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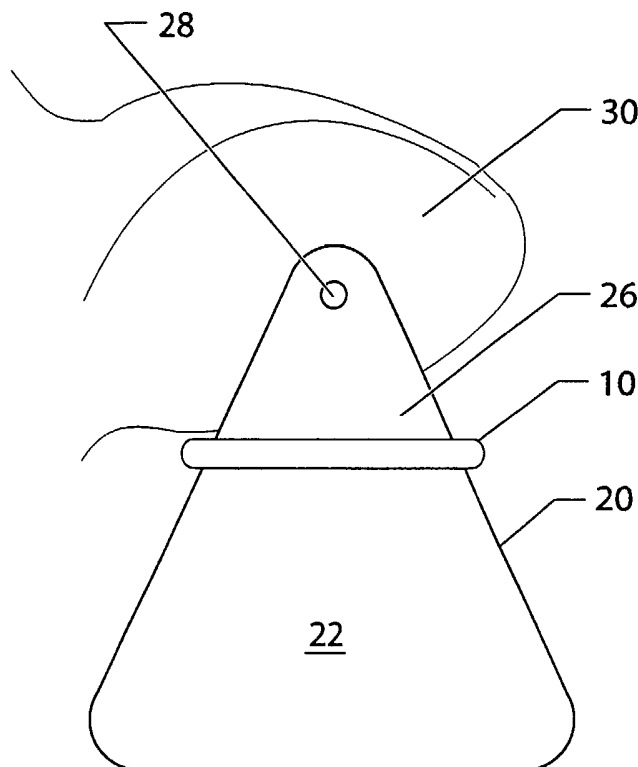
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: SUPPLEMENTAL ANIMAL INFORMATION TAG



(57) Abstract: A supplemental identification or informational indicia means for use with an animal tag located about the neck or ankle of the animal so as to provide additional information about the animal.

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SUPPLEMENTAL ANIMAL INFORMATION TAG

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field.

5 The present invention relates generally to a device for supplementing the information on an animal identification tag and more particularly a device for supplementing the information on an animal identification tag that comprises an identification member that can be attached reversibly and easily to an animal identification tag, such as an ear tag or ankle tag or neck tag.

2. Prior Art.

10 The use of tags for the purposes of tracking animals (typically livestock such as cows, sheep, and pigs) is a prevalent practice in the United States and abroad. The tagging practice helps livestock holders identify both the ownership of the livestock and whether the livestock has been treated with antibiotics and growth hormones. As such, tags play a vital role in the meat producing industry.

Not surprisingly, the prior art discloses an array of such tags, the most common of which appear to be ear tags. US patent No. 3826030 to Read discloses an ear tag that can have two tabs each having multiple indicia. US
20 Patent No. 3388492 to Nichols discloses an ear tag having a flat surface for a first indicia and a second indicia that can be snapped into a hole in the flat surface. US Patent No. 4581834 to Zatkos discloses a locking ear tag with a relatively simple structure. US Patent No. 5473830 to Doble discloses an ear tag comprising numbers, pins, notches, slots and other devices to show information.
25 US patent No. 6055752 to Ritchey discloses an ear tag with a hollow interior for storing articles. Thus, the idea of an ear tag with one or more indicia is known in the art.

Tags are generally placed onto the respective animal early in the animal's life. In many cases, as the tags connote ownership, the tags are placed on the
30 animals as soon as the animal is under the control of the owner. And as some information is not available at the time the tag is place on the animal, the

information on the tag may not reflect the actual status of the animal. Additionally, as hormones or antibiotics are given subsequently and over time, this information may not be reflected on the tag. As a result, the tags may not always provide the most current and accurate information regarding the animal.

5 Further complicating the matter is that many prior art tags are generally (and purposely) difficult to remove. In fact, in many situations, the tags are removed with the use of pliers and the like. Thus, time and patience is required to remove an animal tag, which is not always convenient, especially if the tag needs to be updated or modified with more current information. Further, information
10 about specific animals often is maintained on a computer database. However, a common worker typically is not able to revert to a computer to determine information about the animal on a timely basis. Thus, having as much information as possible in a readily discernable format on or attached to the animal would speed up the process of ascertaining the information about the specific
15 animal.

Accordingly, there is a need for device that can be used to modify the tags, or the information on tags, that are already in place on an animal. There is also a need for the ability to provide as much information about an animal as possible, but in a readily discernable manner. There is also a need for such a device to be
20 able to be placed easily on the tags. There is also a need for such a device that can be removed, modified or changed easily to reflect the modified or changed information or status. It is to this that the present invention is directed.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

25 Briefly, the present invention is a supplemental tag that fits on or around many common prior art tags already in place (that is, attached to) the animal. Preferably, the supplemental tag is visible from a distance and is not hidden behind body of the animal.

In one example, for animal ear tags, the supplemental tag can be placed on
30 the tag between the main tag body and the animal, generally proximal to the animal's ear. One advantage of placing the supplemental tag between the tag

body and the animal is that such a placement does not obstruct the view of information contained on the tag body. Another advantage of this placement is that the neck of the tag, which is the portion of the tag between the main tag body and the attachment point of the tag to the animal, often is narrower than the main tag body. As a result, the supplemental tag is more secure on the neck and can be a smaller structure than if the supplemental tag were placed on the main tag body.

In another example, for animal ankle tags, which are akin to a bracelet about the animal's ankle, the supplemental tag can be placed over or about the tag. One advantage of placing the supplemental tag over or about the ankle tag is that it can be moved or grasped easily by a worker to review the information on the supplemental tag or on the ankle tag. Another advantage of this placement is that the supplemental tag is out of the way and will not interfere with the animal's movement. As a result, the supplemental tag can provide the supplemental information without inconveniencing either the animal or the worker.

In another example, for animal necklace identification tags, the supplemental tag can be placed over or about the necklace tag. One advantage of placing the supplemental tag over or about the necklace tag is that it can readily be seen by a worker viewing the animal. Another advantage of placing the supplemental tag over or about the necklace tag is that it can be placed on the animal relatively easily.

Other examples of how the supplemental tag can be applied to a known or future animal tag, and the various different types of known or future animal tags to which the supplemental tag can be attached, are within the scope of this invention and will become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading this specification.

More specifically, the supplemental tag comprises an identification member that can be a single element with a generally C-shaped or looped configuration, which partially resembles a "0" shape with an entrance slot. The structure comprises two (2) arms that generally define an attachment cavity for attaching for attaching the supplemental tag to the tag. The ends of the two arms can be

located proximally to each other and can form an entrance slot. Alternatively, the two ends of the arms can be joinable in that the arms are joined together after the supplemental tag is placed around the tag neck. Alternatively, the arms can be of different lengths. The entrance slot can be located at many different positions on the supplemental tag.

The tag neck, for ear tags and the like and certain types of necklace tags, or the tag body, for ankle tags and the like and certain other types of necklace tags, enters the attachment cavity through the entrance slot. As the supplemental tag is pushed or snapped onto the tag neck or tag body, in one embodiment one or more of the arms can be deflected, which temporary enlarges the entrance slot to allow the tag neck or tag body to pass therethrough. For example, the arms could deflect outwards, forwards, and/or backwards relative to their initial position by utilizing the elasticity of the material of construction to allow the tag neck or tag body in the attachment cavity. In an alternate embodiment, the inner edge of one or both arms can be provided with a tab at the end of the arm to lock the arm against the tag neck or tag body. In another alternate embodiment, the ends of the arms can be provided with closure means that cooperate with each other to enclose or encircle the tag neck or tag body.

Once the tag neck or tag body is substantially within the attachment cavity, the arms can begin to return to their original positions or be clipped or locked. As the attachment cavity preferably has a size at least the size of the tag neck or tag body, the return of the arms to their initial positions secures the supplemental tag around the tag neck or tag body. As a result, the supplemental tag is securely but removably attached on the animal tag.

In operation and use, the supplemental tag is adapted for mounting about the tag neck or tag body of an animal tag for tagging an animal with information. As described herein, the attachment cavity of the supplemental tag is sized so that the tag neck or tag body can be fitted therethrough. As the animal tag can be already on the animal, the supplemental tag can be used to place additional information on the tag. Further, a user can add multiple supplemental tags to continually add information to the animal tag. Additionally, a user can remove a

supplemental tag that is indicative of various outdated or incorrect information. Thus, the supplemental tag provides a user with a device that can be used to flexibly add or remove information about the animal.

