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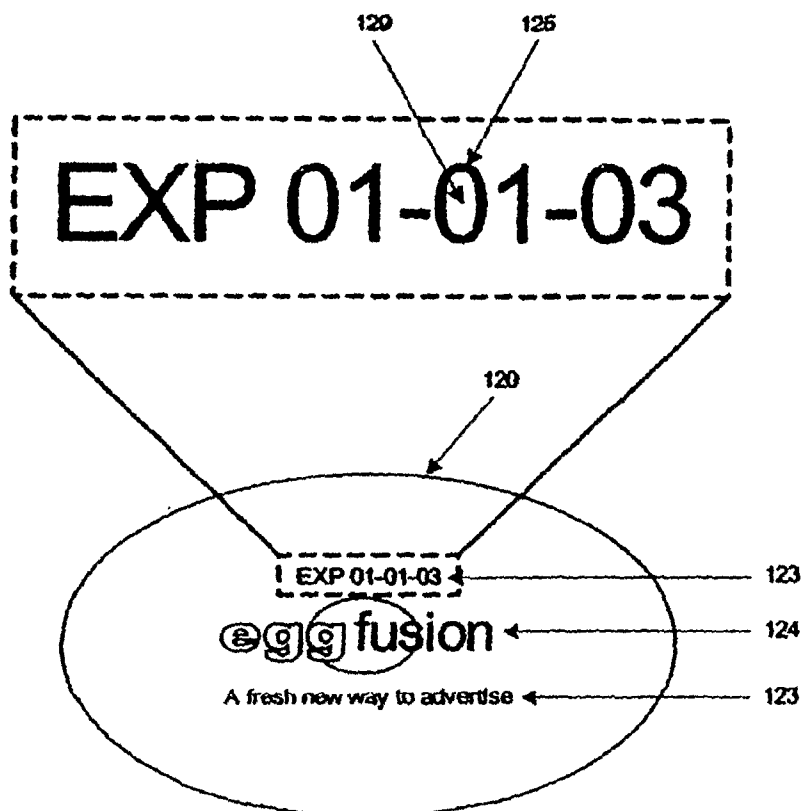
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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MARKING AN EGG WITH AN ADVERTISEMENT, A FRESHNESS DATE AND A TRACEABILITY CODE



(57) Abstract: A method of marking an egg is disclosed and comprises applying radiant energy to the shell of an egg so as to cause discoloration of the eggshell, thereby forming a marking comprising at least a traceability code and a freshness date. Apparatus is also disclosed for applying markings on eggs being processed by an egg-handling machine that is designed and configured to transport a plurality of eggs therethrough, wherein the apparatus comprises a radiant energy source located in proximity to the egg-handling machine, the radiant energy source being configured to apply radiant energy to the eggs as the eggs are transported past the radiant energy source to selectively discolor the shell of the eggs and form markings on the shell, including a freshness date and a traceability code.

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C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	JP 2000-168157 A (MITSUO) 20 June 2000 (20.06.2000), see entire document.	1-20
Y	DE 10109109 A1 (BAUMEISTER) 18 October 2001 (18.10.2001), see entire document.	1-20
Y	DE 4322252 A1(GARTZEN ET AL) 19 January 1995 (19.01.1995), see entire document.	1-20
Y	JP2001-136859A (IWASA AKIO) 22 May 2001 (22.05.2001), see entire document.	1-20
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Name and mailing address of the ISA/US Mail Stop PCT, Attn: ISA/US Commissioner for Patents P.O. Box 1450 Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450 Facsimile No. (571) 273-3201		Authorized officer Steven Weinstein Telephone No. 571-272-1700 DEBORAH A. THOMAS PARALEGAL SPECIALIST