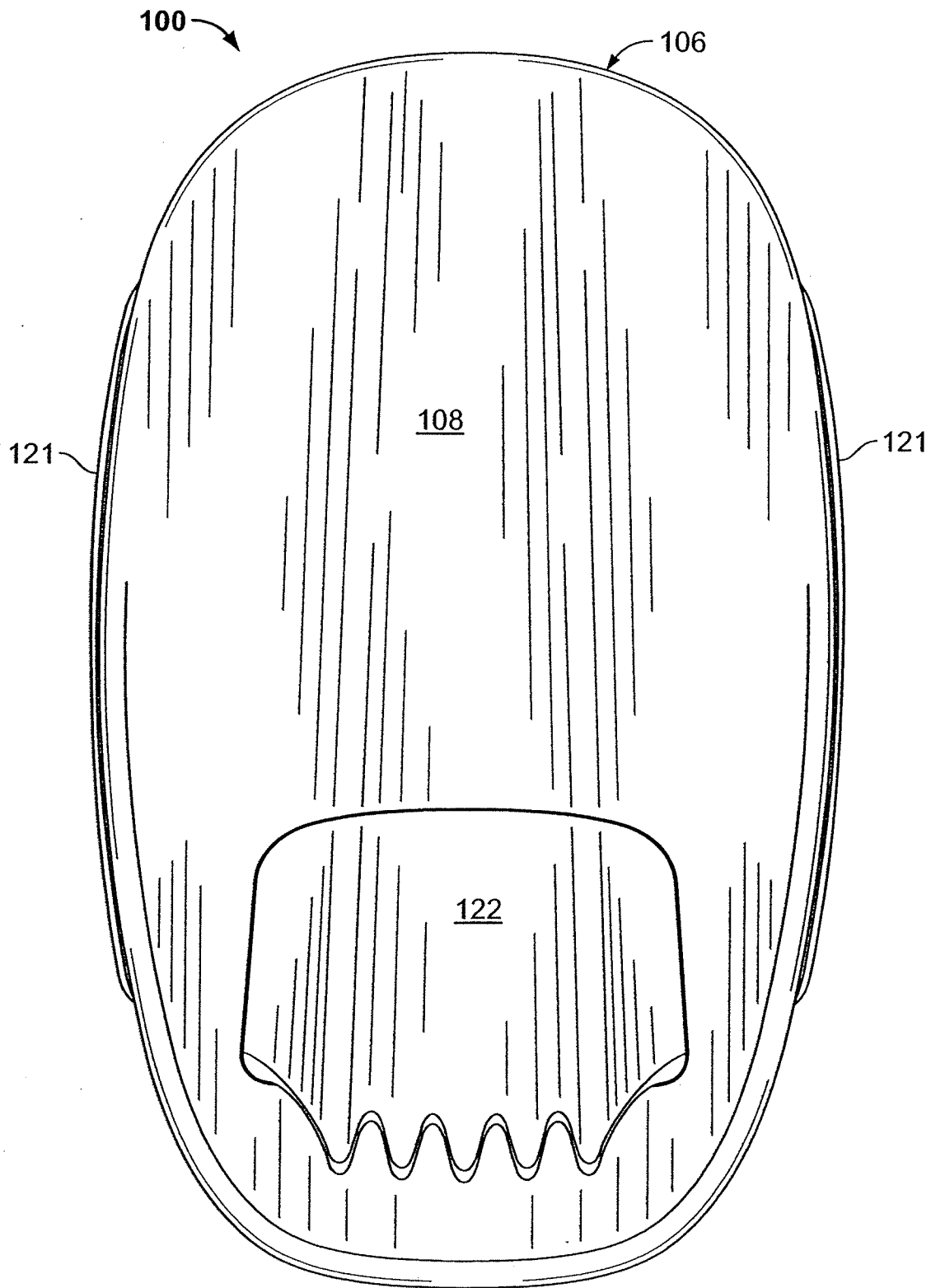


FIG. 3

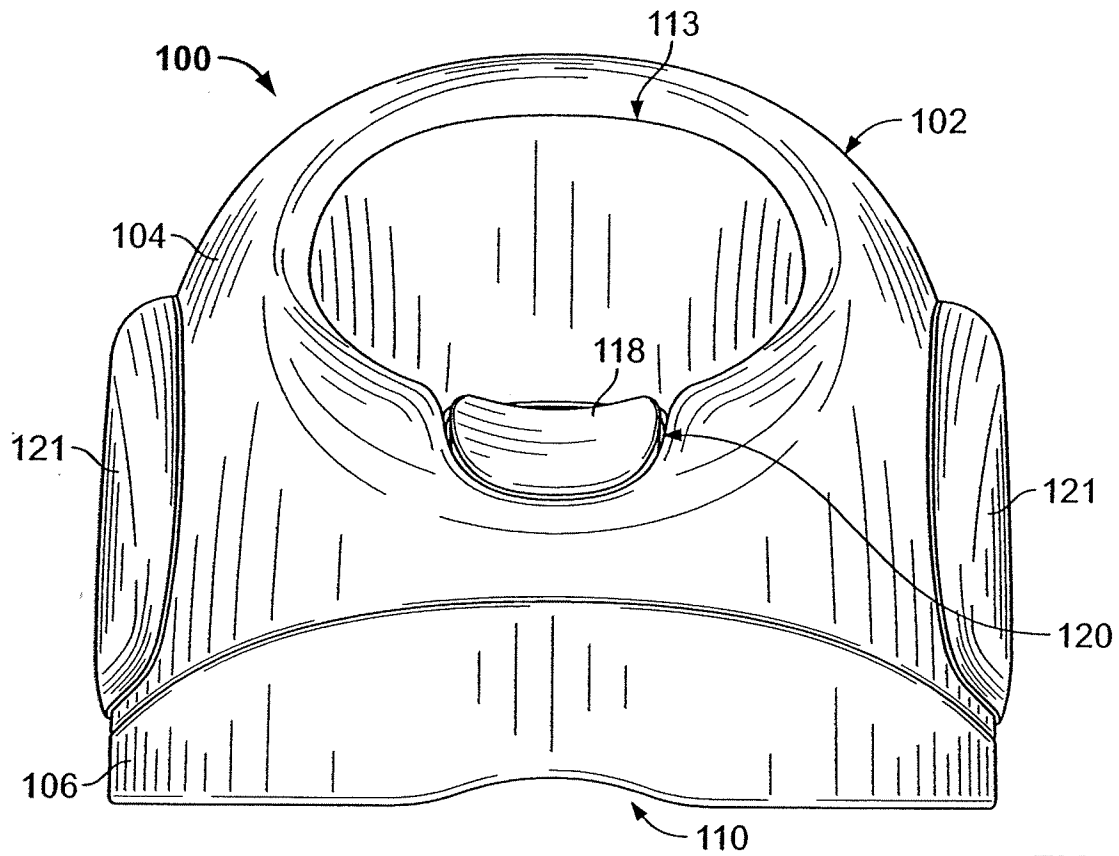


