

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
25 October 2007 (25.10.2007)

PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 2007/118475 A2

- (51) International Patent Classification:
B65D 51/28 (2006.01) B65D 67/02 (2006.01)
B65D 51/24 (2006.01)
- (21) International Application Number:
PCT/DK2007/000181
- (22) International Filing Date: 13 April 2007 (13.04.2007)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
11/405,374 17 April 2006 (17.04.2006) US
- (71) Applicant and
(72) Inventor: NIELSEN, Charlotte [DK/DK]; c/o Jytte og Erling Nielsen, DK-7080 Børkop (DK).
- (74) Agent: LAURITSEN, Kim; Lange MÜLLER Grade 25, 2.th, DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø (DK).
- (81) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of national protection available): AE, AG, AL, AM,

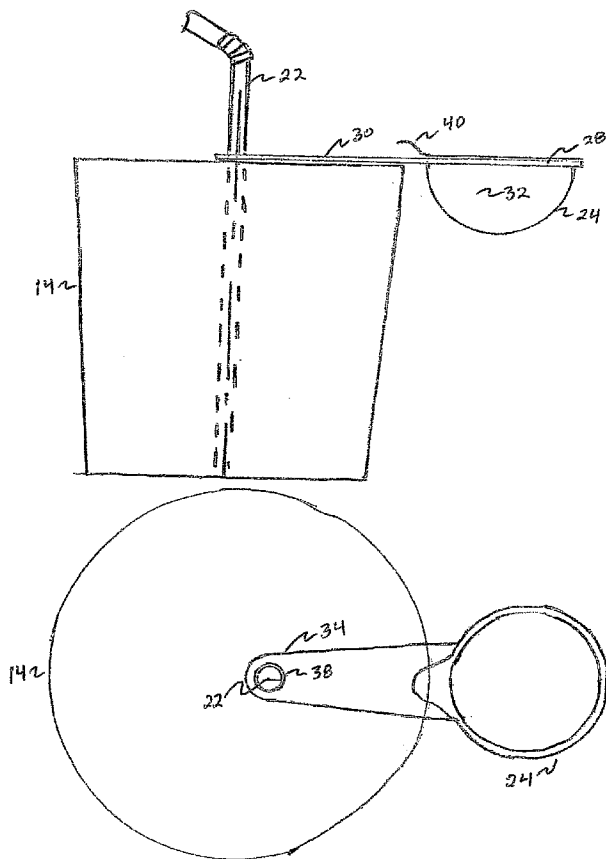
AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BH, BR, BW, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, EG, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, GT, HN, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KM, KN, KP, KR, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LY, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PG, PH, PL, PT, RO, RS, RU, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, SV, SY, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

(84) Designated States (unless otherwise indicated, for every kind of regional protection available): ARIPO (BW, GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, NA, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European (AT, BE, BG, CH, CY, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HU, IE, IS, IT, LT, LU, LV, MC, MT, NL, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK, TR), OAPI (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).

Published:
— without international search report and to be republished upon receipt of that report

For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

(54) Title: ATTACHABLE CONDIMENT CUP ASSEMBLY



(57) Abstract: A condiment cup assembly and methods for attachment to a beverage container is provided. The assembly includes a beverage container cover having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned, a drinking straw inserted through the perforation, a condiment container including a vertical sidewall defining a top opening for accessing a storage space of the condiment container, and an integral attachment arm connected to the vertical sidewall, the integral attachment arm including a coupling portion. The condiment container is attached to the beverage container cover via the coupling portion.

WO 2007/118475 A2

Attachable Condiment Cup Assembly

Background of the invention

5 Field of the invention

The present inventions relates to food and condiment containers in the field of fast-food packaging and containers, and more particularly to a disposable condiment container intended for use with a conventional beverage container cover.

10

Brief Description of the Related Art.

Currently in today's fast paced society, food is consumed on the go. Fast food restaurants profit through their ability to create food for the public that is both filling and can be prepared and
15 consumed at an accelerated pace. The majority of such eating establishments offer drive through services where the consumer can order, pay for and then consume their food while never leaving their vehicle. This creates a problem for the consumer by having to both eat and drink while driving.

20 Most fast food meals typically contain a main dish, such as a burger or sandwich, a secondary dish, such as french fries or onion rings, and a beverage. Consumers are confronted with the problem of organizing their meal in such a way that they can eat and also drive safely. Most of the time, the secondary meal is accompanied with a condiment. The condiments range from ketchup to ranch style dressing and are intended for use with the fries or onion rings. As such, the organizational
25 problem of the consumer is increased when the consumer desires to dip their fries or onion rings into the condiment.

A solution to this problem is to provide a condiment container that has the ability to attach itself to an already present container such as the box of fries or beverage container. Prior art containers have
30 been designed to achieve this solution but their design and functionality do not accomplish a satisfactory result. The fast food market is still void of any condiment container that is easy to use and convenient for the consumer.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,394,297 to Nance describes the idea of attaching a secondary condiment container with a prong to an associated food container such as a French fries box. This design does not solve the problem of allowing the consumer to drive safely while dipping their food in the condiment container. In a vehicle, there are typically storage compartments to place beverages while driving.

