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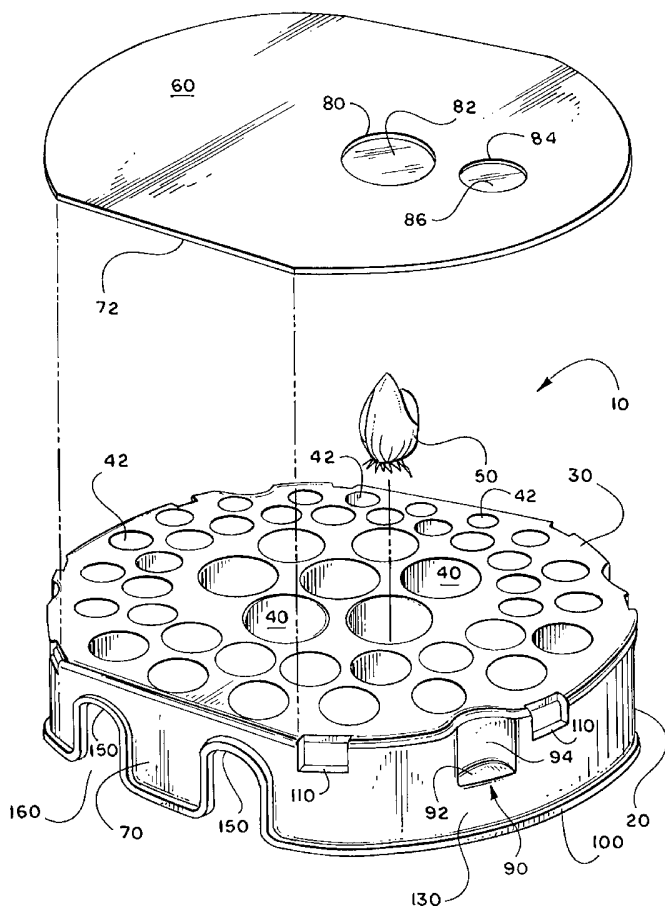
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(54) Title: BULB CONTAINER AND METHOD OF PLANTING



(57) Abstract: A flower bulb planting container allows pre-planting, off-the-shelf selection by the consumer of flower bulbs of possibly differing, but compatible, variety and color and, at the same time, provides for the aesthetically pleasing and healthful arrangement of the flowers when they are grown and mature. The container may hold different varieties of bulbs at their optimum planting depth and inter-bulb spacing, is inexpensive to produce, and is convenient and simple to use. The container is fabricated of biodegradable material that is sufficiently strong for shipment, display, and storage, and, yet, which will soften promptly when the container is wetted during planting in order to allow the bulbs to come into intimate contact with the underlying soil. A method of use of the container is also provided.

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BULB CONTAINER AND METHOD OF PLANTING

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RELATED APPLICATIONS:

This Patent Cooperation Treaty patent application claims the benefit of United States provisional patent application serial number 60/313,697, filed on August 20, 2001, and United States non-provisional patent application
10 serial number TBD, filed on August 16, 2002.

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates, generally, to the improvement of flower gardening and, more specifically, to
15 a novel container for holding, storing, transporting, displaying, and planting flower bulbs.

BACKGROUND

For centuries, people have planted flower bulbs to
20 decorate and beautify the landscape. When deciding to plant flowers, one may choose to plant different colors and varieties of bulbs, so as to create a beautiful, unique, and very personal landscape environment.

For example, one could choose to plant flower

varieties that might all bloom at, or near, the same time of year. Alternatively, one could choose to plant flowers of one variety, that bloom at a particular time of the year, adjacent to flowers of other varieties, which might
5 bloom at a different time of year, so as to create a beautiful landscape environment blooming for longer consecutive periods of time, or blooming at different times of the year, or both. One may also choose to plant flower bulbs in such a way so as to result in a unique and
10 beautiful pattern of mature flowers.

A simple process has been used to carry out the planting. One or more variety of flowers was selected. An individual flower bulb was chosen. A hole was dug in a predetermined location. The bulb was placed into the
15 hole, covered over with dirt, and then watered. The process might be repeated until the envisioned landscape environment was fully planted.

Even such a simple process, however, can sometimes lead to difficulties. Specific technical knowledge can be
20 required with regard to each variety of flower bulbs being planted. For example, it might be difficult for a novice gardener to select flower varieties that are biologically compatible, or that are aesthetically pleasing in color or in size when mature.

Additionally, it can be difficult to position the bulb correctly within its hole and, simultaneously, to hold the bulb in its correct orientation during planting. Each different size and variety of bulb might be required to be planted at a different depth. It can be physically demanding and time consuming to dig holes for, and plant, a large number of bulbs at a time.

Furthermore, it might be difficult to visualize where to place the bulbs to form a particular, desired pattern. Each bulb might require different spacing from its neighboring bulb or bulbs, so as to maximize the health and growth potential of each variety. Each might have differing growth and blooming patterns, enhancing or detracting from the landscaper's vision, depending upon when each of the particular varieties so chosen will bloom.

Of course, the digging of a single, expansive hole to orient and hold multiple bulbs in accordance with these considerations is very nearly impossible.

A variety of solutions to these difficulties have been proposed. Some have proposed containers and divider means, typically of plastic material, to hold the bulb in the correct orientation. Examples of such solutions may be seen with reference to United States Patent Number

2,930,162 to Mulford, and to U.S. Pat. No. 3,678,620 to Voges.

