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W. R. J. WOOCK

2,649,991

SHIPPING BASKET AND COVER THEREFOR

Filed Sept. 6, 1949

2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1

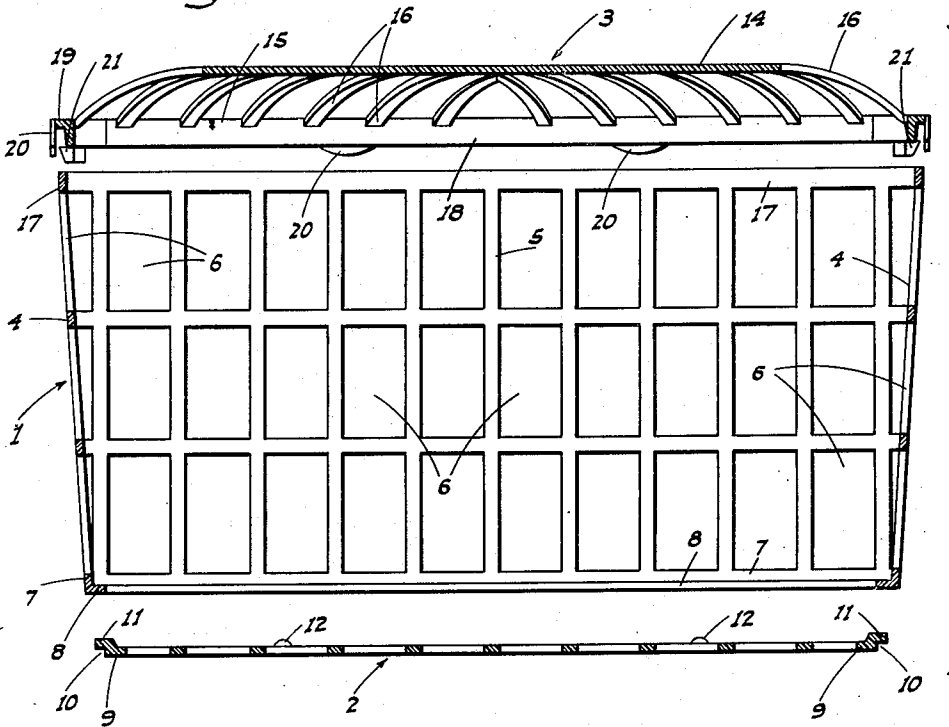


Fig. 2

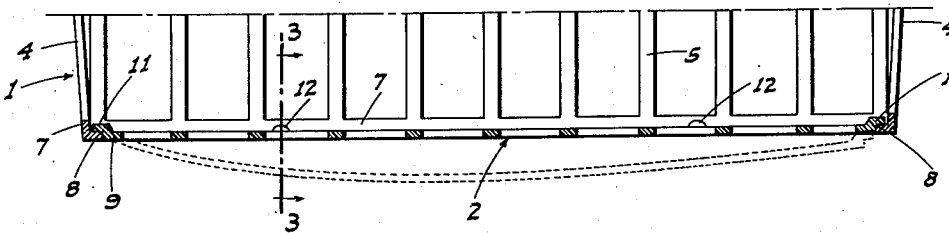
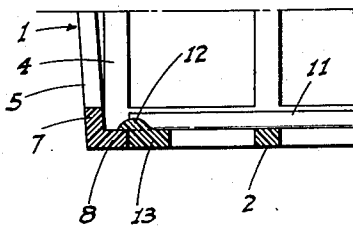