5 However, there are no convenient areas to place in a fixed upright position the French fries box. As such, the consumer still does not have the ability to conveniently use the condiment with the meal.

U.S. Pat. No. 6,427,864 to Asselin discloses a condiment container that surrounds the drinking straw of the beverage container. While this does allow for the consumer to have the condiment fixed to a container which is situated in a cup holder of the vehicle, such condiment container is not optimal. The container requires that the consumer dip around the straw, thereby having the straw as an obstacle in the dipping process. Further, the surface area is minimal and the amount of condiment which can be successfully used is hindered.

15 The presently claimed invention has many advantages over the prior art. This invention provides for a disposable condiment container intended for use with a conventional beverage container cover. The condiment container is unobstructed and has an ease of use, as it is attached to the cover via an integral arm. This allows for the condiment container to be positioned on the side of the beverages container rather than obstructed by the straw on the top of the beverage container or on the side of a fries container which does not sit in the vehicle cup holder.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

25 Accordingly, in a first aspect of the present invention a condiment container is provided. The condiment container including a vertical sidewall defining a top opening for accessing a storage space of the condiment container and an integral attachment are connected to the vertical sidewall, the integral attachment arm including a coupling portion, wherein the coupling portion is capable of attaching the condiment container to a beverage container or a beverage container cover.

30 In another aspect of the present invention a condiment cup assembly for attachment to a beverage container is provided, Said condiment cup assembly comprising: (i) a beverage container cover

having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned for the insertion of a drinking straw, and
(ii) a condiment container as described in the present invention.

In a further aspect of the present invention a beverage container assembly is provided. Said
5 beverage container assembly comprising: (i) a beverage container, (ii) a condiment cup assembly as
described in the present invention, and optionally a drinking straw.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

- 10 The invention of the present application will now be described in more detail with reference to
preferred embodiments of the apparatus and method, given only by way of example, and with
reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:
- Fig. 1 illustrates a perspective side view of a condiment cup assembly for attachment to a
conventional beverage container;
- 15 Fig. 2 illustrates a perspective top view of multiple condiment containers in combination with a
conventional beverage container;
- Fig. 3 illustrates a perspective side view of another embodiment of the present invention including
a condiment container coupled to a conventional beverage container by means of an integral
attachment arm and a drinking straw;
- 20 Fig. 4 illustrates a perspective top view of another embodiment of the present invention including a
condiment container coupled to a conventional beverage container by means of an integral
attachment arm and a drinking straw;
- Fig. 5 illustrates a perspective side view of a curved concave shaped condiment container in
combination with a conventional beverage container;
- 25 Fig. 6 illustrates a perspective top view of a curved concave shaped condiment container in
combination with a conventional beverage container;
- Fig. 7 illustrates a perspective side view of a cone shaped condiment container in combination with
a conventional beverage container;
- Fig. 8 illustrates a flowchart useful in describing an exemplary method of the present invention; and
- 30 Fig. 9 illustrates a flowchart useful in describing another exemplary method of the present
invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION AND DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

According to a first exemplary embodiment, a condiment cup assembly for attachment to a beverage container may be provided. The assembly includes a beverage container cover having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned, a drinking straw may be inserted through the
5 perforation, a condiment container including a vertical sidewall defining a top opening for accessing a storage space of the condiment container, and an integral attachment arm connected to the vertical sidewall. The integral attachment arm includes a coupling portion. The condiment container may be attached to the beverage container cover via the coupling portion of the attachment arm.

10

Preferably, the coupling portion may be attached to an outer edge of the beverage container cover. In an embodiment of the present invention the beverage container cover includes a groove and the coupling portion includes a downwardly extending portion. This downwardly extending portion of the coupling portion may be coupled with the groove of the beverage container cover. This causes
15 the condiment container to be attached to the beverage container cover and preferably positioning the condiment container on the side of the beverage container.

15

The perforation provided may not be in contact with the condiment container.

20

In a further embodiment of the present invention the coupling portion may be formed as a spear having a pike capable of penetrating the beverage container or the beverage container cover. This causes the condiment container to be attached to the beverage container cover and preferably
positioning the condiment container on the side of the beverage container.

25

In yet an embodiment of the present invention the coupling portion may include a coupling hole centrally positioned. Preferably, the condiment container may be attached to the beverage container cover via the drinking straw and the coupling hole, said coupling hole may be centrally positioned. This causes the condiment container to be attached to the beverage container cover and preferably
positioning the condiment container on the side of the beverage container.

30

In an embodiment of the present invention the condiment container further includes a prepackaged condiment located in the storage space. Preferably, the condiment container include a sealing lid removable attached to the top opening.

- 5 The shape of the condiment container may be a conical geometry or concave geometry aligned with the beverage container

10 In another exemplary embodiment, a method of attaching a condiment cup assembly to a beverage container having a top opening is provided. The method includes the steps of placing a cover on the beverage container, the cover having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned, inserting a drinking straw through the perforation centrally positioned, providing a condiment container including an integral attachment arm having a coupling portion, and attaching the condiment cup assembly to the beverage container solely through the integral attachment arm and the drinking straw.