One advantage of the supplemental tag is that it can be used to help
5 maintain the accuracy of the information on an animal tag. As the supplemental tag can fit very easily around an animal tag, a user can simply place the supplemental tag onto animal tag to update the information. More specifically, for example, if an animal is given antibiotics after the animal tag is placed on animal, the user can simply place the correct supplemental tag on animal tag to indicate
10 that an antibiotic was indeed given. Alternatively, supplemental tag can be used to correct a defect in the information on an animal tag already attached to an animal.

An array of means can be used to allow the supplemental tag to identify specific information regarding the animal. For example, the supplemental tag can
15 be a specific color or shape, wherein the specific color or shape signifies or indicates specific information about a tagged animal. Alternatively, supplemental tag can have language affixed thereon conveying the information desired to be attached. Alternatively, the supplemental tag can have a bar code or computer "smart" chip. It is understood that supplemental tag can convey information in
20 other ways than described herein.

These features, and other features and advantages of the present invention, will become more apparent to those of ordinary skill in the relevant art when the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments is read in conjunction with the appended drawings in which like reference numerals
25 represent like components throughout the several views.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a front side view of a prior art exemplary ear tag.

FIG. 2 is a front side view of a representative embodiment of the
30 supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the tag neck of the ear tag shown in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a rear side view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the tag neck of the ear tag shown in FIG. 1.

5 FIG. 4 is a top view of a first embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

FIG. 5 is a top view of a second embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

FIG. 6 is a top view of a third embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

10 FIG. 7 is a top view of a fourth embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

FIG. 8 is a top view of a fifth embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

15 FIG. 9 is a top view of a sixth embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

FIG. 10 is a top view of a seventh embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

FIG. 11 is a top view of an eighth embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention.

20 FIG. 12A is a top view of a ninth embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention shown in the closed position.

FIG. 12B is a plan view of the ninth embodiment of the supplemental tag shown in FIG. 12A shown in the open position.

FIG. 13 is a front side view of a prior art exemplary ankle tag.

25 FIG. 14 is a front side view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the tag body of the ankle tag shown in FIG. 13.

FIG. 15 is a side view of a prior art first exemplary necklace tag.

30 FIG. 16 is a side view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the necklace tag shown in FIG 15.

FIG. 17 is a front view of a prior art second exemplary necklace tag illustrating an identification tag and a neck chain.

FIG. 18 is a front view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the tag neck of the identification tag
5 shown in FIG. 17.

FIG. 19 is a rear view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the tag neck of the identification tag shown in FIG. 17.

FIG. 20 is a front view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted through the eyehole of the identification tag shown in FIG. 17.
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FIG. 21 is a rear view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted the eyehole of the identification tag shown in FIG. 17.

FIG. 22 is a side view of a representative embodiment of the supplemental tag of the present invention as mounted on the neck chain of the necklace neck chain shown in FIG. 17.
15

PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS OF THE PRESENT INVENTION

The general structures of common prior art animal tags are shown in FIGs. 1, 13, 15, and 17. Specifically, a common prior art animal ear tag 20 is shown in FIG 1, a common prior art animal ankle tag 100 is shown in FIG. 13, a first common prior art animal necklace tag is shown in FIG. 15, and a second common prior art animal necklace tag is shown in FIG. 17.
20

As shown in FIG. 1, tag 20 as mounted on an exemplary ear 30 of animal 40, comprises tag body 22, tag neck 26 (located between dashed lines 27), and tag attachment means 28. As shown in FIG 13, tag 100 as mounted on an exemplary ankle of an animal leg between shin 102 and hoof 104, comprises a generally planar piece of material wrapped about the animal leg and secured with conventional securing means 106. As shown in FIG 15, tag 110 as mounted on
25
30 an exemplary neck 112 of an animal, is generally a necklace or collar around the

neck of the animal and often is similar in structure and appearance to the ankle tag 100 disclosed above. As shown in FIG. 22, an exemplary necklace on an animal comprises a separate identification tag 120 hanging from a chain 126 or other structure about the neck 122 of the animal, identification tag 120 often being
5 generally similar in structure and appearance to the ear tag 20 disclosed above. Chain 126 can fit through or be linked or otherwise attached to eyehole 124 to support tag 120, and supplemental tag 10 is clipped onto necklace 126.

As shown, tag body 22 contains biographical and historical information (such as the origin, age and owner) connected with animal 40. Often, tag 20, 100,
10 110, 120 is colored and has a large identification number or barcode imprinted thereon. Tag body 22 of ear tag 20 often is generally substantially larger in size (width and/or length) than tag neck 26 of ear tag 20. Similarly, tag body 130 of necklace tag 120 often is generally substantially larger in size (width and/or length) than tag neck 128 of necklace tag 120. Ear tag 20 is generally placed on
15 animal 40 via tag attachment means 28, while ankle tag 100 and necklace tag 110 are attached to animal 40 in a collar-like fashion, and necklace tag 120 is hung about the neck of animal 40 on a chain 126. Embodiments of the present invention can be used to supplement the information reflected on tag 20, 100, 110, 120 as well as other common tags having the same or a similar general size
20 and shape.

For ease of reading, the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments will be phrased in connection with an ear tag 20. However, it must be appreciated that the description is apt for an ankle tag 100, for a necklace tag 110, 120, or other tags, and the description is not meant to be limited to ear tags
25 20. For example, as necklace tag 110 as shown is generally similar in structure to ankle tag 100, the use of the invention 10 on these two tags is similar. Likewise, as necklace tag 120 as shown is generally similar in structure to ear tag 20, the use of the invention on these two tags also is similar.

Referring now to FIGs. 2 and 3, a representative embodiment of the
30 present invention is supplemental tag 10 that fits around tag neck 26 of an ordinary prior art ear tag 20. More particularly, supplemental tag 10 can be placed

on tag neck 26 between tag body 22 and ear 30. One advantage of placing supplemental tag 10 between tag body 22 and ear 30 is that such a placement does not obstruct the view of information contained on tag body 22. Also, supplemental tag 10 is sized so that it cannot slip over tag body 22 or onto ear 30. Preferably, supplemental tag 10 is visible from a distance and is not hidden behind ear 30 of animal 40.

FIG. 2 specifically shows a front view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 20 and FIG. 3 specifically shows a rear view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 20. In the view shown in FIG. 2, it can be seen that supplemental tag 10 preferably presents a uniform surface to the outside relative to the animal 40. This is for at least two reasons. First, a uniform surface is less likely to get caught on branches or fences as the animal goes about its daily activities. Second, a uniform surface can contain more information than a broken surface. In the view shown in FIG. 3, it can be seen that entrance slot 50 or the equivalent is located on the inside relative to the animal 40. This also is for at least the two reasons mentioned previously.

Referring now to FIG. 4, a first embodiment of supplemental tag 10 is shown. This first embodiment comprises an identification member that can be a single element with a generally C-shaped or looped configuration, which partially resembles a "0" shape with an egress slot. The structure comprises two arms 14, 16 that generally define an attachment cavity 52 for attaching supplemental tag 10 to tag 20. Preferably, supplemental tag 10 has a rounded structure, or at least rounded edges, that can help prevent supplemental 10 from catching on the stanchion or on other objects with which animal 20 comes into contact. Alternatively, supplemental tag 10 can have a circular, oval, square, triangular or other geometric or non-geometric cross-section based on the user's desires. Different cross-sections also can indicate, for example, different information.

Arms 14, 16 can be located proximally to each other. In one preferred embodiment, the ends 18, 19 of arms 14, 16 approximately abut each other and form entrance slot 50 through which tag neck 26 passes into attachment cavity 52. Alternatively, arms 14, 16 can be joinable in that arms 14, 16 are joined after supplemental tag 10 is placed around tag neck 26. The distance between the

ends 18, 19 of arms 14, 16 define entrance slot 50 and therefore can affect the ease of which supplemental tag 10 can be removed from (or placed on) tag neck 26. Once tag neck 26 is substantially within attachment cavity 52, arms 14, 16 can begin to return to their original positions. As attachment cavity 52 preferably is at least the size of tag neck 26, the return of arms 14, 16 to their initial positions secures supplemental tag 10 around tag neck 26.

Referring now to in FIG. 5, a second embodiment of supplemental tag 10 is shown. In this second embodiment, at one or both of ends 18, 19 of arms 14, 16 of supplemental tag 10, there can be tooth structure 60 that can function to help further secure supplemental tag 10 onto tag neck 26. As shown in FIG. 5, tooth structure 60 on end 19 of arm 16 of supplemental tag 10 can aid in securing supplemental tag 10 to tag 20. More specifically, because tooth structure 60 extends inwardly from arm 16, the placement of supplemental tag 10 onto tag 20 can cause tag neck 26 to fit within the area of attachment cavity 52 below tooth structure 60 and to abut tooth structure 60. This will help prevent tag 20 from sliding out of attachment cavity 52. Alternatively, if tag neck 26 occupies the entire length of attachment cavity 52, an elastic force may be applied to tag 20, that is, tooth structure 14 can place pressure on tag 20. The pressure from tooth structure 60 can further secure supplemental tag 10 on tag 20.