FIG. 4

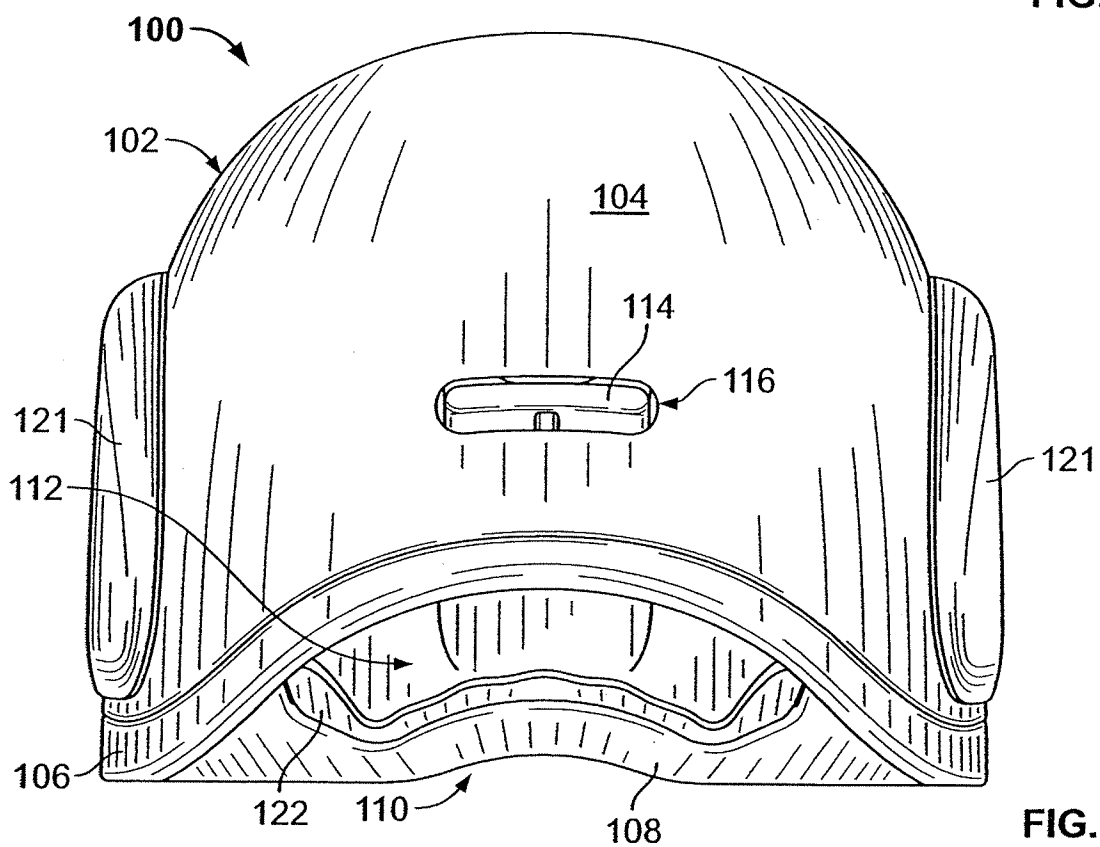


FIG. 5