15 In yet another exemplary embodiment is disclosed a method of attaching a condiment cup assembly to a beverage container. The method includes the steps of placing a cover on the beverage container, the cover having an outer edge and a groove, providing a condiment container including an integral attachment arm having a coupling portion, inserting the coupling portion into the groove, and
20 attaching the condiment cup assembly to the beverage container solely through the integral attachment arm and the groove.

25 An advantage of the present invention is to provide the user the ability to use a condiment container in conjunction with a vehicle cup holder. The condiment container is unobstructed since it is not positioned through a drinking straw. It is attached to the cover via an integral arm which allows for the condiment container to be positioned on the side of the beverage container, so that the condiment container is fully utilized. Positioning on the side of the beverage container allows the user to utilize the already present vehicle cup holder rather than being positioned on the associated food container which does not have a permanent storage placement within the vehicle.

30 Another advantage of the present invention is to allow for more than one condiment container to be attached to the beverage container.

Another advantage of the present invention is to allow for the condiment to be prepackaged in the container so that the consumer does not have to add the condiment to the container but rather only remove the disposable sealing lid. Fast food companies and condiment manufactures can then prepackage the condiment allowing for an ease of use to the consumer.

5

Still other objects, features, and attendant advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from a reading of the following detailed description of embodiments constructed in accordance therewith, taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

10 Referring to the drawing figures, like reference numerals designate identical or corresponding elements throughout the several figures.

The invention provided is a condiment cup assembly for attachment to a beverage container. Fig. 1 illustrates a perspective side view of a condiment cup assembly 10 for attachment to a conventional beverage container 14. By way of example and not by limitation, the assembly 10 may include a beverage container cover 16, a drinking straw 22, a condiment container 24 and a integral attachment arm 30. The beverage container cover 16 includes an outer edge 18 and a perforation 20 centrally positioned. The drinking straw 22 may be inserted through the perforation 20. The condiment container 24 includes a vertical sidewall 26 which defines a top opening 28 for accessing a storage space 32 of the condiment container 24. The integral attachment arm 30 is connected to the vertical sidewall 26 and includes a coupling portion 34 located opposite of the vertical sidewall 26. The condiment container 24 is attached to the beverage container cover 16 via the coupling portion.

25 In an exemplary embodiment, the coupling portion 34 is attached to the outer edge 18. By way of example and not limitation, the outer edge 18 of the beverage container cover 16 may include a groove 19. The coupling portion 34 of the integral attachment arm 30 includes a downwardly extending portion 36. The downwardly extending portion 36 is coupled with the groove 19 creating an attachment of the condiment container 24 to the beverage container cover 16 through frictional connection.

30 Fig. 2 illustrates a perspective top view of multiple condiment containers 24 in combination with a conventional beverage container 14. The condiment containers 24 are attached to the beverage container cover 16 by inserting the downwardly extending portion 35 of the integral attachment arm

30 coupling portion 34 into the groove 19 of the beverage container cover 16. The downwardly extending portion 36 is best viewed in fig. 1.

Fig. 3 illustrates a perspective side view of another embodiment of the present invention including a condiment container 24 coupled to a conventional beverage container 14 by means of an integral attachment arm 30 and a drinking straw 22. Fig. 4 illustrates a perspective top view of the embodiment. The coupling portion 34 includes a coupling hole 38 centrally positioned. The condiment container 24 is attached to the beverage container 14 by means of the drinking straw 22 placed through the coupling hole 38.

In another embodiment of the present invention, the condiment container 24 further includes a sealing lid 40 removably attached to the top opening 28. The condiment container may then be prepackaged with a condiment located in the storage space 32. By way of example and not limitation, the prepackaged condiment may be ketchup, mayonnaise, mustard, ranch dressing, salsa or other types of condiments commonly found in the fast food industry.

Fig. 5 illustrates a perspective side view of the condiment container 24 that is a curved concave shape. Fig. 6 illustrates a perspective top view of the curved concave shaped condiment container 24 in combination with a conventional beverage container 14.

Fig. 7 illustrates a perspective side view of the condiment container 24 that is cone shaped.

Now referring to Fig. 8 which illustrates a flowchart useful in describing an exemplary method of the present invention. Provided is a method 200 for attaching a condiment cup assembly 10 to a beverage container 14. The method 200 begins with placing a cover 16 on the beverage container 14, the cover having an outer edge 18 and a perforation 20 centrally positioned, as indicated in step 210. Next is inserting a drinking straw 22 through the perforation 20, as indicated in step 220. Then providing a condiment container 24 including an integral attachment arm 30 having a coupling portion 34, as indicated in step 230. Next is attaching the condiment cup assembly 10 to the beverage container 14 solely by means of the integral attachment arm 30 and the drinking straw 22, as indicated in step 240.