Preferably, tag neck 26 enters attachment cavity 52 through entrance slot 50. As supplemental tag 10 is pushed or snapped onto tag neck 26, one or both of arms 14, 16 are deflected, which temporary enlarges entrance slot 50 to allow tag neck 26 pass therethrough. For example, arms 14, 16 could deflect outwards, forwards, and/or backwards (relative to their initial position) by utilizing the elasticity of the material of construction to allow tag neck 32 in attachment cavity 52. Once tag neck 26 is substantially within attachment cavity 52, arms 14, 16 can begin to return to their original positions. As attachment cavity 52 preferably is at least the size of tag neck 26, the return of arms 14, 16 to their initial positions secures supplemental tag 10 around tag neck 26.

It is understood that persons with ordinary skill in the art can determine the appropriate dimensions of entrance slot 50 and attachment cavity 52 based on the

tag 20 onto which supplemental tag 10 is to be placed, and thus the appropriate overall dimensions of supplemental tag 10, based on factors including the dimension of tag neck 26 of the tag 20 that supplemental tag 10 is engaging. As the selected dimensions can affect the degree of freedom of supplemental tag 10 around tag neck 26, one of ordinary skill in the art can select dimensions to best fit with the model of tag 20. For example, persons with ordinary skill in the art can determine the preferred dimensions based a particular model of a tag 20 on which the present invention will be used, or for a one-size-fits-all version.

Additional illustrative embodiments of the supplemental tag 10 are shown in FIGs. 6 through 11. As shown in FIGs 6-11, entrance slot 50 can be made so that it resides in an array of positions. FIG. 6 shows entrance slot 50 in the center of the elongated section 70 of supplemental tag 10. Alternatively, FIG. 7 shows entrance slot 50 at the offset or upper edge where the elongated section 70 meets the short, preferably curved section 80 of supplemental tag 10. Alternatively, FIG. 8 shows entrance slot 50 in the center of the curved section 80 of supplemental tag 10. One of ordinary skill in the art can manufacture supplemental tag 10 so that entrance slot 50 is in a position optimal for each application of tag 20.

FIGs. 8 and 9 show alternative embodiments of a supplemental tag 10 having entrance slot 50 on the curved section 80. In FIG. 8, ends 18, 19 of arms 14, 16 form flattened abutting surfaces. When supplemental tag 10 is placed over tag neck 26, the flattened surfaces are separated allowing ingress to attachment cavity 52. Separating flattened surfaces creates entrance slot 50. After tag neck has been inserted into attachment cavity 52, flattened surfaces again abut each other, helping to maintain tag neck 26 within attachment cavity. In FIG. 9, end 18 of arm 14 comprises an elongated section serving as the bulk of the curved section 80. When tag neck 26 is within attachment cavity 52, tag neck 26 will abut the interior surface of end 18, thus being secured within attachment cavity 52.

FIG. 10 shows a supplemental tag 10 having a rotating gate 82 attached to end 18 of arm 14 via pin 84. Gate 82 can rotate from an open position to a closed position and back so as to allow easy access to attachment cavity 52. Gate 82 can be secured in the closed position via friction or other locking means.

FIG. 11 shows a supplemental tag 10 having an elongated rotating gate 82 corresponding to one of the elongated sections 70, also attached to end 18 of arm 14 via pin 84. Gate 82 can rotate from an open position to a closed position and back so as to allow easy access to attachment cavity 52. Gate 82 can be secured in the closed position via friction or other locking means. In this embodiment, arms 14, 16 are of different lengths.

FIGs. 12A and 12B show a supplemental tag 10 of a folding design. As can be seen in FIG. 12B, supplemental tag 10 is a generally planar and rectangular piece 88 of flexible and durable material having closing prong 90 and shaft 96 proximal to a first end and closing hole 92 proximal to a second end distal from the first end. Supplemental tag 10 is placed about animal tag 20, 100, 110, 120 and folded about centerline 94. Prong 90 is inserted through hole 92 to secure arm 14 to arm 16. Shaft 96 provides a spacing element to help create attachment cavity 52. The base of prong 90 preferably has a greater diameter or width than hole 92 so as to prevent prong 90 from exiting hole 92 and thus maintaining supplemental tag 10 in a closed configuration as shown in FIG. 12A. In this embodiment, the material of supplemental tag 10 should be flexible enough to be folded about centerline 94 and elastic enough for prong 90 and hole 92 to deform to allow prong 90 to pass through hole 92, and then to return to nearly the initial shape to hold prong 90 and not allow prong 90 to repass easily through hole 92.

FIG. 13 illustrates a common animal ankle tag 100 about the ankle of an animal. As shown in FIG. 14, supplemental tag 10 can be placed about or over ankle tag 100 in much the same manner and with much the same results as disclosed previously for ear tag 20. Any or all of the alternative embodiments disclosed previously also can be used in connection with ankle tag 100.

For the present disclosure for animal necklace-type tags, FIGs. 15-22 illustrate the use of the invention on two different types of common necklace-type animal identification tags, namely a collar necklace tag 110 as shown in FIG. 15 and a hanging necklace tag 120 as shown in FIG. 17. FIG. 15 illustrates a common collar-type animal necklace tag 110 about the neck 112 of an animal. As

shown in FIG. 16, supplemental tag 10 can be placed about or over necklace tag 110 in a matter similar and with much the same results as disclosed herein for ear tag 20 and ankle tag 100. Any or all of the alternative embodiments disclosed previously also can be used in connection with the collar-type necklace tag 110.

5 Referring now to FIGs. 18 and 19, a first representative embodiment of the present invention is supplemental tag 10 that fits around tag neck 128 of an ordinary prior art necklace tag 120. More particularly, supplemental tag 10 can be placed on tag neck 128 between tag body 130 and chain 126. One advantage of placing supplemental tag 10 between tag body 130 and chain 126 is that such a
10 placement does not obstruct the view of information contained on tag body 130. Also, supplemental tag 10 is sized so that it cannot slip over tag body 130 or onto chain 126. Preferably, supplemental tag 10 is visible from a distance. FIG. 18 specifically shows a front view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 120 and FIG. 19 specifically shows a rear view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 120.

15 Referring now to FIGs. 20 and 21, a second representative embodiment of the present invention is supplemental tag 10 that fits or links through eyehole 124 located on tag neck 128 of an ordinary prior art necklace tag 120. More particularly, supplemental tag 10 can be placed so as to link onto tag neck 128. One advantage of placing supplemental tag 10 onto tag neck 128 in this fashion is
20 that such a placement is generally secure and does not obstruct the view of information contained on tag body 130. FIG. 20 specifically shows a front view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 120 and FIG. 21 specifically shows a rear view of supplemental tag 10 on tag 120.

In operation and use, supplemental tag 10 is adapted for mounting about a
25 tag 20, 100, 110, 120 for tagging animal 40 with information. As described herein, attachment cavity 52 of supplemental tag 10 is sized so that tag neck 26 or tag 100 or necklace tag 105 can be fitted therein. As tag 20, 100, 110, 120 can be already on animal 40, supplemental tag 10 can be used to place additional information on tag 20, 100, 110, 120. Further, a user can add multiple
30 supplemental tags 10 to continually add information to tag 20, 100 or 110, 120. Additionally, a user can remove supplemental tag 10 which can be indicative of

various incorrect or outdated information. Thus, supplemental tag 10 provides a user a device that can flexibly add or remove information from animal 40.

One advantage of supplemental tag 10 is that it can be used to help maintain the accuracy of information on tag 20, 100, 110, 120. As supplemental tag 10 can fit very easily on tag 20, 100, 110, 120 a user can simply place the supplemental tag 10 onto tag 20, 100, 110, 120. Further, for example, if animal 40 is given antibiotics after tag 20, 100, 110, 120 has been placed on animal, the user can simply place the correct supplemental tag 10 on tag 20, 100, 110, 120 to indicate that an antibiotic was indeed given. Alternatively, supplemental tag 10 can be used to correct a defect of tag 20, 100, 110, 120.

Supplemental tag 10 can identify specific information regarding the animal 40 in a myriad of manners. For example, supplemental tag 10 can be a specific color or shape, wherein a specific color or shape can signify or indicate information about animal 40. Alternatively, supplemental tag 10 can have language affixed thereon conveying the information desired to be conveyed. Alternatively, supplemental tag 10 can have a bar code or a computer "smart" chip. It is understood that supplemental tag can convey information in other ways than described herein.