U.S. Pat. No. 2,930,162 to Mulford describes a shipping and growing device for bulbs. The container is made in two pieces. The lower piece contains pins or holes that support the base of the bulb. The upper piece is provided with means to support the neck of the bulb and snaps onto the lower piece. The device may be made of solid, plastic material for indoor use, or may be made of mesh material so that it can be planted directly into the ground. It is difficult to determine the correct depth at which to plant this container for outdoor use, and different varieties and sizes of bulbs within the same container are not conveniently held at locations and depths appropriate to their variety. The container structure itself eventually must be retrieved from the ground and disposed of. No provision is made for the storage and planting of more than a few bulbs of a single variety at a time.

U.S. Pat. No. 3,678,620 to Voges provides a plastic package that holds bulbs in a preferred in-line position and at a spacing configuration for promoting optimum growth. An indicator is provided to assist in insuring that the container is planted at the correct depth.

Openings are provided in the top and bottom of the plastic container to allow the bulb to grow. This container does not, however, provide for different varieties of bulbs to be placed at differing depths or in non-linear horizontal spacing. The container structure itself eventually must be retrieved and disposed of.

It has been proposed to use compressed dirt or other material to act as a carrier and locator for the bulbs. An example of such a solution may be seen with reference to U.S. Pat. No. 3,112,577 to Burger.

U.S. Pat. No. 3,112,577 to Burger discloses a carrying and planting plate for bulbs. The plate is formed from loosely compressed material, such as dirt or cow dung. The sides may be strengthened with a framework of wood or synthetic material. The plate has chambers formed into it for carrying bulbs. The chambers have holes in the bottom to allow the bulb to contact the ground immediately upon planting. In another embodiment, the plate has funnels inserted through the holes within it in order to contain the bulb and to provide for water drainage. This device does not provide for the bulbs to be located below the surface of the device, or for different sizes or varieties of bulbs to be planted at their respective optimum depth.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,161,331 to Lalane has provided for the use of a biodegradable material to form a package to hold the bulb and other optional planting components. This patent provides a bulb casing comprising two joinable, 5 hemispherical members for holding a bulb, nutrients, and other optional components. The members are formed from biodegradable cardboard, cellulosic moldable paper pulp, or starch resins. Extended leg portions are provided on the bottom of the casing, so that the casing can stand 10 within the planting hole. No provision is made in this invention to hold more than one bulb at a time, nor to hold several bulbs of possibly differing size and variety at their respective optimum depth and inter-bulb spacing.

It is, therefore, readily apparent that a new and 15 improved bulb-planting container is needed that allows pre-planting, off-the-shelf selection by the consumer of flower bulbs of compatible variety and color. At the same time, such a container should provide for the aesthetically pleasing and healthful arrangement of the 20 flowers when they are grown and mature. In order to accomplish these results, such a container should further allow a plurality of bulbs of possibly differing size and variety to be held at the optimal planting depth and relative spacing therebetween; it should have self-

supporting and structurally adequate walls for strength and convenience during shipment, storage, display, and planting; it should be made of a biodegradable material which is sufficiently strong for shipment, display, and storage, and yet which will soften promptly when the container is wetted during planting. When so softened, such a container should allow the bulbs to come into intimate contact with the underlying soil for optimal growth. Such a container should not require removal from the ground after the growing season, in order to be environmentally friendly. Such a container should allow for the attainment of each of these benefits through the digging of a single hole of an approximately uniform depth. Such a container should be economical to produce, and convenient to ship, store, display, and use.

It is, therefore, to the provision of such a container that the present invention is directed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly described, in a preferred embodiment, the present invention both overcomes the above-mentioned disadvantages, and meets the recognized needs for such device, by providing a flower bulb planting container that allows pre-planting, off-the-shelf selection by the

consumer of flower bulbs of differing, but compatible variety and color and, at the same time, provides for the aesthetically pleasing and healthful arrangement of the flowers when they are grown and mature. The container of the present invention may hold different varieties of bulbs at their optimum planting depth and inter-bulb spacing, is inexpensive to produce, and is convenient and simple to use. The container of the present invention is fabricated of biodegradable material that is sufficiently strong for shipment, display, and storage, and, yet, which will soften promptly when the container is wetted during planting in order to allow the bulbs to come into intimate contact with the underlying soil.

Accordingly, in the preferred embodiment, the present invention comprises a generally circularly shaped container having a flat top surface and sidewalls depending therefrom, the overall circular shape being truncated along two sides to form flat sidewalls. The container contains a plurality of truncated, frustoconically or cylindrically shaped cavities depending from the top surface. A hole is provided in the bottom of each cavity in order to allow water entry and drainage after planting, and to allow the maturing roots easily to exit the cavity.

The container body is made from a biodegradable material, formed into the desired shape. Indentations are formed about the periphery, and the edges of sidewalls are rolled, in order to provide a container that is rigid enough to stack, display, and ship without requiring additional reinforcement means or supplementary containers. The container is stackable and, configured without bulbs therein, may be nested into other similar containers.

The flat sidewalls are provided to allow the container to stand upright on, or within, a display rack. A web of stiffening projections is formed underneath the top of the container, and between the cavities, in order to stiffen the container and keep the top surface from sagging under the weight of the bulbs.

"U"-shaped notches within each flat sidewall of the container keep the sidewalls from bunching or buckling during the forming process, and, advantageously, serve to allow water and soil to migrate under the container during planting operations.

The cavities may be formed in various sizes and depths in order to hold various sizes and varieties of bulbs, and are configured in a pattern so that, when planted, the bulbs will grow into a beautiful, optimally

spaced design.

The depth of the cavities from the top surface varies depending on the size and variety of bulb contained therein. The size of the cavity, as well as the space
5 between cavities, may also vary depending upon the size and variety of bulb. Such configuration allows different sizes and varieties of bulbs to be held in their optimum growing position, both in depth and in horizontal spacing from adjoining bulbs or plants, with the least amount of
10 difficulty for the user.