Fig. 3



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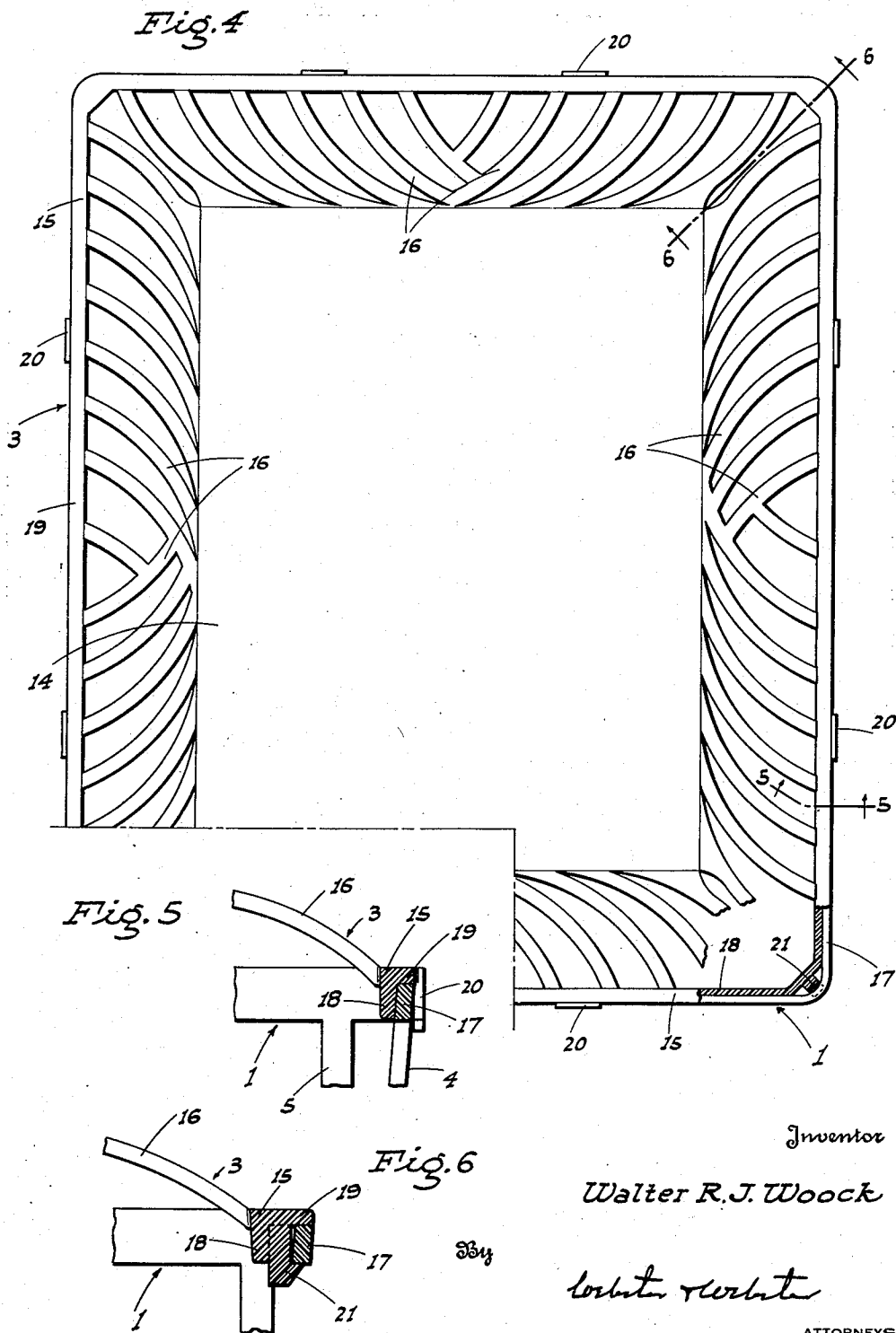
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UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,649,991

SHIPPING BASKET AND COVER THEREFOR

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a limited partnership

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1 Claim. (Cl. 220—60)

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This invention is directed to, and it is an object to provide, a novel shipping basket for produce, especially fresh fruit such as grapes; the basket being designed so that the produce is shipped, displayed, and sold without removal from the basket, whereby such produce remains fresh, clean, wholesome, and untouched from the point of packing to the consumer.

A separate object of the invention is to provide a shipping basket which is light weight but sufficiently stiff or rigid to adequately protect the produce from damage during transit or subsequent handling.

Another object of the invention is to provide a shipping basket which affords adequate air circulation, for cooling, through the produce pack, and also permits such pack to be readily subjected to the action of a gas for preservation.

An additional object of the invention is to provide a shipping basket formed in its entirety from a molded plastic; the basket having a unique configuration, and including initially separate bottom and cover sections.

A further object of the invention is to provide novel snap-engaged means, integral with the basket, for attaching the bottom and cover sections thereto, thus eliminating the need of separate securing elements.

It is also an object of the invention to provide a shipping basket designed for ease and economy of manufacture.

A further object of the invention is to provide a practical and reliable shipping basket for the packing, shipping, and sale of high quality produce, and one which will be exceedingly effective for the purpose for which it is designed.

These objects are accomplished by means of such structure and relative arrangement of parts as will fully appear by a perusal of the following specification and claim.

In the drawings:

Fig. 1 is a transverse section of the shipping basket with the parts in adjacent but separated relation.

Fig. 2 is a fragmentary transverse section showing the manner of attaching the bottom section.

Fig. 3 is an enlarged fragmentary section on line 3—3 of Fig. 2.

Fig. 4 is a plan view of the cover section, partly broken away.

Fig. 5 is an enlarged fragmentary cross section on line 5—5 of Fig. 4.

Fig. 6 is an enlarged fragmentary cross section on line 6—6 of Fig. 4.

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Referring now more particularly to the characters of reference on the drawings, the novel shipping basket comprises—as initially separate parts molded from a light-weight but relatively stiff plastic—an upstanding body 1, a flat bottom section 2, and an arched cover section 3.