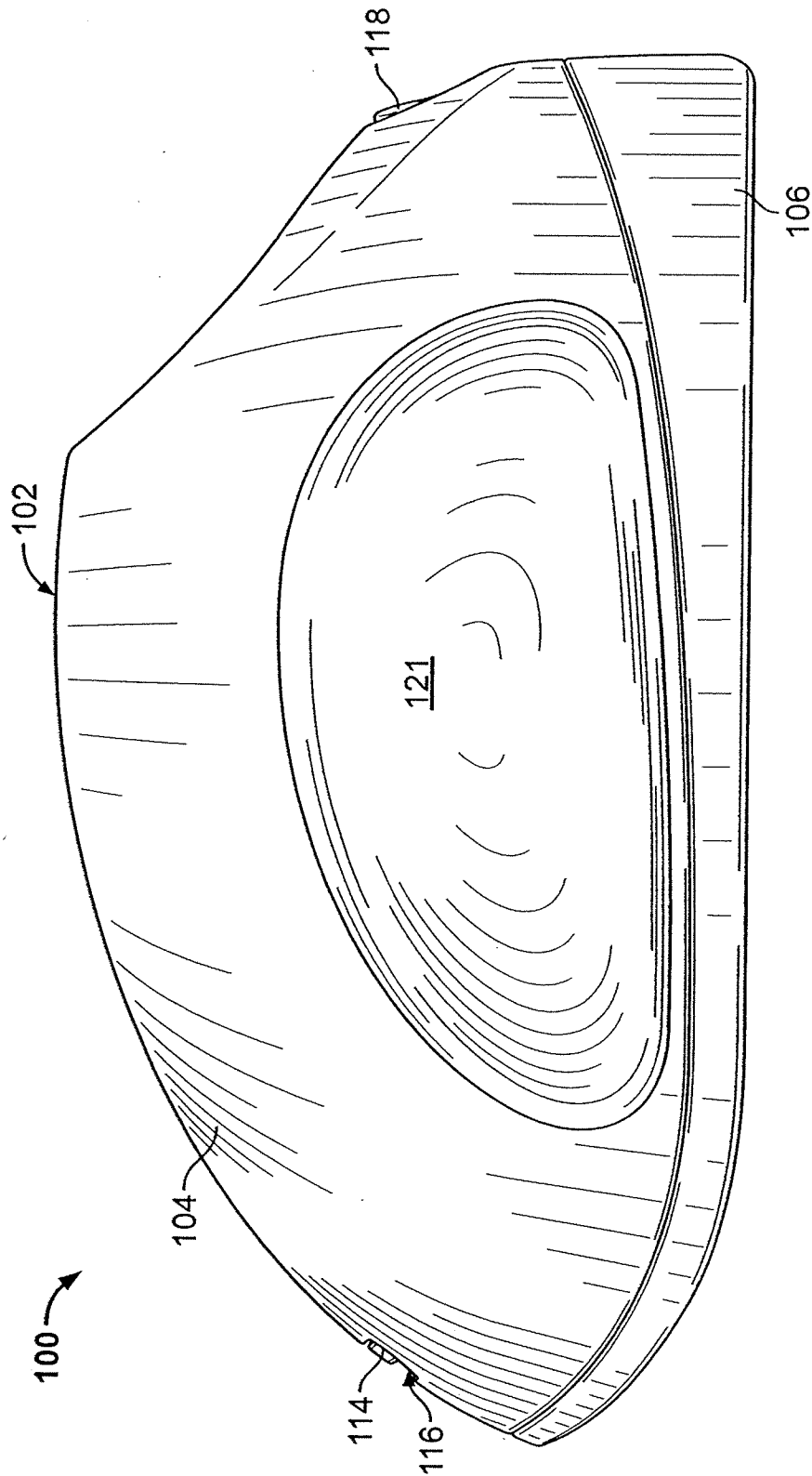


FIG. 6