Further, it is understood that more than one supplemental tag 10 can be placed on tag 20, 100, 110, 120. For example, the first supplemental tag can be placed on tag 20, 100, 110, 120 after an event such a first vaccination and a second supplemental tag can be placed on tag 20, 100, 110, 120 after a second vaccination. The supplemental tags 10 can be of different colors or contain different indicia. Thus, the present invention can allow for the continual update of information on tag 20, 100, 110, 120.

The relatively simple structure of supplemental tag 10 can allow it to be manufactured relatively easily with inexpensive materials. Preferably, supplemental tag 10 can be molded from a single piece of resilient material such as plastic, other polymers, metals, or other resilient material that do not break easily. Such plastics, metals, and other materials are evident to and known by those of ordinary skill in the art.

The foregoing detailed description of the preferred embodiments and the appended figures have been presented only for illustrative and descriptive purposes and are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the scope and spirit of the invention. The embodiments were selected and described to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical applications. One of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that many variations can be made to the invention disclosed in this specification without departing from the scope and spirit of the invention.

CLAIMS

What is Claimed is:

1 1. A supplemental tag for use with an identification tag on an animal,
2 the supplemental tag comprising two arms each comprising:
3 a. a first end and a second end, the first ends terminating at
4 least proximal to each other and the second ends being connected to each
5 other;
6 b. a cavity between the two arms sized to conform to a selected
7 portion of the identification tag; and
8 c. an egress means between the first ends through which the
9 identification tag can pass into the cavity,
10 whereby supplemental tag contains supplemental information regarding the
11 animal.

1 2. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the
2 supplemental tag is a generally looped-shaped member having two generally
3 parallel elongated sections and two generally short sections.

1 3. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the egress
2 means is located on one of the elongated sections.

1 4. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the egress
2 means is located on one of the short sections.

1 5. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the elongated
2 sections transition into the short sections and the egress means is located at a
3 transition.

1 6. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the elongated
2 sections transition into the short sections and the egress means is located
3 proximal to a transition.

1 7. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein the short
2 sections are curved sections and the looped-shaped member is generally oval-
3 shaped.

1 8. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the first ends
2 abut one another.

1 9. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein at least one of
2 the first ends of the arms has a tooth structure.

1 10. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein at least one of
2 the arms is sufficiently flexible to allow one arm to flex away from the other arm so
3 as to allow the supplemental tag to slide over the identification tag.

1 11. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the
2 supplemental information regarding the animal is indicated by placing at least one
3 color indicator on the supplemental tag.

1 12. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the entire
2 supplemental tag is a single color to indicate the supplemental information
3 regarding the animal.

1 13. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the
2 supplemental information regarding the animal is contained in a computer chip
3 attached to or a part of the supplemental tag.

1 14. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein at least one
2 elongated section is pivotally attached to a short section and the at least one
3 elongated section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental
4 tag onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental
5 tag to be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 15. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 2, wherein at least one
2 short section is pivotally attached to an elongated section and the at least one
3 short section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental tag
4 onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental tag to
5 be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 16. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the first end of
2 one arm comprises a first securing means and the first end of the other arm
3 comprises a second securing means, whereby the first securing means and the
4 second securing means cooperate with each other to secure the supplemental tag
5 onto the identification tag.

1 17. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 16, wherein the two arms
2 define a unitary planar structure capable of being folded, whereby when the

unitary planar structure is folded, the cavity is formed between the two arms and the first securing means and the second securing means come into proximity with each other.

18. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 17, wherein the first securing means is a prong and the second securing means is a hole, whereby the prong is inserted into the hole to secure the supplemental tag about the identification tag.

19. A supplemental tag for use with primary ear tags attached to an animal, the ear tag comprising a tag body having a first planar dimension and a tag neck having a second planar dimension smaller than the first planar dimension, the supplemental tag comprising supplemental information regarding the animal and attachment means for reversibly mounting the supplemental tag on the tag neck.

20. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 19, further comprising:

a. a first end and a second end, the first ends terminating at least proximal to each other and the second ends being connected to each other;

b. a cavity between the two arms sized to conform to a selected portion of the identification tag; and

c. an egress means between the first ends through which the identification tag can pass into the cavity.

21. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 20, wherein the supplemental tag is a generally looped-shaped member having two generally parallel elongated sections and two generally short sections.

22. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the egress means is located at a position on the supplemental tag selected from the group consisting of:

a. a position on one of the elongated sections;

b. a position on one of the short sections;

c. a position on a transition between one of the short sections and one of the elongated sections; and

8 d. a position proximal to a transition between one of the short
9 sections and one of the elongated sections.

1 23. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 22, wherein the short
2 sections are curved sections and the looped-shaped member is generally oval-
3 shaped.

1 24. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 23, wherein the first ends
2 abut one another.

1 25. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 23, wherein at least one
2 of the first ends of the arms has a tooth structure.

1 26. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 22, wherein at least one
2 of the arms is sufficiently flexible to allow one arm to flex away from the other arm
3 so as to allow the supplemental tag to slide over the identification tag.

1 27. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 22, wherein the
2 supplemental information regarding the animal is indicated by an indicia selected
3 from the group consisting of:

4 a. a color marking placed on the supplemental tag;

5 b. the supplemental tag being a color different than the color of
6 the ear tag; and

7 c. a computer chip attached to the supplemental tag and
8 electronically containing the supplemental information.

1 28. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 22, wherein at least one
2 elongated section is pivotally attached to a short section and the at least one
3 elongated section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental
4 tag onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental
5 tag to be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 29. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 22, wherein at least one
2 short section is pivotally attached to an elongated section and the at least one
3 short section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental tag
4 onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental tag to
5 be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 30. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the first end
2 of one arm comprises a first securing means and the first end of the other arm
3 comprises a second securing means, whereby the first securing means and the
4 second securing means cooperate with each other to secure the supplemental tag
5 onto the identification tag.

1 31. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 30, wherein the two arms
2 define a unitary planar structure capable of being folded, whereby when the
3 unitary planar structure is folded, the cavity is formed between the two arms and
4 the first securing means and the second securing means come into proximity with
5 each other.

1 32. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 31, wherein the first
2 securing means is a prong and the second securing means is a hole, whereby the
3 prong is inserted into the hole to secure the supplemental tag about the
4 identification tag.

1 33. A supplemental tag for use with an identification tag located about
2 an animal's neck, the supplemental tag comprising two arms each comprising:

3 a. a first end and a second end, the first ends terminating at
4 least proximal to each other and the second ends being connected to each
5 other;

6 b. a cavity between the two arms sized to conform to a selected
7 portion of the identification tag; and

8 c. an egress means between the first ends through which the
9 identification tag can pass into the cavity,

10 whereby supplemental tag contains supplemental information regarding the
11 animal.

1 34. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 supplemental tag is a generally looped-shaped member.

1 35. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 34, wherein the generally
2 looped-shaped member has two generally parallel elongated sections and two
3 generally short sections.

1 36. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 35, wherein the egress

2 means is located on one of the elongated sections.

1 37. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 35, wherein the egress
2 means is located on one of the short sections.

1 38. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 35, wherein the short
2 sections are curved sections and the looped-shaped member is generally oval-
3 shaped.

1 39. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the first ends
2 abut one another.

1 40. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein at least one
2 of the first ends of the arms has a tooth structure.

1 41. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein at least one
2 of the arms is sufficiently flexible to allow one arm to flex away from the other arm
3 so as to allow the supplemental tag to slide over the identification tag.

1 42. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 supplemental information regarding the animal is indicated by placing at least one
3 color indicator on the supplemental tag.

1 43. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 42, wherein the entire
2 supplemental tag is a single color to indicate the supplemental information
3 regarding the animal.

1 44. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 supplemental information is in the form of indicia selected from the group
3 consisting of numbers, letters, symbols, barcodes, bumps, and combinations of
4 the foregoing.

1 45. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 supplemental information regarding the animal is contained in a computer chip
3 attached to or a part of the supplemental tag.

1 46. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 35, wherein at least one
2 elongated section is pivotally attached to a short section and the at least one
3 elongated section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental
4 tag onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental
5 tag to be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 47. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 35, wherein at least one
2 short section is pivotally attached to an elongated section and the at least one
3 short section can move between a closed position securing the supplemental tag
4 onto the identification tag and an opened position allowing the supplemental tag to
5 be placed on or removed from the identification tag.

1 48. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the first end
2 of one arm comprises a first securing means and the first end of the other arm
3 comprises a second securing means, whereby the first securing means and the
4 second securing means cooperate with each other to secure the supplemental tag
5 onto the identification tag.