Now referring to fig. 9 which illustrates a flowchart useful in describing another exemplary method of the present invention. Provided is a method 300 for attaching a condiment cup assembly 10 to a beverage container 14. The method 300 begins with placing a cover 16 on the beverage container,

as indicated in step 310. The cover 16 includes an outer edge 18 and a groove 19. Next is providing a condiment container 24 including an integral attachment arm 30 having a coupling portion 34, as indicated in step 320. Then inserting the coupling portion 34 into the groove 19, as indicated in step 330. Finally attaching the condiment cup assembly 10 to the beverage container 16 solely through
5 the integral attachment arm 30 and the groove 19, as indicated in step 340.

While the invention has been described in detail with reference to preferred embodiments thereof, it will be apparent to one skilled in the art that various changes can be made, and equivalents employed, without departing from the scope of the invention.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

CLAIMS

- 5 1. A condiment container including a vertical sidewall defining a top opening for accessing a storage space of the condiment container and an integral attachment are connected to the vertical sidewall, the integral attachment arm including a coupling portion, wherein the coupling portion is capable of attaching the condiment container to a beverage container or a beverage container cover.
- 10 2. A condiment container according to claim 1, wherein the coupling portion is attached to an outer edge of the beverage container cover.
3. A condiment container according to claim 2, wherein the outer edge of the beverage container cover includes a groove and the coupling portion includes a downwardly extending portion.
- 15 4. A condiment container according to claim 3, wherein the downwardly extending portion of the coupling portion is coupled with the groove of the beverage container cover.
- 20 5. A condiment container according to claims 1-4, wherein the coupling portion is formed as a spear having a pike capable of penetrating the beverage container or the beverage container cover.
6. A condiment container according to claims 1-5, wherein the coupling portion includes a coupling hole centrally positioned.
- 25 7. The condiment container according to claims 1-6, wherein the condiment container further includes a sealing lid removably attached to the top opening.
8. The condiment container according to claims 1-7, wherein the condiment container further includes a prepackaged condiment located in the storage space.
- 30 9. The condiment container according to claim 1-8, wherein the condiment container has a conical geometry.

10. The condiment container according to claim 1-9, wherein the condiment container has a concave geometry aligned with the beverage container

11. A condiment cup assembly for attachment to a beverage container comprising:

5

(i) a beverage container cover having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned for the insertion of a drinking straw, and

(ii) a condiment container as described in any one of claims 1-10.

10

12. A condiment cup assembly according to claim 11, wherein the perforation is not in contact with the condiment container.

15

13. The assembly according to claims 11 or 12, wherein the condiment container is attached to the beverage container cover via the drinking straw and the coupling hole.

14. A beverage container assembly comprising:

20

(i) a beverage container, and

(ii) a condiment container as described in any one of claims 1-10,

(iii) and optionally a drinking straw.

25

15. A beverage container assembly according to claim 14, wherein the beverage container assembly comprises a condiment cup assembly as described in any one of claims 11-13.

30

16. A method of attaching a condiment cup assembly to a beverage container comprising the steps of: Placing a cover on the beverage container, the cover having an outer edge and a perforation centrally positioned; inserting a drinking straw through the perforation centrally positioned ; providing a condiment container including an integral attachment arm having a coupling portion;

and attaching the condiment cup assembly to the beverage container solely through the integral attachment arm and the drinking straw.

- 5 17. A method of attaching a condiment cup assembly to a beverage container comprising the steps of: Placing a cover on the beverage container, the cover having an outer edge and a groove; Providing a condiment container including an integral attachment arm having a coupling portion; inserting the coupling portion into the groove; and attaching the condiment cup assembly to the beverage container solely through the integral attachment arm and the groove.

