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2,516,359

FLESH CLAMPING DEVICE

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Fig. 1.

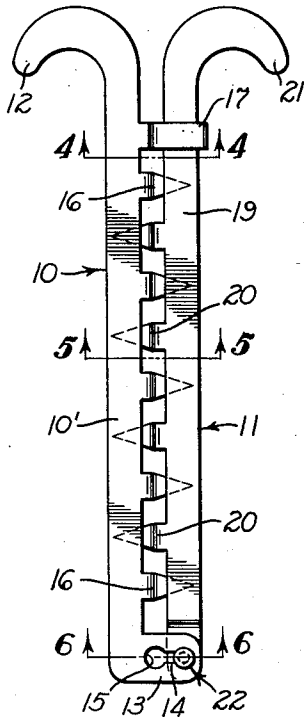


Fig. 2.

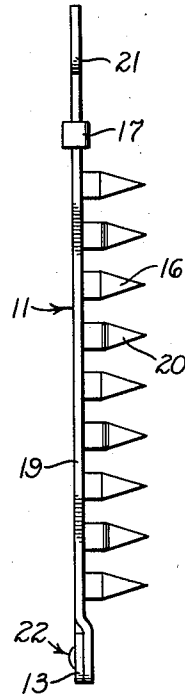


Fig. 4.

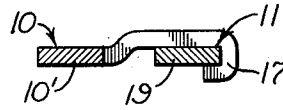


Fig. 5.

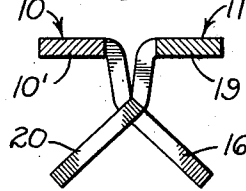


Fig. 6.

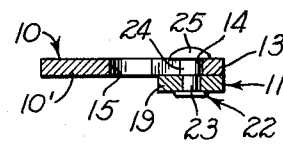


Fig. 3.

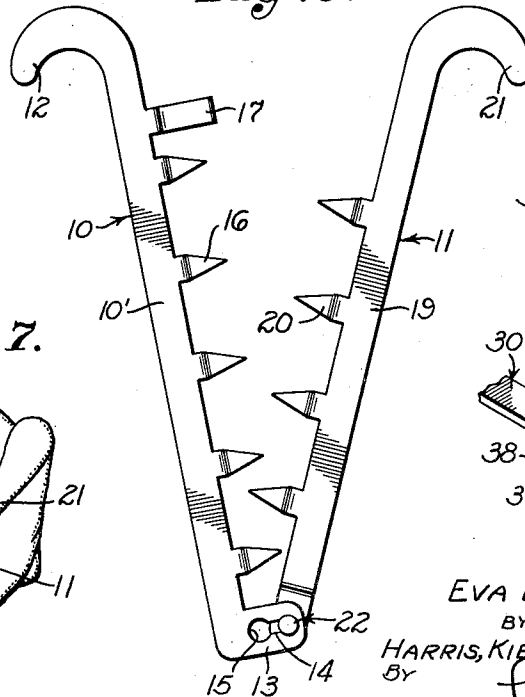


Fig. 7.

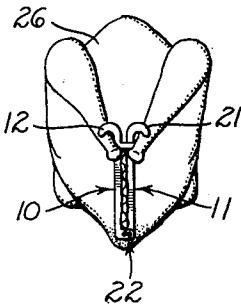


Fig. 8.

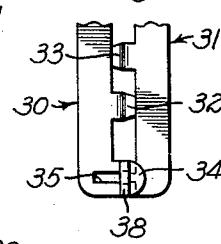
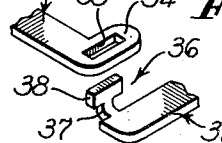


Fig. 9.



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FLESH CLAMPING DEVICE

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3 Claims. (Cl. 17-11)

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My invention relates generally to fastening devices and more particularly to a clamping device which is adapted for use in retaining the vent opening of a stuffed fowl closed during cooking of the fowl.