1 49. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 48, wherein the two arms
2 define a unitary planar structure capable of being folded, whereby when the
3 unitary planar structure is folded, the cavity is formed between the two arms and
4 the first securing means and the second securing means come into proximity with
5 each other.

1 50. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 49, wherein the first
2 securing means is a prong and the second securing means is a hole, whereby the
3 prong is inserted into the hole to secure the supplemental tag about the
4 identification tag.

1 51. The supplemental tag as claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 identification tag is a primary neck tag attached to an animal, the neck tag
3 comprising a tag body having a first planar dimension and a tag neck having a
4 second planar dimension smaller than the first planar dimension, the
5 supplemental tag comprising supplemental information regarding the animal and
6 attachment means for reversibly mounting the supplemental tag on the tag neck.

1 52. The supplemental tag as Claimed in Claim 33, wherein the
2 supplemental tag is attached to a chain or necklace located about the animal's
3 neck.

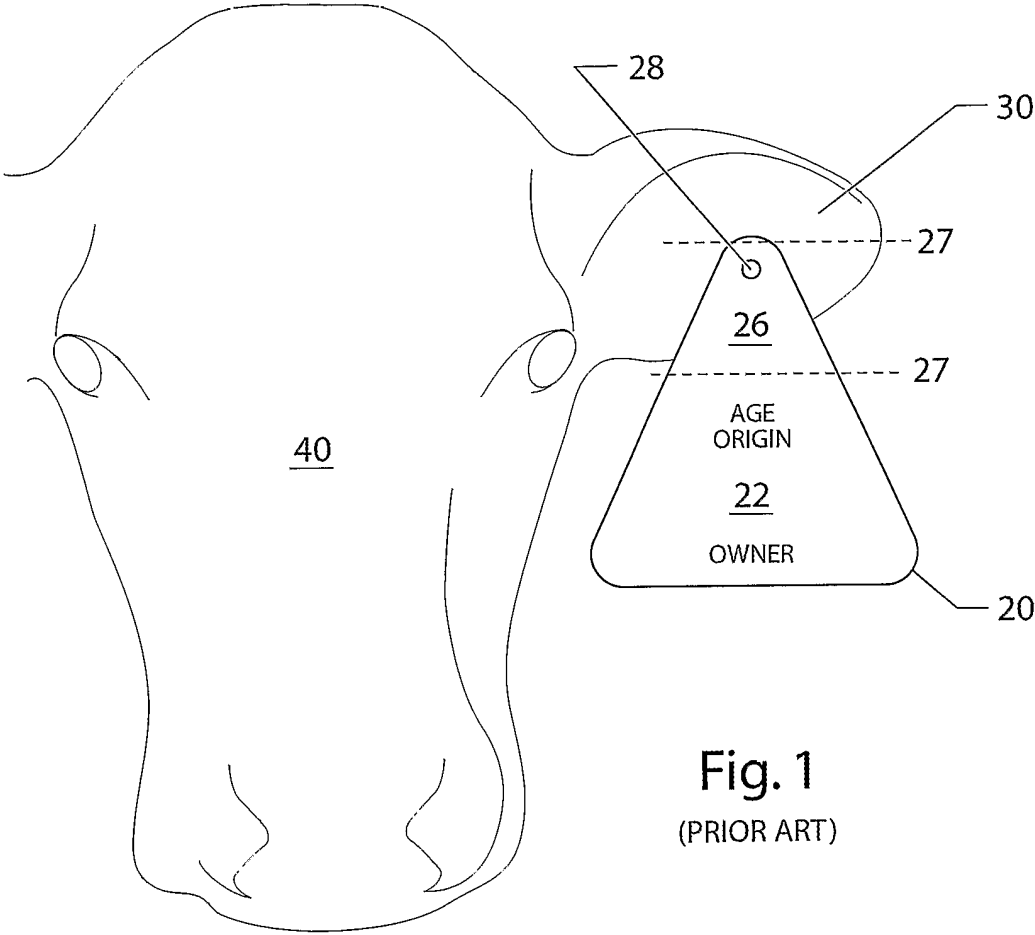


Fig. 1
(PRIOR ART)