The sidewalls advantageously maintain proper planting depth and structural support for the container. When the container is wetted, it softens and sags, allowing the bulbs to contact the underlying soil.

15 A removable and biodegradable cover, having a contour similar to that of the top surface of the container, attaches to the top of the body. The cover may be provided with one or more transparent windows to allow a prospective buyer to view one or more sample bulbs. Slots
20 may be provided in the container sidewalls and top surface in order to allow clearance for a staple gun or other attachment means. The cover may contain any combination of artwork, instructions for use, representative photos, labels or other printing meeting governmental and

regulatory disclosure requirements, and brand indicia.

In use, the cover of the container is removed and set aside. A suitable planting location is selected. A single hole of approximately four (4) inches in depth, and
5 of sufficient diameter to hold the container, is dug. The container is placed within the hole and the hole is filled, preferably with the previously removed soil. The area is watered and, thereafter, growth of the bulbs into mature flowers occurs in accordance with the advantages of
10 the present invention.

Thus, it is an object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb planting container which allows pre-planting, off-the-shelf selection by the consumer of flower bulbs of compatible variety and color
15 and, at the same time, provides for the aesthetically pleasing and healthful arrangement of the flowers when they are grown and mature.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb-planting container
20 that may hold bulbs of differing sizes and varieties at their optimum depth and inter-bulb spacing when planted.

It is still another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb-planting container that may hold bulbs for planting in a decorative

and aesthetically pleasing pattern.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb planting container which is self-supporting and requires no other container
5 for shipping or storage.

It is yet still another object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb planting kit that is entirely biodegradable.

It is yet still another and further object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower
10 bulb planting container in which the cover contains any combination of artwork, instructions for use, representative photos, labels or other printing meeting governmental and regulatory disclosure requirements, and
15 brand indicia.

It is still a further object of the present invention to provide a new and improved flower bulb planting kit that allows a plurality of bulbs of differing variety to be planted simultaneously within a single hole of
20 approximately uniform depth.

Other objects, features, and advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those ordinarily skilled in the art by reference to the accompanying drawing Figures and to the Detailed Description of the

Preferred Embodiment presented herein.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

Fig. 1 is an exploded perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the flower bulb-planting container of the present invention, illustrating a representative bulb, cover, container, and other salient features of the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a top view of the cover of the preferred embodiment of the flower bulb-planting container of the present invention, illustrating the transparent windows thereof, representative artwork, instructions, brand indicia, contoured shape, and other salient features thereof;

Fig. 3 is a bottom view of the preferred embodiment of the flower bulb-planting container of the present invention, illustrating the bulb-holding cavities and arrangement thereof, and other salient features thereof; and, further, designating the section line for **Fig. 5**;

Fig. 4 is a bottom view of the preferred embodiment of the flower bulb-planting container of the present invention, illustrating the web of stiffening projections, the bulb-holding cavities and arrangement thereof, and other salient features; and,

Fig. 5 is a sectional view of a portion of the preferred embodiment of the flower-bulb planting container of the present invention taken along line 5 of **Fig. 3**, and illustrating the container, plurality of cavities and bulbs, and other salient features thereof.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

In describing the preferred and alternate embodiments of the present invention illustrated in the Figures, specific terminology is employed for the sake of clarity. The invention, however, is not intended to be limited to the specific terminology so selected, and it is to be understood that each specific element includes all technical equivalents that operate in a similar manner to accomplish a similar purpose.

With reference to the Figures generally, and specifically with reference to **Figs. 1-2**, in a preferred embodiment, container **10** may comprise a generally circularly shaped body **20**, having top surface **30** which is approximately flat and planar. Top surface **30** may be truncated along two sidewalls **70** thereof, for purposes that will be explained in greater detail below. Top surface **30** is supported along its marginal edges by sidewall **130**. Depending from, and carried by, top surface

30 are a plurality of large cavities 40 and small cavities 42, for holding large bulbs 50 and small bulbs 52, respectively. Cover 60 is fastened to the body 20 by staples (not shown) or by such other appropriate fastening means as will enable cover 60 to be easily removed by the user.

More specifically, body 20 preferably is formed from thin-walled biodegradable material, which may be press-formed or molded into a unitary body. Body 20, preferably, is made of biodegradable material such as moldable paper pulp, although starch resins or starch-based plastic materials may be used. For convenient recognition by the reader of the characteristics of such paper pulp materials, these materials have been utilized, for example, in egg-cartons, bedding-plant containers, and in other commonly recognizable applications. When made from such materials, body 20 advantageously may be cut, pierced, formed, and shaped without harming the structural integrity thereof.

Accordingly, a plurality of indentations 90 is formed into sidewall 130 to make body 20 self-supporting and to stiffen sidewall 130. Indentations 90 comprise, in combination, an approximately flat bottom 92 and curved side 94.

Additionally, and as previously mentioned, two flat sidewalls **70**, disposed diametrically opposite of each other on body **20**, allow container **10** to be stood on end; thereby, enabling the convenient display of container **10** in a retailer's rack for consumer view, selection, and purchase.

"U"-shaped areas **150**, best seen with reference to **Fig. 1**, are formed on each side of body **20** within flat sidewalls **70**, and define notches **160**. U-shaped areas **150** prevent flat sidewalls **70** from bunching or buckling during the forming process, and, advantageously, later serve to allow water and soil to migrate under body **20** during planting operations.

Edges **100** of body **20** may be rolled or turned outwardly in order to lend added stiffness. A radius **135** may be formed as an adjunct of the manufacturing process near the intersection of top surface **30** and sidewalls **70**, **130**. Such radius advantageously may provide further structural stiffness.