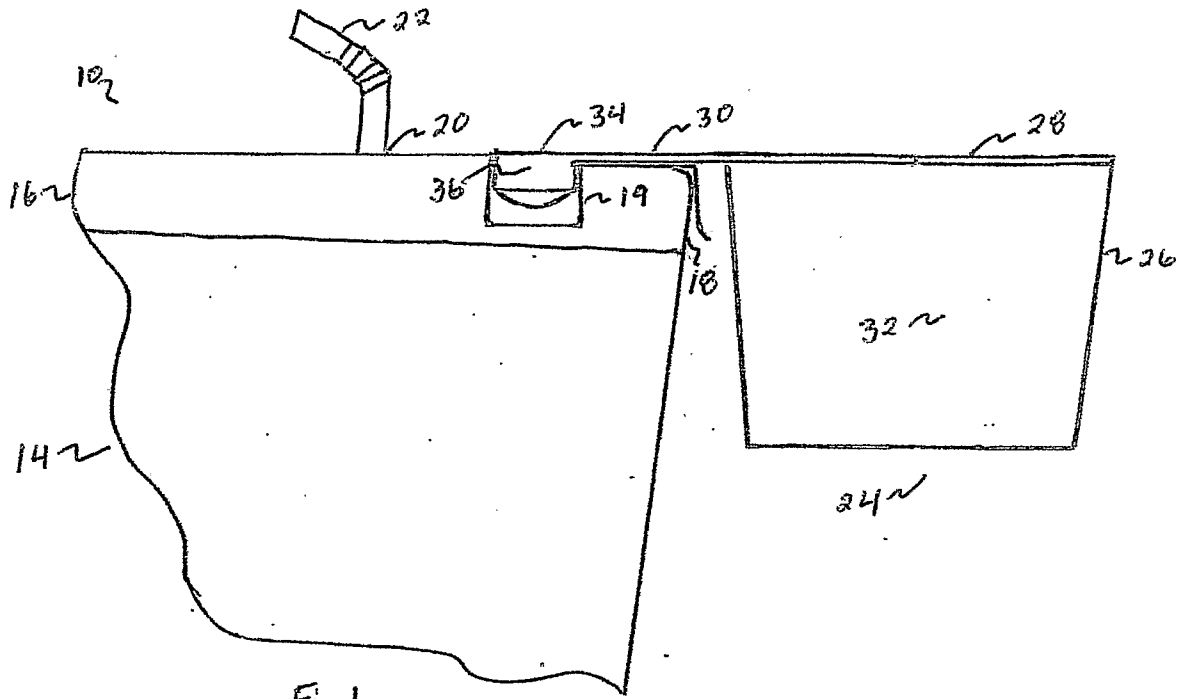


Fig. 1

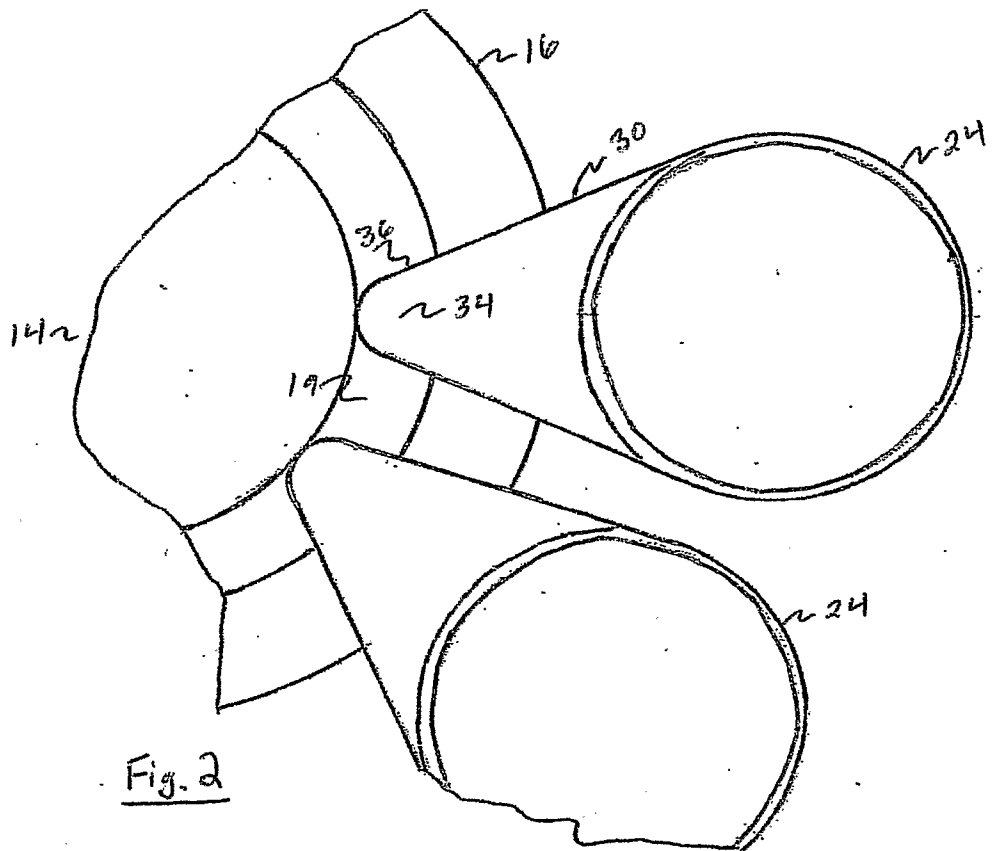


Fig. 2