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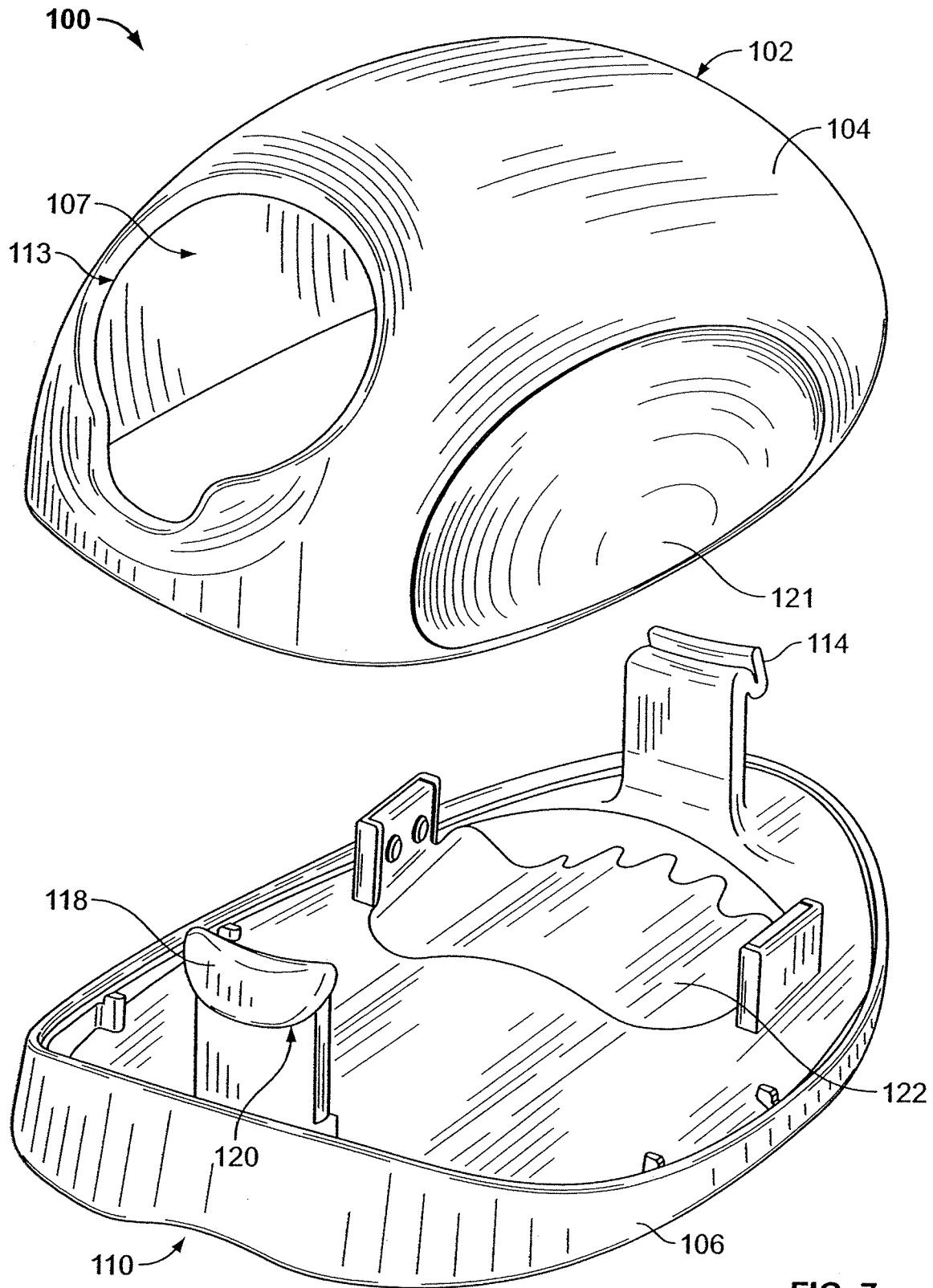


