ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A cabinet-like container provided with a plurality of vertically spaced shelves, each having a compartmented tray remotely supported thereon for receiving lobsters or the like. The container has an ice receiving compartment at the center top and a drip pan with a sponge therein at the bottom for chilling the interior thereof and maintaining the lobsters live during transport, storage, display and the like, by a combination of cool and moist air circulating throughout said container.

An object of the invention is to provide a cabinet-type container having a plurality of shelves, access doors and compartmented trays remotely supported on the shelves for movement through the access openings when one of the doors is open. Another object of this invention is to provide a container having an ice storage chamber therein for cooling the interior thereof for maintaining lobsters or the like in the trays in a live condition, while keeping lots of moisture in the air. Still another object of this invention is to provide a container in accordance with the preceding objects and which includes a drip pan under the ice chamber for receiving water from the melting ice with the drip pan having a sponge therein to reduce splashing of the water in the drip pan. A further object of the present invention is to provide a lobster ice box which is simple in construction, easy to use, foolproof in operation and relatively inexpensive to manufacture and maintain. These together with other objects and advantages which will become subsequently apparent reside in the details of construction and operation as more fully hereinafter described and claimed, reference being had to the accompanying drawings forming a part thereof, wherein like numerals refer to like parts throughout, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the lobster ice box of the present invention;
FIG. 2 is a vertical sectional view taken along section line 2—2 of FIG. 1;
FIG. 3 is a plan sectional view taken along section line 3—3 of FIG. 1;
FIG. 4 is a perspective view of one of the trays;
FIG. 5 is a top plan view of the ice box;
FIG. 6 is a plan sectional view taken along section line 6—6 of FIG. 1 illustrating the drip pan and sponge; and
FIG. 7 is a plan sectional view illustrating one of the shelf assemblies.

Referring now specifically to the drawings, the ice box or cabinet-type container is designated generally by reference numeral 10 and includes a top 12, bottom 14, back 16, front 18 and sides 20 which cooperate to form a hollow parallelepiped enclosure which may be constructed of conventional materials provided with suitable insulation as deemed appropriate.

The front 18 has a plurality of access openings 22 through, each of which has a closure door 24 hingedly connected to one edge thereof by hinges 26 with a suitable latch 28 provided on the other edge thereof. The openings 22 and doors 24 are arranged in vertical rows and disposed interiorly thereof is a pair of rows of vertically spaced shelves 30 supported at the corners thereof by vertical support rods 32.

Disposed on each shelf 30 is a removable tray 34 separated into compartments by transverse partitions 36 to separate the lobsters 38. The trays 34 are shallow and are of less vertical dimension than the distance between the shelves 30 to permit air circulation.

The top 12 is provided with an opening 40 having a closure door 42 with hinges 44 at the rear edge thereof and a latch 46 at the front edge thereof. A shallow ice receiving tray 48 is supported from the underside of the top 12 by interengaging flanges 59 so that ice can be placed therein through opening 40. A drain line 52 extends down from the lower point at the center rear of ice tray 48 and discharges into a drip pan or tray 54 slidable through the front 18 along the upper surface of the bottom 14. A sponge 56 substantially completely fills the tray 54 to prevent splashing of any water accumulated therein, and aid in evaporating cool, moist air into the whole cabinet-type container.

If desired, a large door 58, carrying all the smaller doors 24, can be hinged to one side of the container 20 by hinges 60. A combined knob and latch means 62 on the opposite side of the door 58 engages the corresponding portion of the container and normally holds the door 58 in a closed position. This large door facilitates the loading of the lobsters into the container and allows easy cleaning of the interior. When it is desired to remove the lobsters, each small door can be opened individually, thus keeping the cool moist air confined except for the small amount which escapes through said individual door.

The container is constructed to hold approximately 100 pounds of ice, which will maintain lobsters live over relatively long periods of time, during transport, handling, storage, display and the like. The lobsters are kept in perfect condition during shipment and storage as the combination of cool and moist air is exactly what the lobsters need. If they are placed in direct contact with ice, or immersed in cold water, they will die. It is the combination of cool and moist air flowing over and around the trays of loosely packed lobsters that is the secret of indefinite preservation of live lobsters, whether in transport or in storage awaiting sale.

The foregoing is considered illustrative only of the principles of the invention. Further, since numerous modifications and changes will readily occur to those skilled in the art, it is not desired to limit the invention to the exact construction and operation shown and described, and accordingly, all suitable modifications and equivalents may be resorted to, falling within the scope of the invention as claimed.

What is claimed as new is as follows:

1. A combined shipping and storage device for lobsters comprising a hollow cabinet-type container having a hinged front wall, a plurality of shelves in said container, spaced from each other and from the inner walls of the container, trays disposed on said shelves, hinged doors on the hinged front wall, each of said hinged doors disposed adjacent a shelf and tray in the container so that access can be gained to one tray at a time or all trays at once as desired, an ice receiving tray in the upper portion of said container, a drip tray containing a sponge in the lower portion of said container, a drain line connecting said ice tray and said sponge in said drip tray.
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whereby said drain line will allow the melting ice to cool
the interior of the container as the ice water passes
through it to said sponge, and said sponge will evap-
orate said water up and around each shelf and tray in
said container to keep said lobsters moist and cool.

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