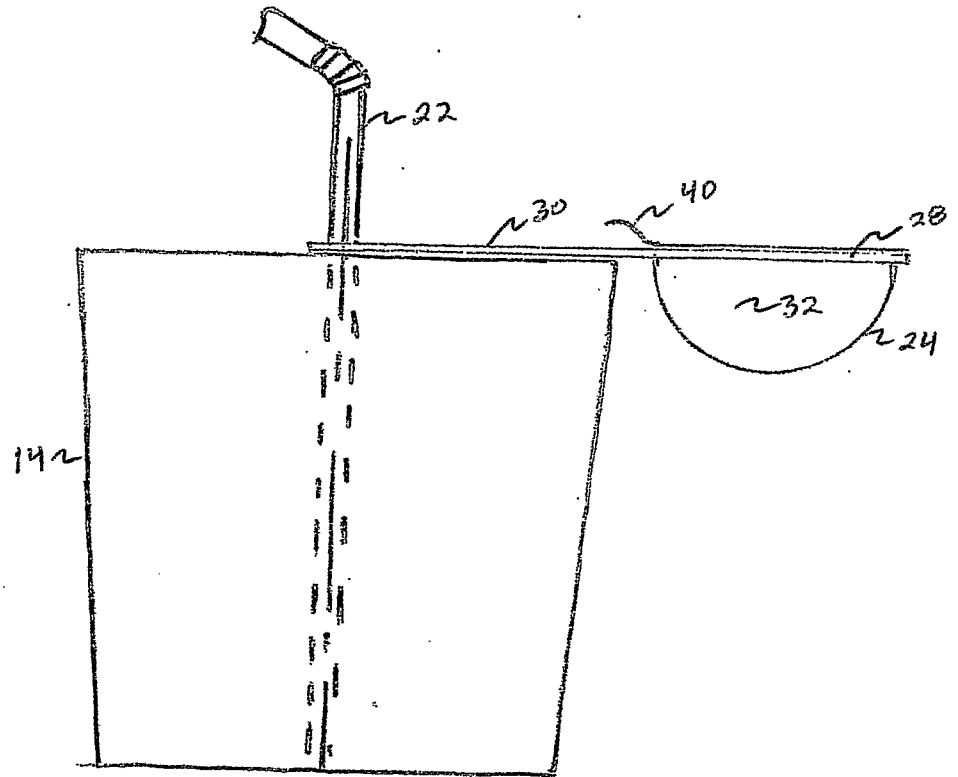


Fig. 3

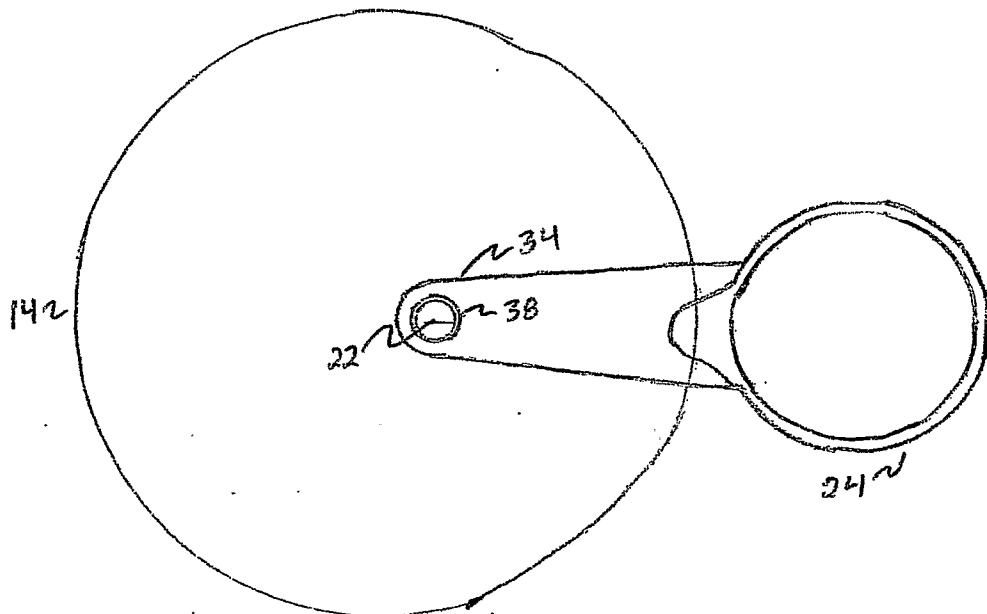


Fig. 4

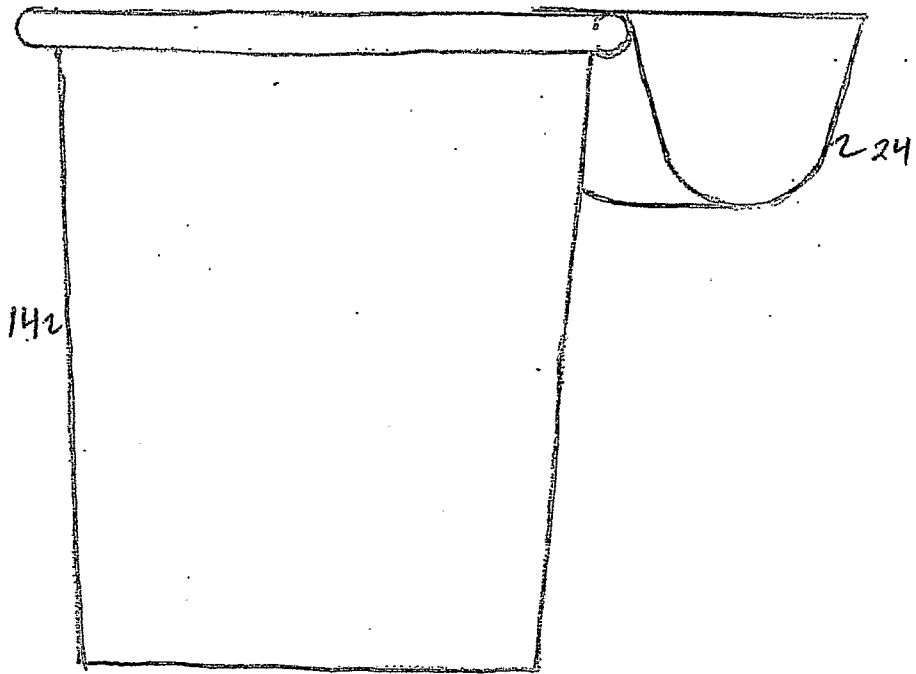