Fig. 2

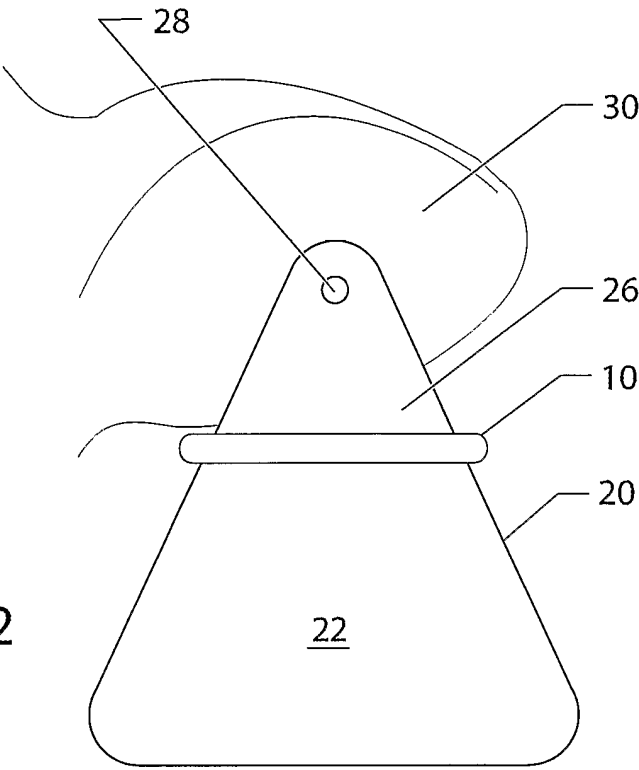
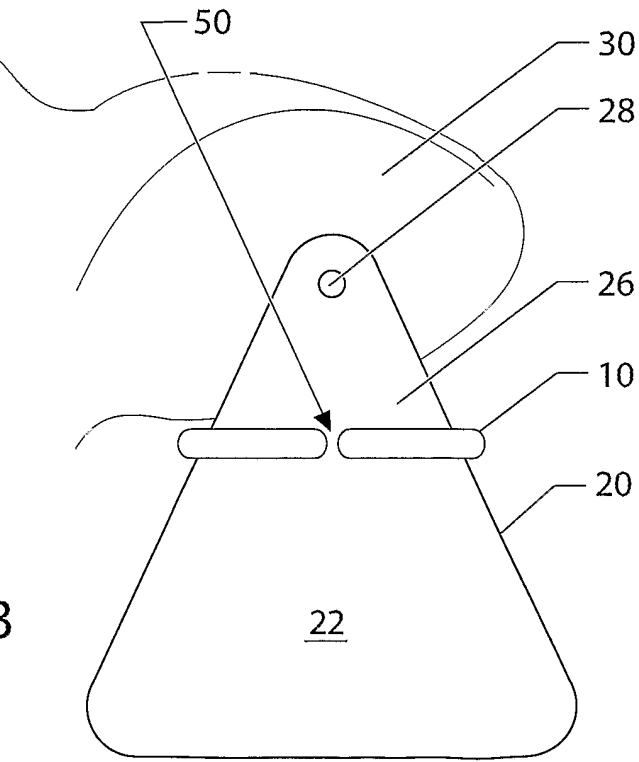
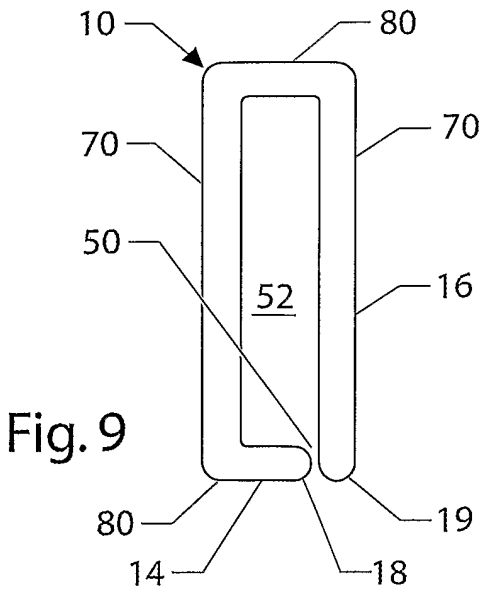
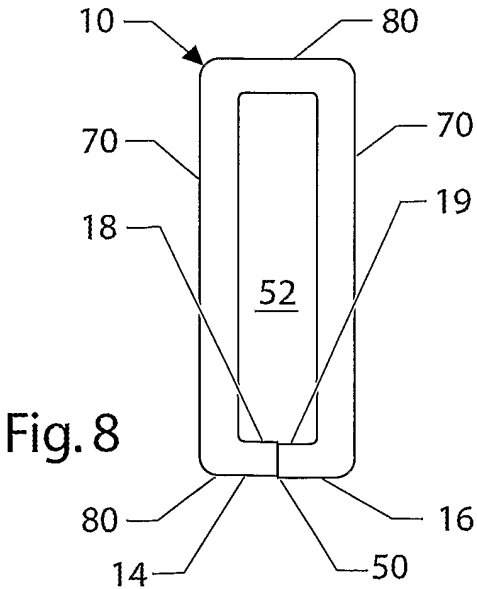
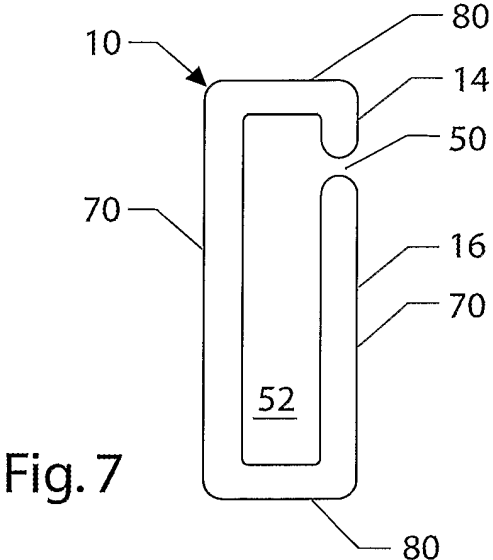
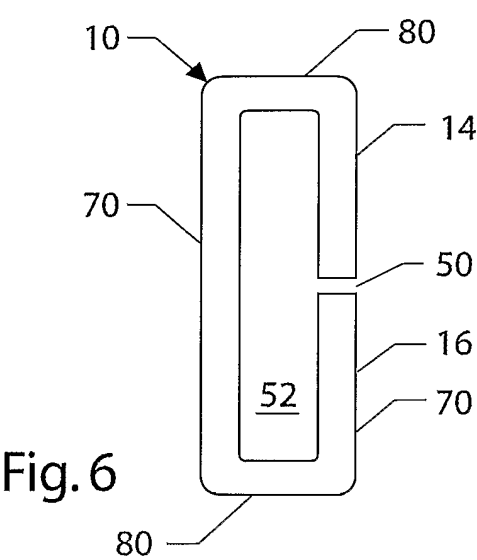
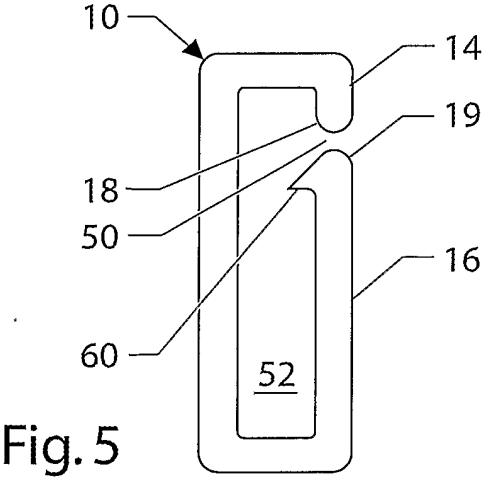
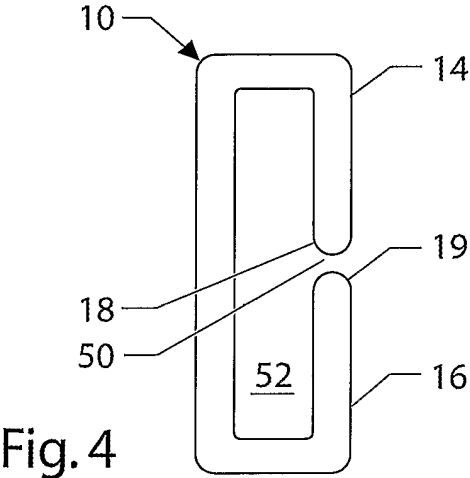
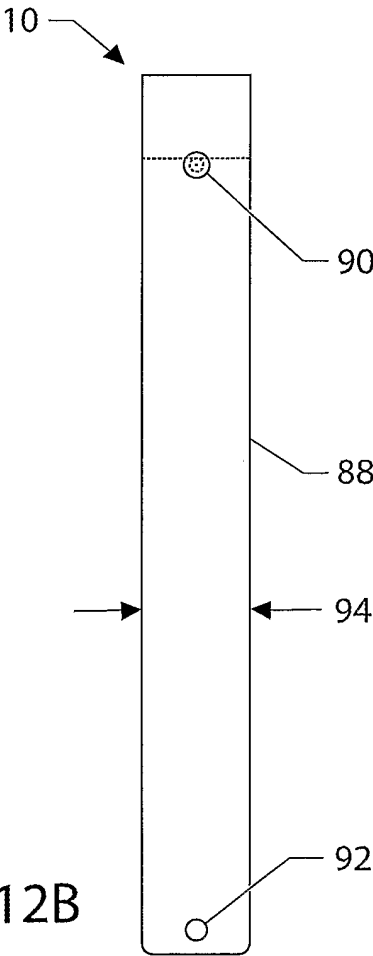
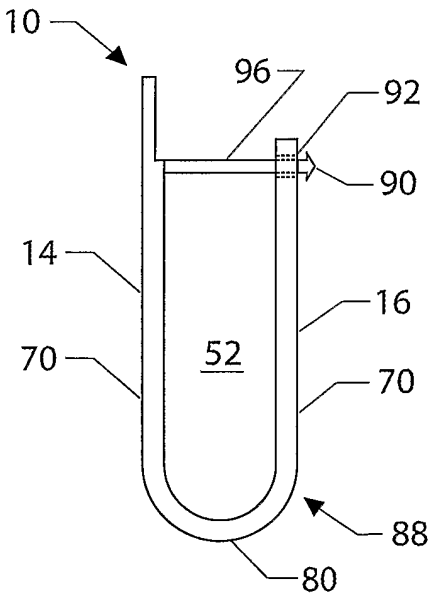
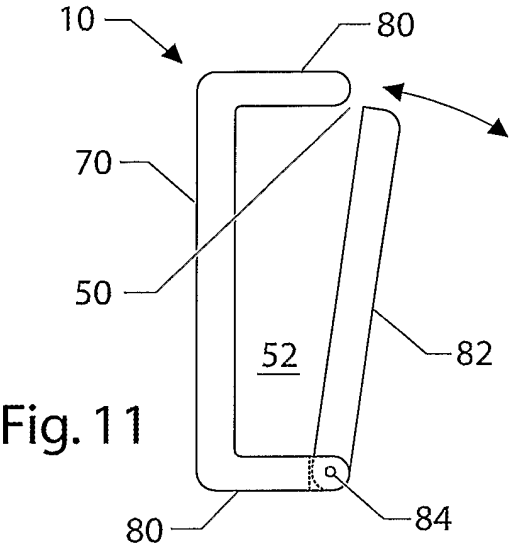
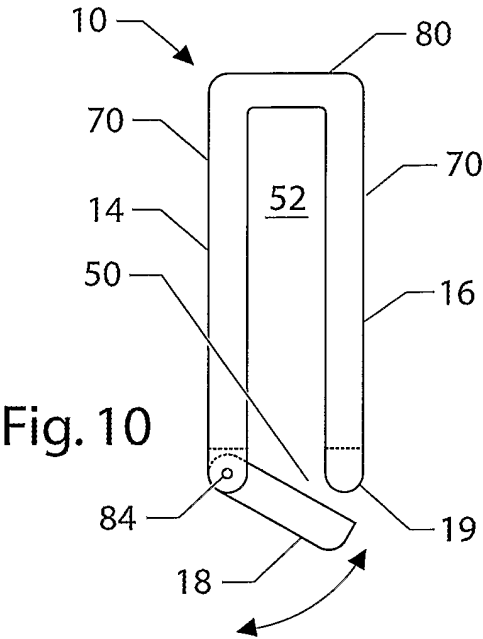