FIG. 7

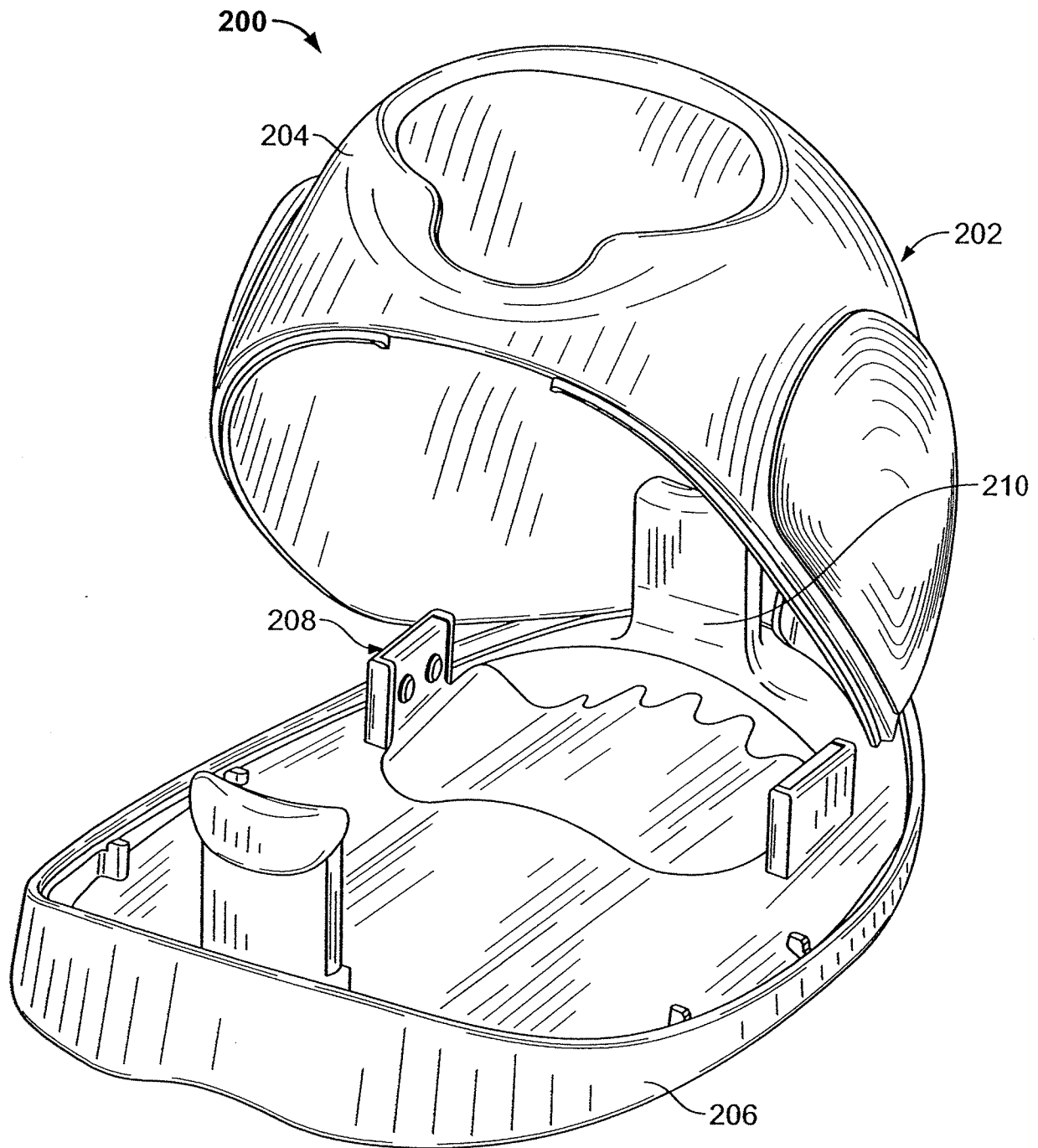


FIG. 8