Various means have been employed for maintaining the vent opening of a stuffed fowl closed during roasting of the fowl, the most common expedient being to sew the adjacent portions or flaps at the sides of the opening together. It is well known that this method of closing the opening consumes considerable time and the twine used for the sewing is apt to pull out of the flesh. To overcome this difficulty various fastening means have been proposed for holding the edges or flaps of the vent opening together during the cooking of the fowl to retain the stuffing therein. While such prior devices have been used with some degree of success, it has been found that they have certain undesirable features. For example, it has been determined that when the fastening devices are composed of pivoted or articulated parts which are permanently connected, fats, stuffing, flesh or other material is apt to gather and congeal in minute spaces between the relatively movable parts of the devices, thus making it extremely difficult to thoroughly clean the device. For this reason, such devices are subject to contamination and thus are considered unsanitary. Moreover, it has been ascertained that such devices are not positive in retaining the vent opening closed for the reason that the means for holding the parts of the devices in closed relationship are ineffectual and are readily released.

It is an important object of my invention to overcome the deficiencies of such prior devices by providing an improved device for clamping the sides or flaps of the vent opening in abutting relationship so as to close the opening and retain the stuffing within the fowl being roasted, the device comprising a pair of clamping jaws pivoted together and each having points or prongs adapted to pierce the flesh of the fowl and to draw the flaps together to close the opening, the device also including a resilient latch hook on one of the jaw members engageable with a side of the other jaw member to releasably lock the members in clamping position.

Another and extremely important object of the invention is to provide a clamping device, of the class referred to, which includes means for detachably connecting the jaw members for relative pivotal movement so that following the cooking of the fowl, the members can be disconnected and cleaned individually. By this provision, surfaces of the jaw members which adjoin or interengage, when the members are in assembled relationship, are fully exposed when the members are disconnected so that they may be completely

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cleansed by a usual washing operation to avoid the possibility of contamination.

It is another object of the invention to provide a clamping device of the type indicated in which the pivot means may comprise a pin or projection on one jaw member receivable in an aperture in the other jaw member to connect the members for relative pivotal movement, said projection being readily releasable from the aperture so as to permit disassembly of the parts to facilitate cleaning thereof.

Another object is to provide a clamping device embodying means for releasably locking the jaw members in closed position so as to guard against loss of the stuffing from the fowl during the cooking procedure.

Another object is to provide a clamping device which includes hook means on the jaw members for engaging the legs of the fowl and retaining them adjacent each other so as to effect compactness and prevent spreading of the legs which might result in improper seating of the cover of the pan in which the fowl is cooked.

Another object of the invention is to provide a clamping device which is extremely simple in construction, being composed of a minimum number of parts, each of which is adapted for economical manufacture by mass production method so that the device can be sold at a low price.

A further object is to provide a device, of the character referred to, which, in addition to serving as a means for closing the vent opening of a stuffed fowl, can be employed for retaining roasts of meat in rolled condition and as a means for suspending articles of food within a utensil during a steaming or like cooking operation.

Further objects of the invention will be apparent from the following detailed description and from the drawing, which is intended for the purpose of illustration only, and in which:

Fig. 1 is a front view of my improved clamping device, showing the jaw members in closed relationship;

Fig. 2 is a side view of the device;

Fig. 3 is a view similar to Fig. 1 but showing the jaw members pivoted outwardly;

Fig. 4 is a cross-sectional view, taken on line 4-4 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a cross-sectional view, taken on line 5-5 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 6 is a cross-sectional view, taken on line 6-6 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 7 is a view showing the device applied to use in closing the vent opening of stuffed fowl and for retaining the legs of the fowl in contracted position;

Fig. 8 is a front view of the pivotal end of a clamping device of modified construction; and

Fig. 9 is a composite perspective view of the

pivotal ends of the device shown in Fig. 8, illustrating the method of assembling and disassembling the jaw members.

Referring to Figs. 1 to 7 of the drawing in detail, my improved clamping device comprises a pair of jaw members 10 and 11 which are preferably stamped from sheet metal in suitable dies. One jaw member 10 is made in the form of a strip or bar 10' having a curved hook portion 12 at one end and a right-angular projection or ear 13 at its other end. The projection is provided with an elongated aperture 14 which has a widened portion or re-entrant opening 15 arranged at the end of the aperture which is adjacent the intersection of the bar 10' and the projection 13. Projecting laterally and downwardly from the bar 10', at the same side from which the ear 13 extends, is a series of longitudinally-spaced inclined points or prongs 16. Also projecting from this edge of the bar 10', adjacent the hook portion 12, is a bent latch-hook 17.