Referring to **Figs. 3-5**, cavities **40**, **42** are truncated, frustoconically or cylindrically shaped cavities, and are provided with holes **120**, **122** in the bottom thereof in order to allow water entry and drainage, and to allow the roots easily to exit cavities **40**, **42**. As

best seen in **Fig. 5**, the portion of each cavity adjacent holes **120, 122** may serve initially to support bulbs **50, 52** in their optimum growing orientation.

The depth of cavities **40, 42** vary from top surface
5 **30**, depending on the size and variety of bulb to be contained therein. The size of cavities **40, 42**, and the space between cavities **40, 42**, may also vary, depending upon the size and variety of bulb to be contained therein. This arrangement advantageously allows different sizes and
10 varieties of bulbs **50, 52** to be held in their optimum growing position both in depth and in horizontal spacing from adjoining bulbs or plants, with the least amount of difficulty for the user.

While only two primary cavity sizes are demonstrated
15 in the Figures, it will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that any number of such cavities, all differing in size, depth, and shape, may be provided, as appropriate under the circumstances.

It will be recognized by those ordinarily skilled in
20 the art that cavities **40 42**, the overall shape and size of container **10**, and the relative position and placement of said cavities therewithin, can be arranged so that bulbs **50, 52** will form an aesthetically pleasing, prearranged pattern as they grow into mature flowering plants.

Best seen with reference to **Figs. 4** and **5**, a web of stiffening projections **170** may be formed between cavities **40**, **42** in order to maintain top surface **30** in an approximately flat condition, to enhance rigidity, and to prevent sagging under the weight of bulbs **50**, **52** or of other externally applied forces.

As a result of sidewalls **70**, **130**, indentations **90**, edges **100**, radius **135**, and stiffening projections **170**, the overall stiffness of container **10**, and, more specifically, body **20**, is increased; and, thereby, the container of the present invention is better able to resist deformation under both externally applied forces and the internal weight of the bulbs carried within cavities **40**, **42**. Accordingly, no other container or ancillary stiffening device is required for shipment, storage, display, or planting. Container **10** is sufficiently rigid to enable the stacking of a plurality of such containers. Similarly, container **10** is sufficiently rigid and strong to enable a plurality of containers **10** to be nested within other such containers when in the absence of bulbs **50**, **52** and cover **60**.

Returning now to **Figs. 1** and **2**, it will be seen that cover **60** serves to hold bulbs **50**, **52** within container **10**, and serves, further, to maintain the preferred growing

orientation of the bulbs. Accordingly, cover **60** may be provided with a large hole **80** and a small hole **84**, which contain large window **82** and small window **86**, respectively. A prospective buyer may use windows **82**, **86** in order to view sample bulbs contained within container **10**. Cover **60** may be stapled, or otherwise removably affixed, to the top of body **20** and is, accordingly, easily removed prior to planting. For such purpose, openings **110** may be provided for clearance of a stapler body or other fastening tool.

With continued reference to **Fig. 2**, cover **60** may contain artwork **62**, instructions and representative photos **64**, and brand indicia **66**. It will be apparent to one of ordinary skill in the art that instructions **64** may further contain labels or other printing such as may be required to meet governmental and regulatory disclosure requirements of a particular region.

Cover **60** has flat surfaces **72** formed therein, disposed diametrically opposite of each other, in order to allow it to match the profile of body **20** when in an overlying relationship therewith.

In order to use container **10**, the user simply selects an appropriate planting location and digs a single hole to the required depth, typically approximately four (4) inches. In the case of a non-round container, or the use

of more than a single container **10** in the same general planting location, an appropriately shaped trench may be dug to the required depth. Advantageously, the depth of the hole or trench may be approximately uniform across its diameter or expanse, respectively. Cover **60** is removed from body **20** and set aside. Body **20** is placed within the hole or trench, covered over, preferably with the same soil as was previously removed, and then the area is lightly compacted and sparingly watered.

It will be recognized that during planting, sidewalls **70**, **130** and edges **100** of body **20** serve to hold the lower portion of cavities **40**, **42** in a position that is slightly above the bottom of the hole or trench. Soon after the body **20** is contacted by water, it softens and sags sufficiently to enable bulbs **50**, **52** to settle into the underlying soil, and, soon thereafter, the growing roots may penetrate into and take hold of the ground. Bulbs **50**, **52** will then grow in the beautiful, healthfully situated, and decorative arrangement that was predetermined upon manufacture of container **10** by the bulb provider.

Through appropriate use of container **10**, the user is secure in knowing that the design of container **10** has been optimized by the manufacturer initially to provide bulbs **50**, **52** and, thereafter, mature flowering plants, that are

mutually compatible, that are pre-selected for color and other suitable biological and aesthetic characteristics, that are oriented optimally in distance from one another, and that are oriented optimally in depth of soil to assure proper and healthy growth. Accordingly, no technical expertise concerning flowers is required of the user; nor is previous experience required; and, yet, even a novice user may grow a beautiful outdoor arrangement of differing varieties of flowers with minimal risk of failure and minimal effort.

Optionally, container **10** may be provided with suitable pest repellants, fertilizers and growth promoting agents, and the like, in enhancement of the operation and desirability of the product. Such agents may be provided within the material of container **10** for release during biodegradation; or, they may be disposed within cavities **40, 42** adjacent to bulbs **50, 52**; or, they may be provided beneath the cavities, container **10** being suitably wrapped or otherwise packaged in order to contain any such agents.

With regard to all such embodiments as may be herein described and contemplated, it will be appreciated that optional features, including, but not limited to, aesthetically pleasing coloration and surface design, and labeling and brand marking, may be provided in association

with the present invention, all without departing from the scope of the invention.