Fig. 5

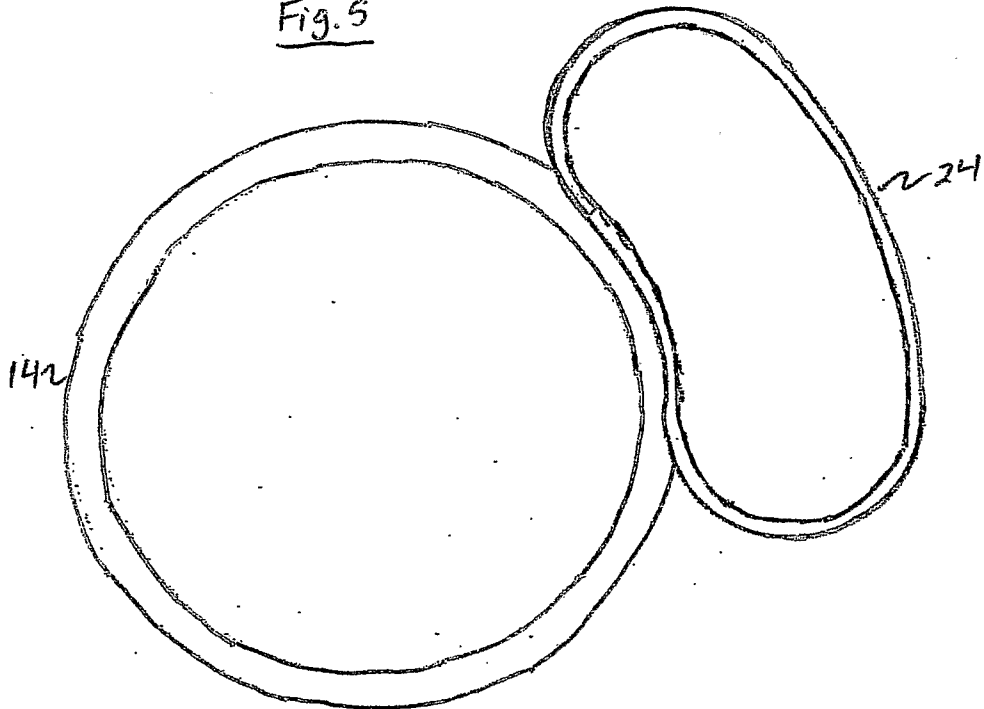


Fig. 6

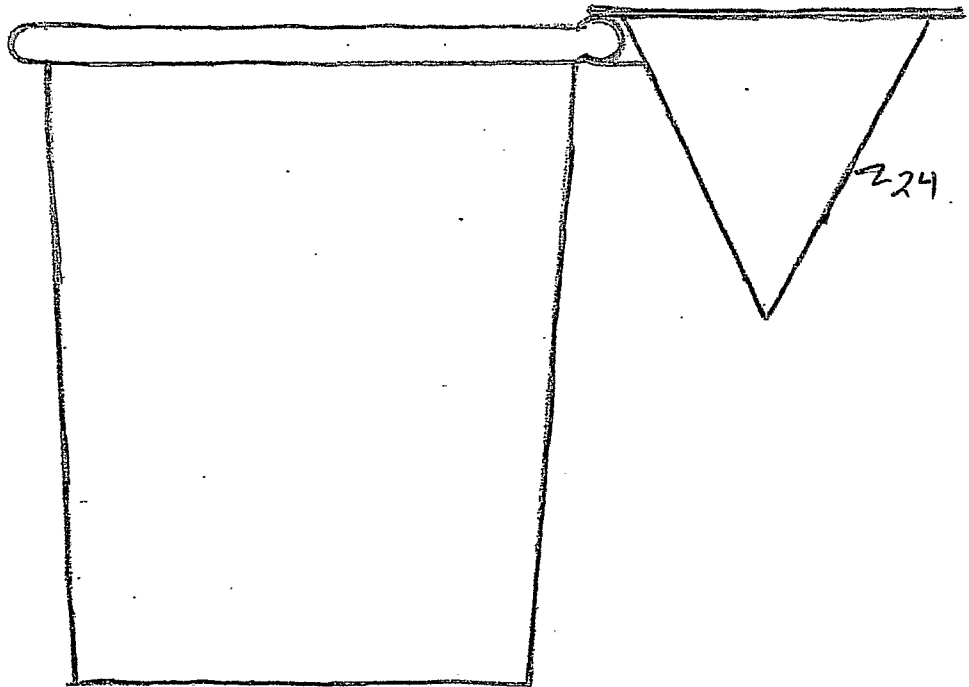