The second jaw member 11 is similar to the first jaw member 10, being made in the form of a bar 19 having a plurality of inclined prongs 20 projecting from an edge thereof, the bar 19 being formed with a hook portion 21 at one end. At the end opposite the hook portion 21, the bar 19 carries a pivot pin or stud 22. As shown in Fig. 6, the pin 22 has a reduced portion 23 inserted in a hole in the bar 19 and a slightly larger shank portion 24 which abuts one side of the bar, the end of the reduced portion 23 being headed over against the bar to retain the pin in place. The shank portion 24 is of a diameter which is slightly less than the width of the elongated aperture 14 to adapt it to slide therein when the jaw members 10 and 11 are assembled in the manner to be later explained. The pin 22 also has an enlarged head 25 which has a diameter slightly less than that of the re-entrant opening 15 to adapt it to pass therethrough.

It is to be particularly noted that my improved clamping device, described in detail above, comprises two independent main elements or jaw members 10 and 11. To apply the clamping device to use in closing the vent opening of a fowl, such as that illustrated at 26 in Fig. 7, the two jaw members 10 and 11 are assembled as shown in Figs. 1 and 3. To assemble the jaw members 10 and 11, the head 25 of the pivot pin 22 is passed through the re-entrant opening 15 and the jaw members then relatively moved to cause the shank portion 23 to slide in the aperture 14 to the end of the aperture as shown in Figs. 1 and 3. It is thus seen that the pin 22 is pivotally arranged in the aperture 14 so that the jaw members 10 and 11 can pivot from an open position as shown in Fig. 3 to a closed position as illustrated in Fig. 1.

With the jaw members in the open position, the clamping device is placed against the body of the fowl 26 with the jaw members straddling the vent opening through which the stuffing or dressing was previously inserted into the fowl. To close the vent opening, it is only necessary to press downwardly to cause the prongs 16 and 20 to pierce the flaps of flesh of the fowl at the sides of the vent opening, and then pivot the jaw members toward each other. During this pivotal movement, the pronged jaw members 10 and 11 act to draw the flaps of the fowl together so as to effectively close the vent opening to retain the stuffing within the fowl. As the jaw members 10 and 11 approach their closed relationship, the detent hook 17, which is relatively resilient,

rides along the side of the jaw member 11 and eventually snaps around an edge of its bar 19, as shown in Figs. 1 and 4. By this means, the jaw members 10 and 11 are releasably locked in closed position to guard against accidental opening of the clamping device and vent opening which might permit loss of the stuffing from the fowl. After the vent opening has been closed by the clamping device, the legs of the fowl are brought in under the hook portions 12 and 21 of the respective jaw members 10 and 11 so that they will not interfere with the placing of a cover on the cooking utensil in which the fowl is to be cooked.

Following the cooking of the fowl, the legs of the fowl are released from the hook portions 12 and 21 and the clamping device is then opened by merely pressing the jaw members 10 and 11 closer together and flexing them in opposite directions to disalign the detent hook 17 from the bar 19, after which the jaw members can be relatively pivoted to open position, as illustrated in Fig. 3, to remove the several prongs 16 and 20 from the flesh of the fowl and release the clamping device. After the device has been removed from the fowl, the jaw members 10 and 11 are separated by sliding the pin 22 into alignment with the re-entrant opening 15, to permit withdrawal of the pin therethrough. The separated jaw members 10 and 11 then may be washed individually in any conventional manner and it is to be particularly noted that by this provision each jaw member can be thoroughly cleansed of all oil, flesh, stuffing or the like. In other words, since there exist no permanently interconnected parts, there are no clearance openings, bearings or crevices in which fats, stuffing or other material can lodge and thus the cleaning of the clamping device can be carried out expeditiously and thoroughly with a minimum of effort.