Having thus described exemplary embodiments of the present invention, it should be noted by those ordinarily skilled in the art that the within disclosures are exemplary only, and that various other alternatives, adaptations, and modifications may be made within the scope of the present invention. Accordingly, the present invention is not limited to the specific embodiments illustrated herein, but is limited only by the following claims.

I CLAIM:

1. A container suitable for holding, storing, transporting, displaying, and subsequently planting within the ground a plurality of flower bulbs, comprising:

5 a body of thin-wall, biodegradable material, comprising:

an approximately planar top surface for resting in approximately parallel relationship with the underlying ground upon planting;

10 a sidewall, said sidewall depending from said top surface for supporting said top surface a spaced-apart distance from the ground; and,

15 a plurality of cavities depending from said top surface, each for holding therewithin a flower bulb at a spaced-apart distance from said top surface, each of said cavities further comprising a bulb-support region;

20 each of said cavities being spaced-apart from one another along said top surface so as to provide adequate inter-bulb spacing;

whereby each of said cavities is disposed to hold a flower bulb in a prearranged position and a preferred planting orientation, at a pre-selected planting depth, and at pre-selected inter-bulb distance from each

neighboring bulb, so as to enable said plurality of bulbs to grow in a healthy state to maturity.

2. The container of claim 1 wherein said cavities
5 further comprise a hole at the bottom thereof to allow water entry and drainage after planting, and to allow root growth therethrough.

3. The container of claim 1 wherein said cavities are
10 frustoconically shaped.

4. The container of claim 1 wherein a portion of said
sidewall is flattened.

5. The container of claim 1 further comprising an
15 indentation formed within said sidewall for the reinforcement thereof.

6. The container of claim 5 wherein said indentation
20 further comprises a planar first end and a curved sidewall.

7. The container of claim 1 wherein said material
comprises moldable pulp.

8. The container of claim 1 wherein said cavities are interconnected with a reinforcing web.

9. The container of claim 8 wherein said web depends
5 from said top surface.

10. The container of claim 1 wherein said sidewall further comprises a U-shaped opening.

10 11. The container of claim 1 further comprising a slot formed through said sidewall for attaching a cover.

12. The container of claim 1 further comprising a cover.

15 13. The container of claim 12 wherein said cover further comprises a transparent window.

14. The container of claim 12 wherein said cover further comprises instructions for use of said container.

20 15. The container of claim 1 wherein said sidewall further comprises a rolled edge at a distal edge thereof.

16. The container of claim 1 further comprising a flower

bulb within each said cavity.

17. The container of claim 1 further comprising an agent selected from the group consisting of fertilizers, pest repellents, and growth promoters.

18. A container for holding, storing, transporting, displaying, and subsequently planting within the ground a plurality of flower bulbs, comprising:

a one piece body of thin-wall biodegradable material, comprising:

an approximately planar top surface for resting in approximately parallel relationship with the underlying ground upon planting;

a sidewall depending from said top surface for supporting said top surface a spaced-apart distance from the underlying ground;

a first cavity depending from said top surface for holding therewithin a first variety of flower bulb below said top surface at a pre-selected planting depth; and,

a second cavity depending from said top surface for holding therewithin a second variety of flower bulb below said top surface at a pre-

selected planting depth;

said first and second cavities differing in relative depth from said top surface;

said first and second cavities being spaced-apart relative to one another so as to provide pre-selected inter-bulb spacing;

whereby, upon planting and watering, said material softens and allows each said bulb to settle into position in contact with the ground beneath the container; thereby, providing optimum growing conditions for each bulb.

19. The container of claim 18 wherein said cavities further comprise a hole at the bottom thereof to allow water entry and drainage after planting, and to allow root growth therethrough.

20. The container of claim 18 wherein said cavities are frustoconically shaped.

21. The container of claim 18 wherein a portion of said sidewall is flattened.

22. The container of claim 18 further comprising an indentation formed within said sidewall for the

reinforcement thereof.

23. The container of claim 22 wherein said indentation
further comprises a planar first end and a curved
5 sidewall.

24. The container of claim 18 wherein said material
comprises moldable pulp.

10 25. The container of claim 18 wherein said cavities are
interconnected with a reinforcing web.

26. The container of claim 25 wherein said web depends
from said top surface.

15 27. The container of claim 18 wherein said sidewall
further comprises a U-shaped opening.

28. The container of claim 18 further comprising a slot
20 formed through said sidewall for attaching a cover.

29. The container of claim 18 further comprising a cover.

30. The container of claim 29 wherein said cover further

comprises a transparent window.

31. The container of claim 29 wherein said cover further comprises instructions for use of said container.

5

32. The container of claim 18 wherein said sidewall further comprises a rolled edge at a distal edge thereof.

10

33. The container of claim 18 further comprising a flower bulb within each said cavity.

15

34. The container of claim 33 wherein said flower bulb comprises a first variety of flower bulb within said first cavity and a second variety of flower bulb within said second cavity.

20

35. The container of claim 18 further comprising an agent selected from the group consisting of fertilizers, pest repellents, and growth promoters.

36. A container for holding, storing, transporting, displaying, and subsequently planting within the ground a plurality of flower bulbs, said container comprising:

a one piece body of thin-wall, biodegradable

material, said body comprising:

an approximately planar top surface for resting in approximately parallel relationship with the underlying ground upon planting;

5 a sidewall depending from said top surface for supporting said top surface a spaced-apart distance from the underlying ground, said sidewall comprising a flattened portion, an indentation, and a U-shaped opening;

10 a first cavity depending from said top surface for holding therewithin a first variety of flower bulb below said top surface at a pre-selected planting depth; and,

15 a second cavity depending from said top surface for holding therewithin a second variety of flower bulb below said top surface at a pre-selected planting depth;

20 said first and second cavities interconnected with a reinforcing web therebetween, said first and second cavities further differing in relative depth from said top surface and being spaced-apart relative to one another so as to provide pre-selected inter-bulb spacing, each of said cavities comprising a

hole at the bottom thereof;

a cover comprising a window therethrough for viewing one of said cavities;

whereby, upon planting and watering, said material
5 softens and allows each said bulb to settle into position
in contact with the ground beneath the container; thereby,
providing optimum growing conditions for each bulb.