The body 1 is an upstanding structure and includes sides 4 and ends 5; said sides and ends being of lattice-like construction whereby the body 1 includes a multiplicity of openings or perforations 6.

The body 1 has a slight downward taper at both the sides and ends; this to facilitate packing of a number of the baskets in a transport crate, and further assures of adequate air circulation or ventilation between the baskets.

At the bottom edge thereof the body 1 is formed with a continuous bottom rim 7 which includes an inwardly projecting flange 8. The flat bottom section 2 is rectangular in plan, being initially separately formed but snap-engaged in the body 1 as follows:

At the sides the bottom section 2 is formed with longitudinal side bars 9 outwardly and downwardly notched, as at 10, to form a longitudinal lip 11. The bottom section 2 is somewhat flexible so that it may be bowed downwardly in the manner shown in dotted lines in Fig. 2, whereby said bottom section may be manually brought into place and then released so that the corresponding flanges 8 engage in the notches 10, with the lips 11 resting on said flanges to retain said bottom section in place. This operation can be easily accomplished in a snap-in manner.

Additional retension for the bottom section 2 is provided by snap nubs 12 formed on transverse end bars 13 of said bottom section 2; the snap nubs 12 being rounded on top and adapted to deflect by, and then rest on top of, the corresponding flanges 8. See Fig. 3.

The bottom section 2 is initially formed separate from the body 1, not only to facilitate manufacture but to permit the basket to be loaded from the bottom, as is desirable for certain types of produce.

The cover section 3 is constructed and attached as follows:

Such cover section 3 is of generally arched configuration, including a central top panel 14 of rectangular configuration, which is substantially smaller than, but symmetrical to, a rectangular border frame 15; the central top panel 14 being connected, in integral relation to the border frame 15, by a plurality of arcuate, diagonal ribs 16. The arched effect of the cover section 3 is

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accomplished by disposing the top panel 14 in a plane above the border frame 15, and by downwardly curving the diagonal ribs 16. By disposing the ribs 16 diagonally and curving them downwardly, substantial strength and resistance against crushing of the cover section is obtained.

The above described arched cover section 3 is snap-engaged on the body 1 of the basket as follows:

The body 1 is formed with a top rim 17, and the border frame 15 of the cover section 3 includes a depending skirt 18 and an outwardly projecting top flange 19. When the cover section 3 is in place on the body 1 the skirt 18 lies inwardly of the top rim 17, with the top flange 19 resting on the latter.

Depending retaining tabs 20 on the border frame 15 of the cover section 3 lie outside the top rim 17 at spaced points around the body 1, whereby to prevent the sides 4 and ends 5 from bulging laterally outwardly.

At each corner thereof the cover section 3 includes a hook 21 which depends from the border frame 15; such hook projecting outwardly, facing upwardly, and snap-engaging beneath the adjacent part of the top rim 17 in the manner shown in Fig. 6. These snap-engaged hooks 21 permit the cover section 3 to be readily and quickly snap-engaged on the body 1, and thereafter prevent accidental escape of said cover section during transit, display, and sale of the produce-loaded basket.

As the bottom section 2 is perforate in the same manner as the sides and ends of the body 1, and as there is substantial spacing between the ribs 16 of the cover section 3, the basket is well ventilated so that air may freely circulate through the produce. This is an advantage during pre-cooling of the produce in the basket, as well as during transit. Additionally, the arrangement assures that when gassing operations are conducted for produce preservation, the gas effectively gains access into the produce in the basket.

The described basket is primarily adapted for the packing, shipping, and sale of high quality produce; the produce in the basket being maintained fresh, protected against damage, and untouched between the time that it is packed and sold to the consumer.

The shipping basket is designed so that it may be readily and economically molded of plastic, which plastic may be of a suitable color, although if desired, the top panel 14, together with the other parts, may be clear and transparent to permit of full vision of the produce.

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From the foregoing description it will be readily seen that there has been produced such a device as substantially fulfills the objects of the invention, as set forth herein.

While this specification sets forth in detail the present and preferred construction of the device, still in practice such deviations therefrom may be resorted to as do not form a departure from the spirit of the invention, as defined by the appended claim.

Having thus described the invention, the following is claimed as new and useful, and upon which Letters Patent are desired:

A produce shipping basket comprising a substantially rectangular body including upstanding sides having a connecting top rim, and a cover having a border frame which includes a depending skirt to lie inwardly of the rim to locate the cover against horizontal displacement, said skirt being inwardly offset at the corners thereof forming short diagonal portions, and a top flange to rest on said top rim and from end to end thereof; and outwardly facing hooks depending from the top flange at the corners thereof and extending between said diagonal portions and the corner portions of the top rim to engage under the latter.

WALTER R. J. WOOCK.

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