Fig. 3







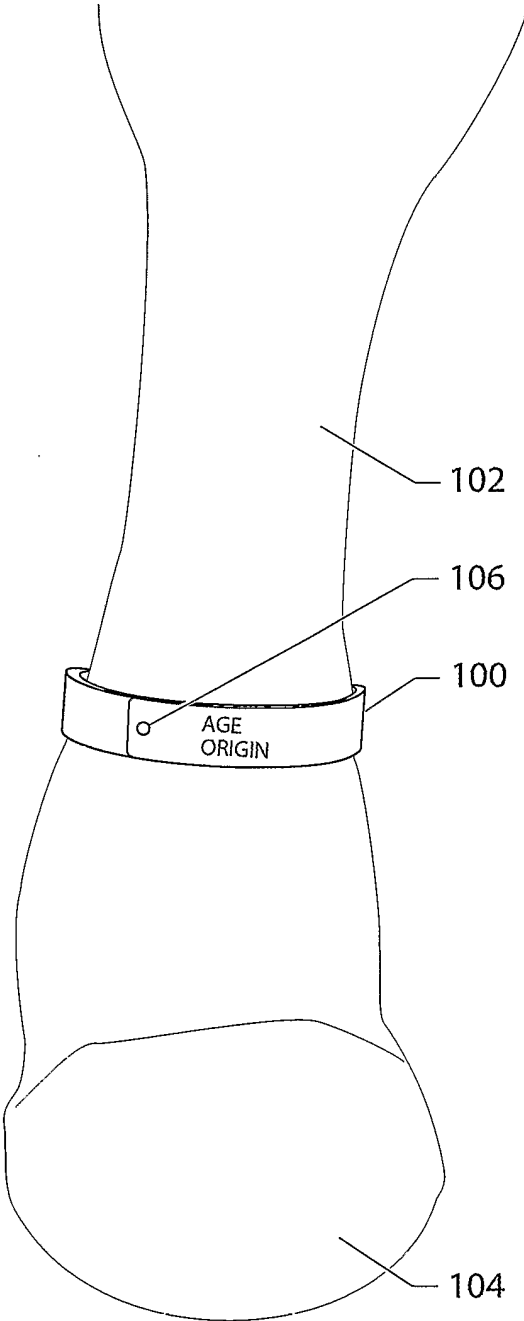


Fig. 13
(PRIOR ART)

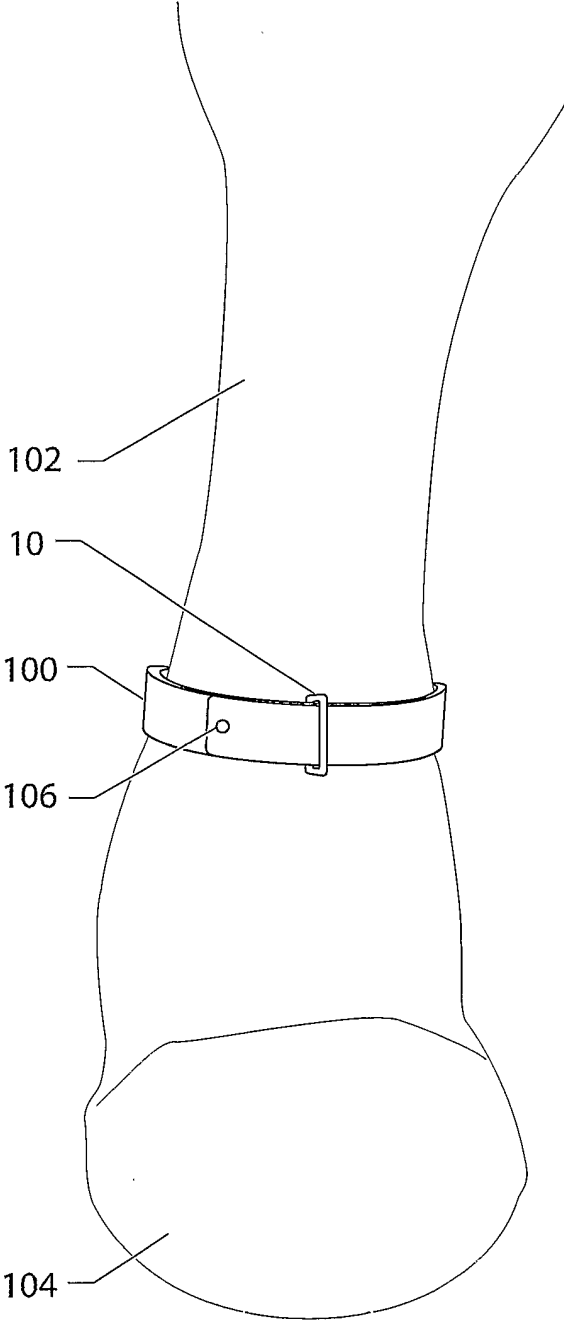
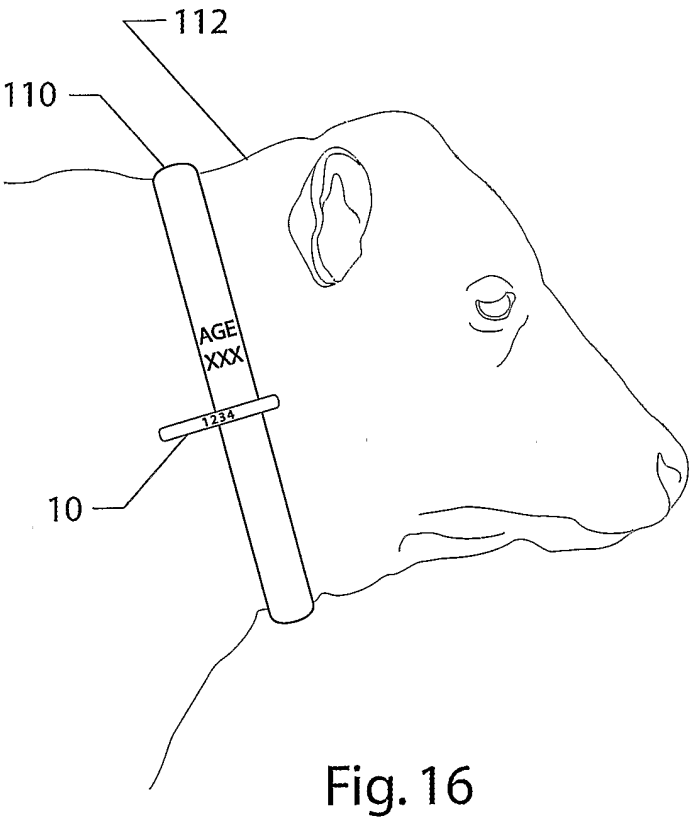
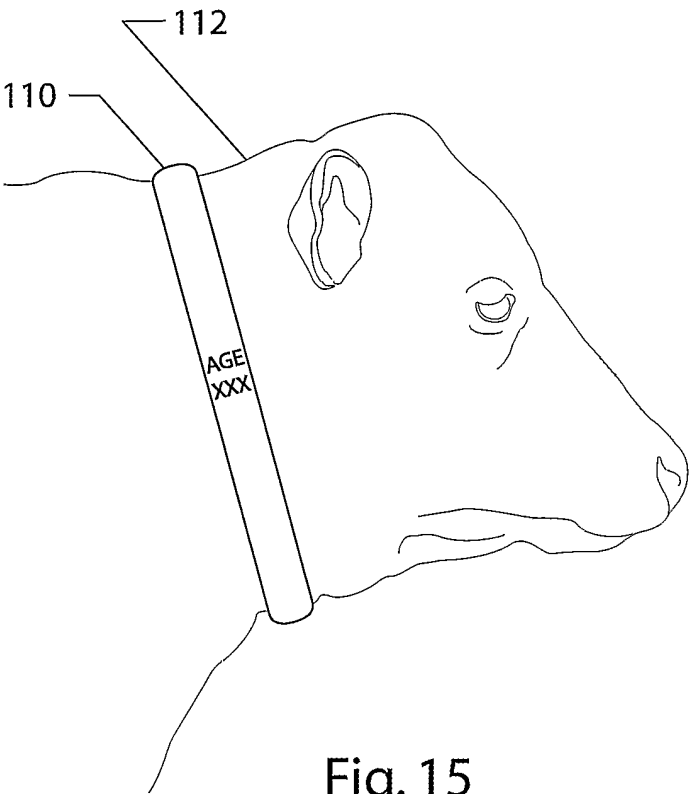


Fig. 14

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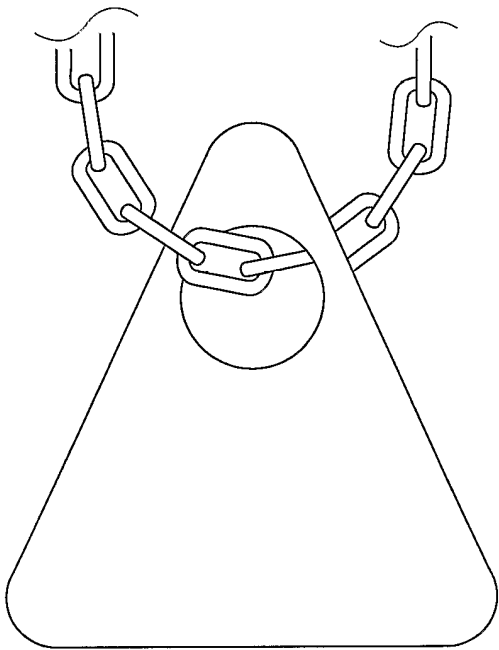