Referring now to Figs. 8 and 9, my invention contemplates the provision of an alternative means for pivotally and separably connecting the jaw members. In this modified version of the device, the jaw members 30 and 31 are similar to the members 10 and 11, previously described, and have respective flesh-engaging prongs 32 and 33. The jaw member 30 has a lateral projection or ear 34 at one end which is provided with a relatively narrow rectangular opening 35 which extends normal to the longitudinal axis of the jaw member. The other jaw member 31 has an offset T-shaped lateral projection 36 at one end which provides a pivot lug 37 having a rectangular head 38 at its end. To assemble the jaw members 30 and 31, the members are placed in the relative positions shown in Fig. 9 so as to dispose the projection 36 below the ear 34 with its rectangular head 38 in alignment with the rectangular opening 35, after which the head is inserted upwardly through the opening to dispose the pivot lug 37 in the opening. The two jaw members 30 and 31 are then relatively pivoted toward closed position, at which time the ends of the head 38 overlie the side of the ear 34 to retain the jaw members in connected relationship. The modified device is operated in the same manner as the device shown in Figs. 1 to 7, the pivot lug 37 serving the same function as the pivot pin 22. Following a roasting or other cooking operation, the jaw members 30 and 31 are opened to a position wherein they extend at right angles to each other so as to align the head 38 with the opening 35 and permit withdrawal of the pivot projection 36. As in the first described embodiment of the invention, cleaning of the

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separate jaw members 30 and 31 is greatly facilitated and contamination thereof is entirely avoided. After the two parts have been cleaned, they may be re-connected and held in closed position by the resilient detent hook so that separation of the parts during storage of the device is prevented.

The operation of my improved clamping device has been herein explained in connection with the cooking of a fowl but it will be obvious that the device can be advantageously employed as a means for holding meat in a rolled condition. I have also found that the device can be applied to use as a means for supporting a cloth bag or the like in a vessel when it is desired to steam the contents of the bag. In this case, the material at the mouth of the bag is impaled on the prongs of the jaw members, which are maintained in open relationship, the device then being placed across the open rim of the vessel to suspend the bag therein.

While I have herein shown the clamping device as embodied in two preferred forms of construction, and applied to use in a preferred manner, by way of example, it will be obvious that various modifications might be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention. Consequently, I do not wish to be limited in this respect, but desire to be afforded the full scope of the appended claims.

I claim as my invention:

1. A flesh clamping device adapted for use in retaining the vent opening of a stuffed fowl closed during cooking of the fowl, comprising: a pair of jaw members each having prongs adapted to pierce the flesh of the fowl, one of said jaw members having an aperture and the other of said jaw members having pivot means releasably disposed in said aperture so as to detachably connect said members for relative pivotal movement to a closed position to draw the flaps of flesh at the edges of the vent opening together, and to an open position to release said flaps; and releasable locking means for retaining said jaw members in closed position, said jaw members having curved holding means at their distal ends adapted to partly encircle the legs of the fowl so as to retain the legs of the fowl in proximity.

2. A flesh clamping device adapted for use in retaining the vent opening of a stuffed fowl closed during cooking of the fowl, comprising: a pair of jaw members each having prongs adapted to pierce the flesh of the fowl, one of said jaw

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members having an aperture and the other of said jaw members having pivot means releasably disposed in said aperture so as to detachably connect said members for relative pivotal movement to a closed position to draw the flaps of flesh at the edges of the vent opening together, and to an open position to release said flaps; and releasable locking means for retaining said jaw members in closed position, said jaw members having integral hooks at their distal ends, said hooks curving laterally in opposite directions with their free ends directed generally toward said pivot means, and said hooks being adapted to partly encircle the legs of the fowl so as to retain the same in proximity.

3. A flesh clamping device adapted for use in retaining the vent opening of a stuffed fowl closed during cooking of the fowl, comprising: a pair of jaw members each having prongs adapted to pierce the flesh of the fowl, one of said jaw members having an aperture and the other of said jaw members having pivot means releasably disposed in said aperture so as to detachably connect said members for relative pivotal movement to a closed position to draw the flaps of flesh at the edges of the vent opening together, and to an open position to release said flaps, said prongs of said jaw members being spaced alternately along and projecting from the adjacent edges of said jaw members in planes substantially normal to the plane of said jaw members, said prongs having inclined, pointed ends, and said prongs crossing when said jaw members are in closed position; and releasable locking means for retaining said jaw members in closed position.

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