Fig. 7

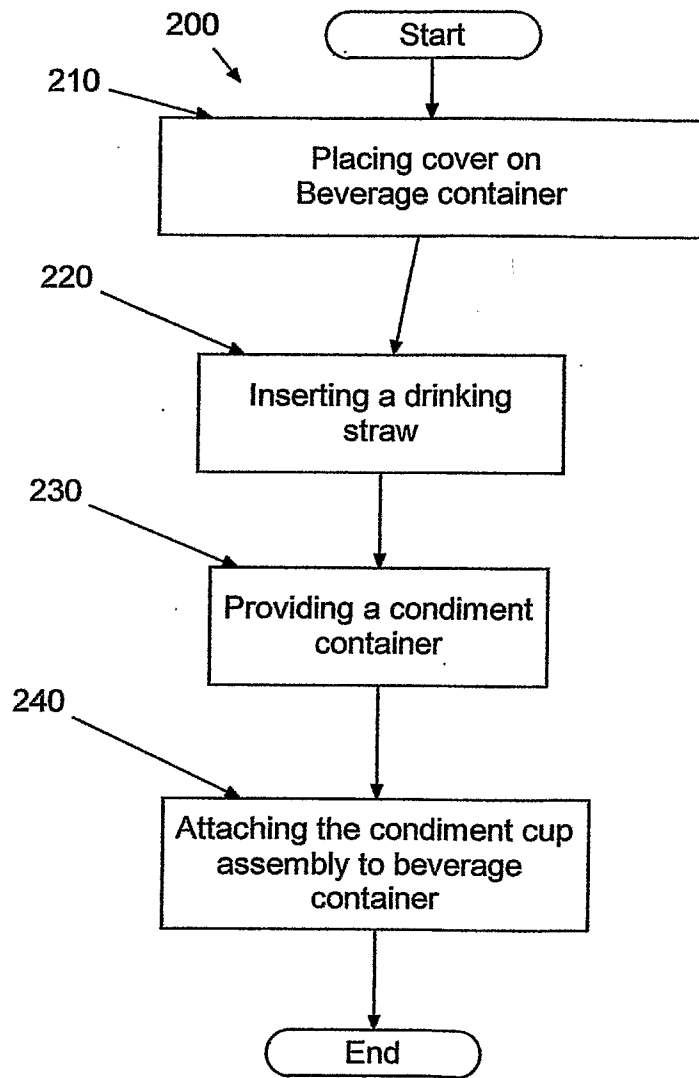


Fig. 8

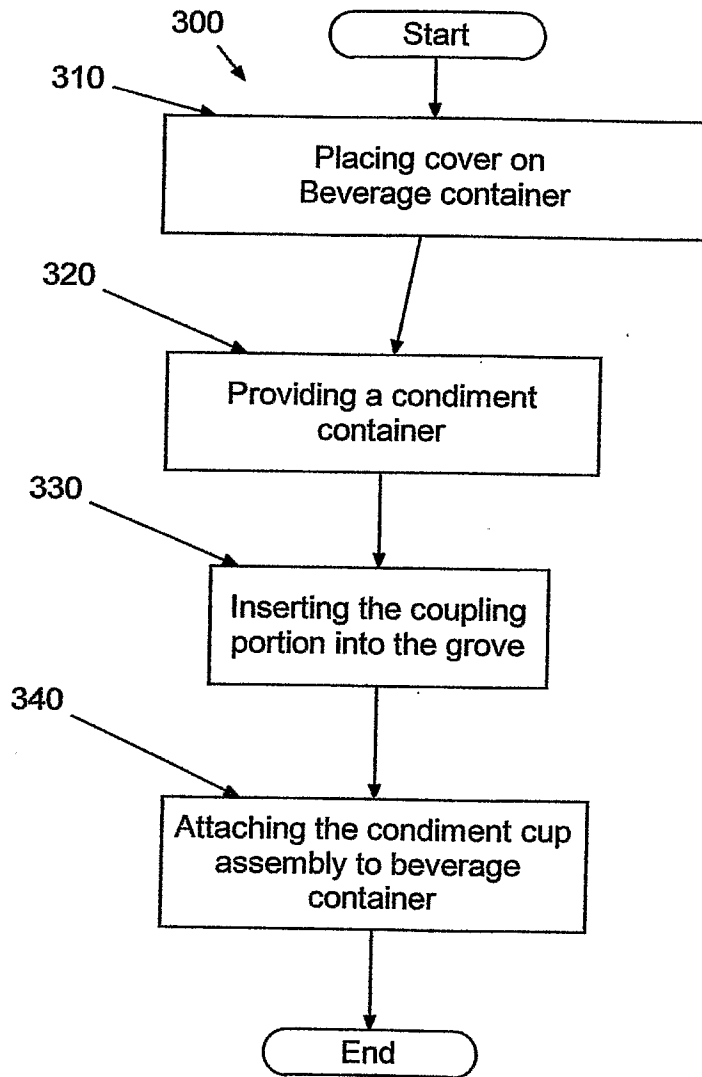


Fig. 9