Fig. 17

(PRIOR ART)

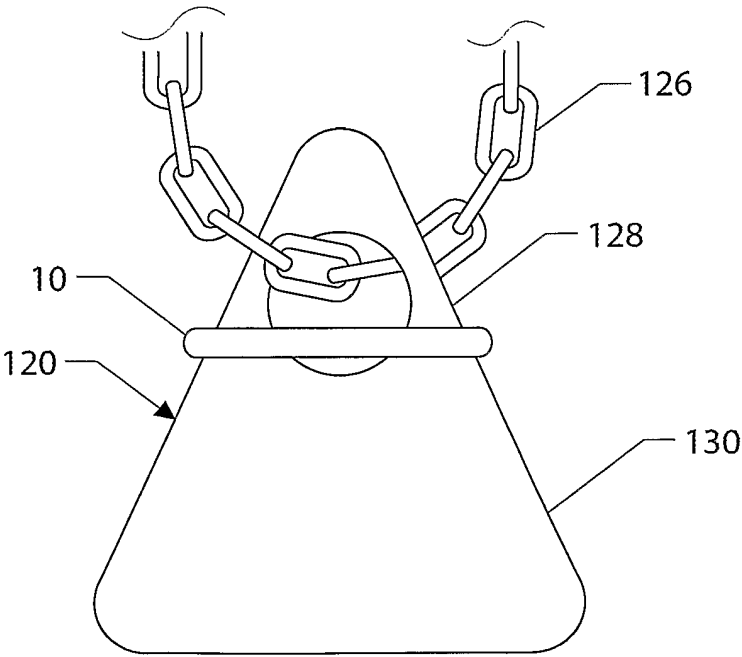


Fig. 18

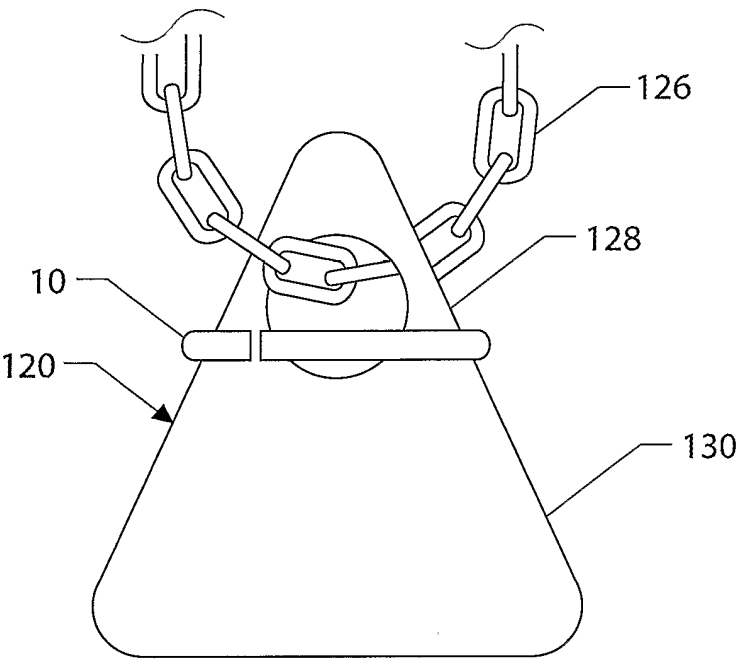


Fig. 19

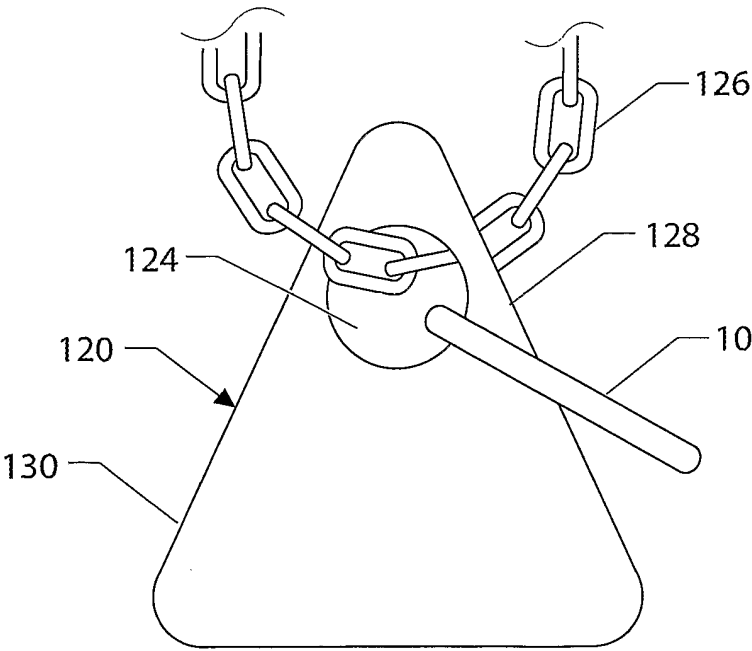


Fig. 20

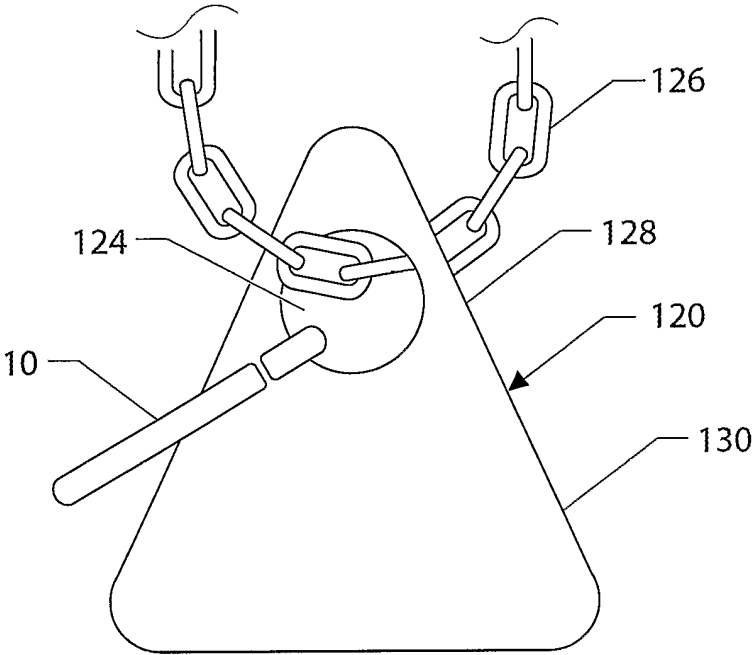


Fig. 21

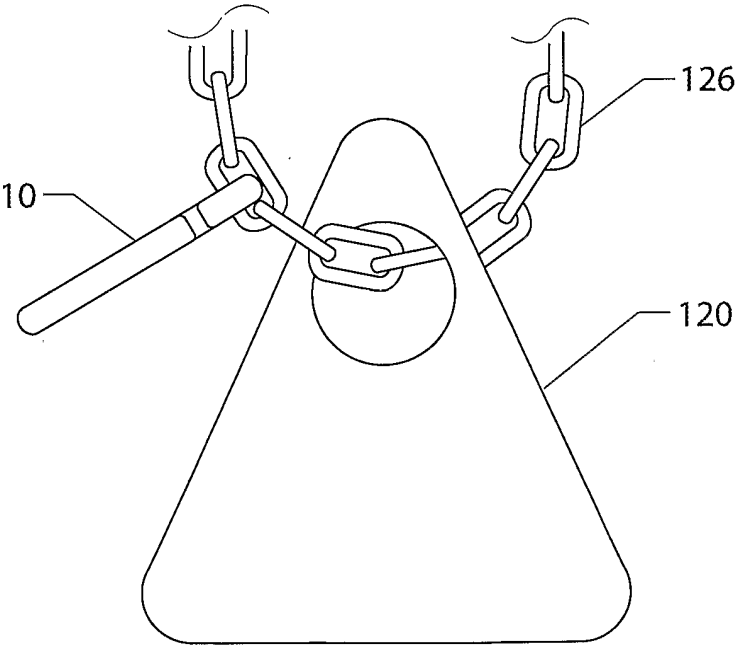


Fig. 22