37. The container of claim 36 further comprising a first
10 variety of flower bulb within said first cavity and a
second variety of flower bulb within said second cavity.

38. A method of manufacture comprising pre-consumer
selection and packaging of a plurality of bulbs, said
15 method comprising the steps of:

a. selecting a plurality of bulbs comprising more
than one biological variety; and,

b. placing said bulbs within a container in pre-
selected spatial orientation for subsequent
20 planting, said orientation comprising spacing
apart said bulbs relative to one-another by a
pre-selected distance conducive to healthy
growth of said bulbs, and, further, spacing said
bulbs at a pre-selected planting depth conducive

to healthy growth of said bulbs;

- c. said distance and depth being selected according to the biological variety of said bulbs.

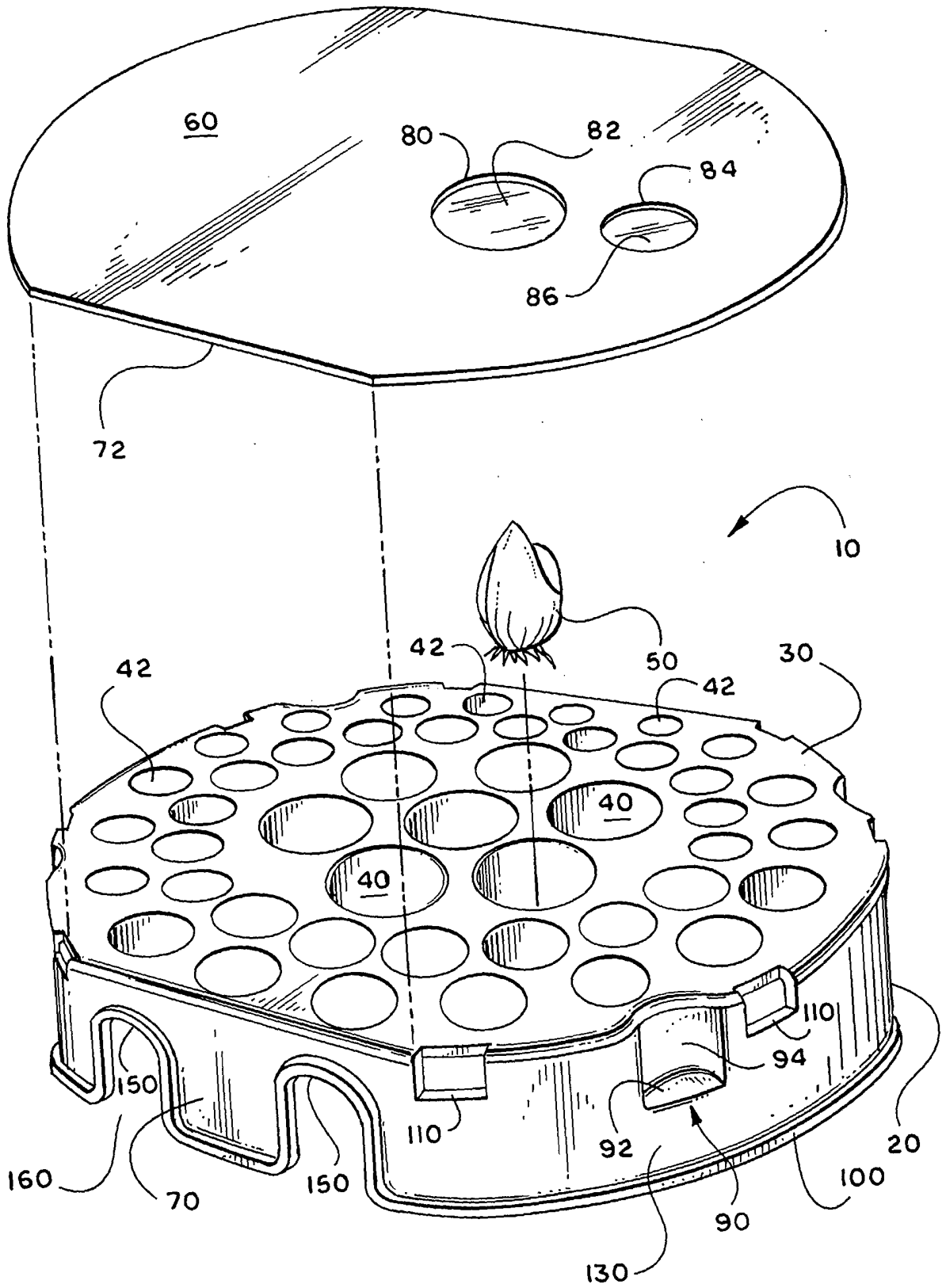


Fig. 1

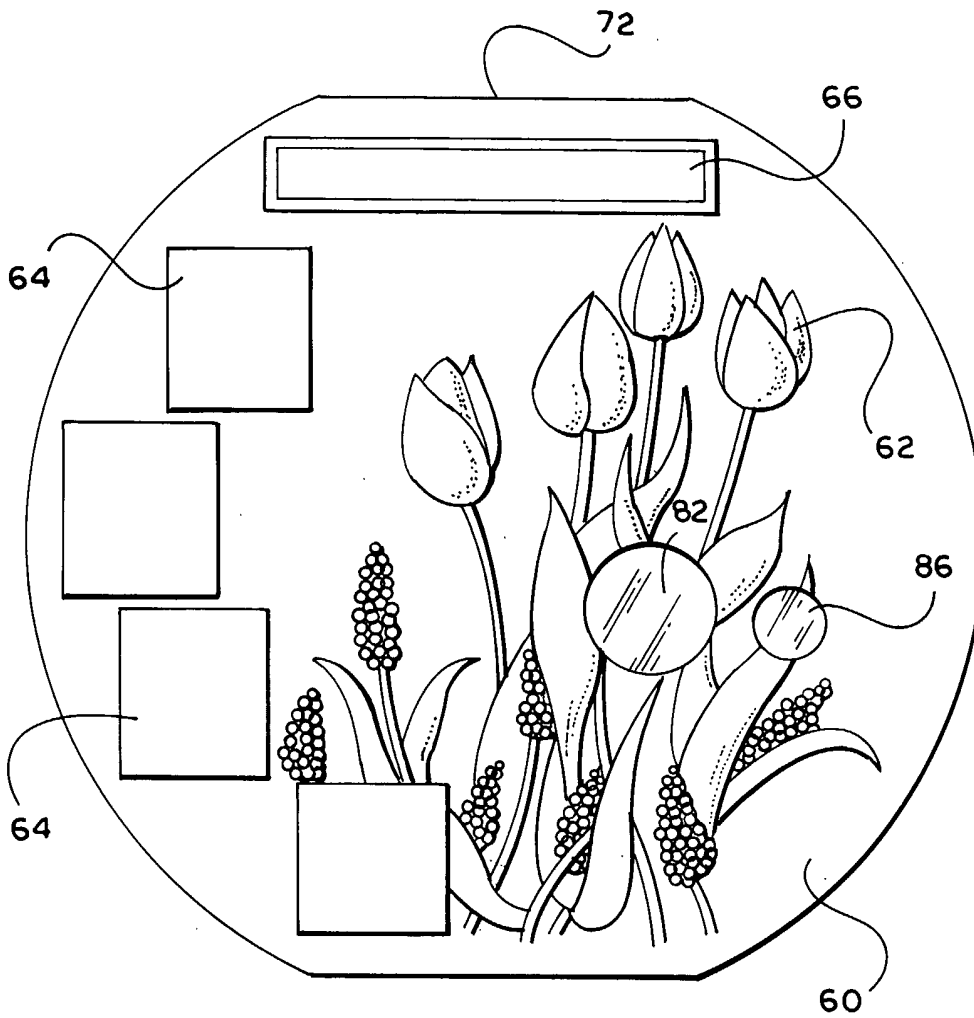


Fig. 2

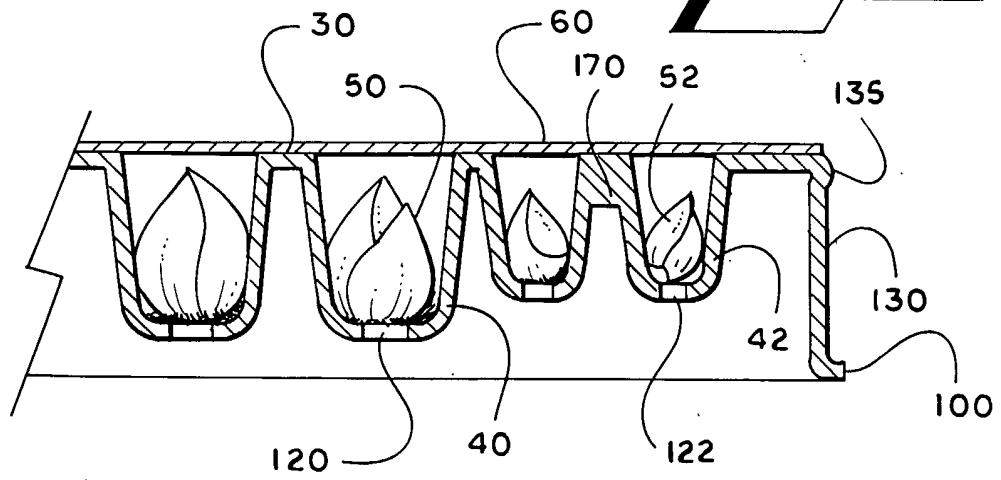


Fig. 5

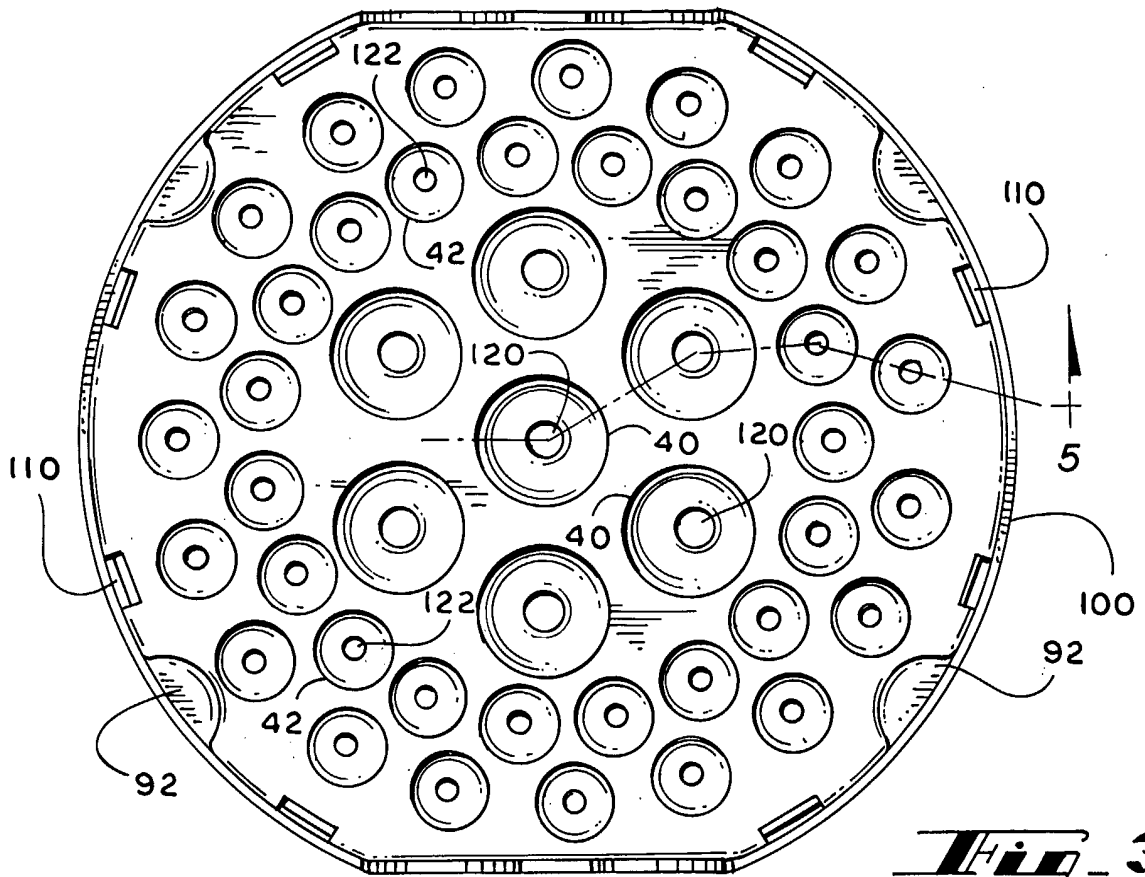


Fig. 3

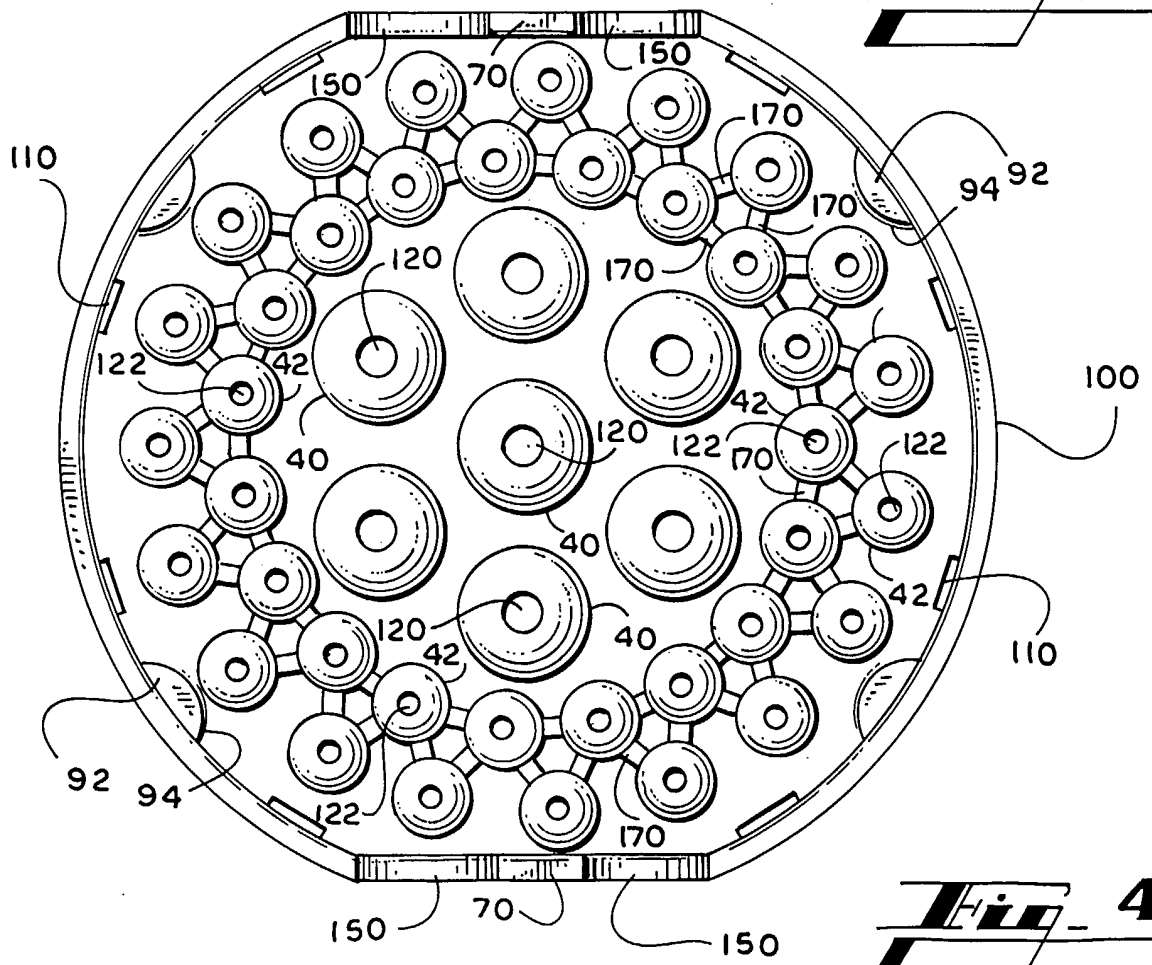


Fig. 4