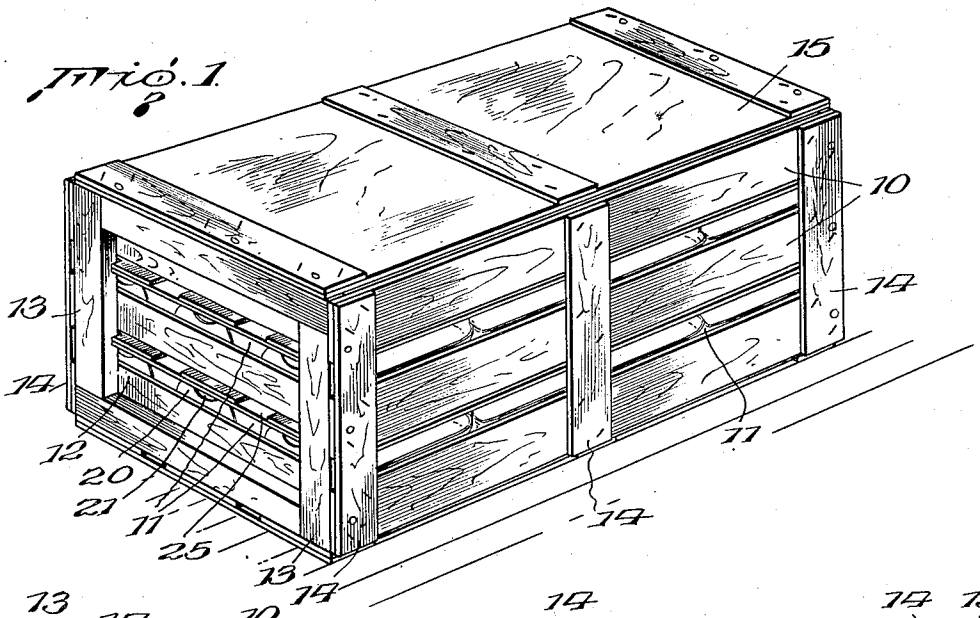
Nov. 13, 1934. J. C. MILLER 1,980,283

SHIPPING CONTAINER

Filed April 9, 1934 2 Sheets-Sheet 1

Fig. 1.



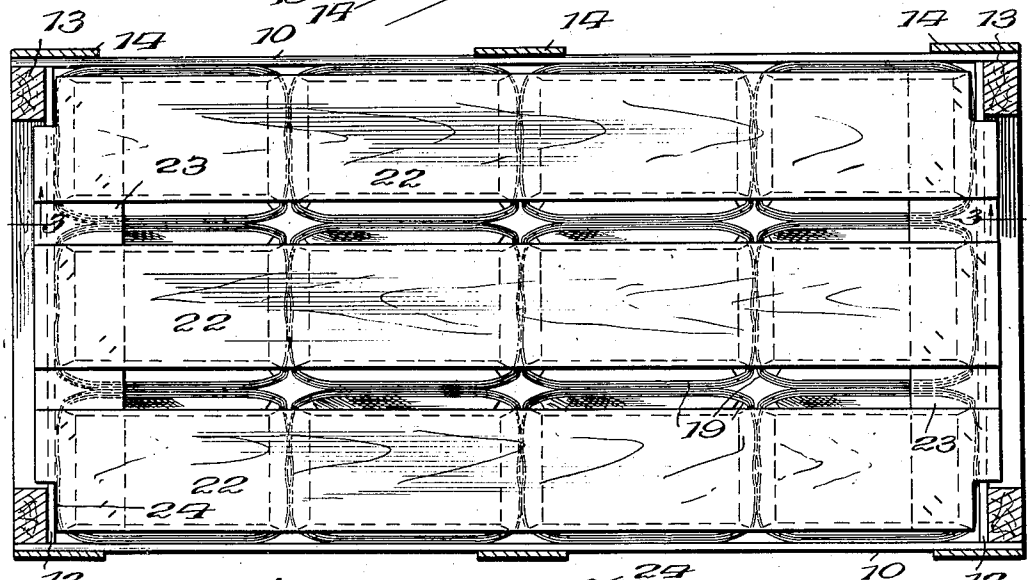




Fig. 2.

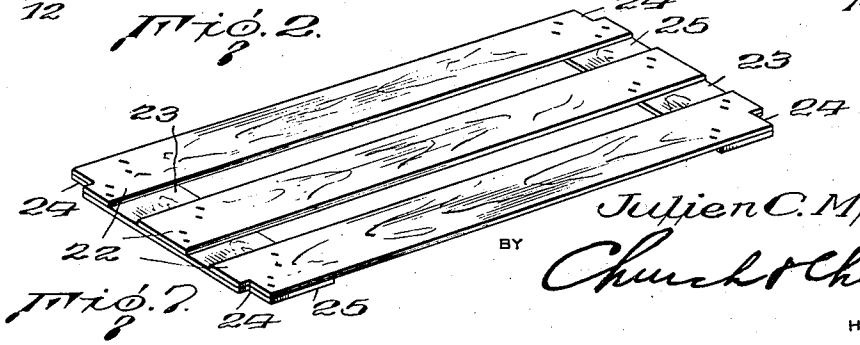



Fig. 3.

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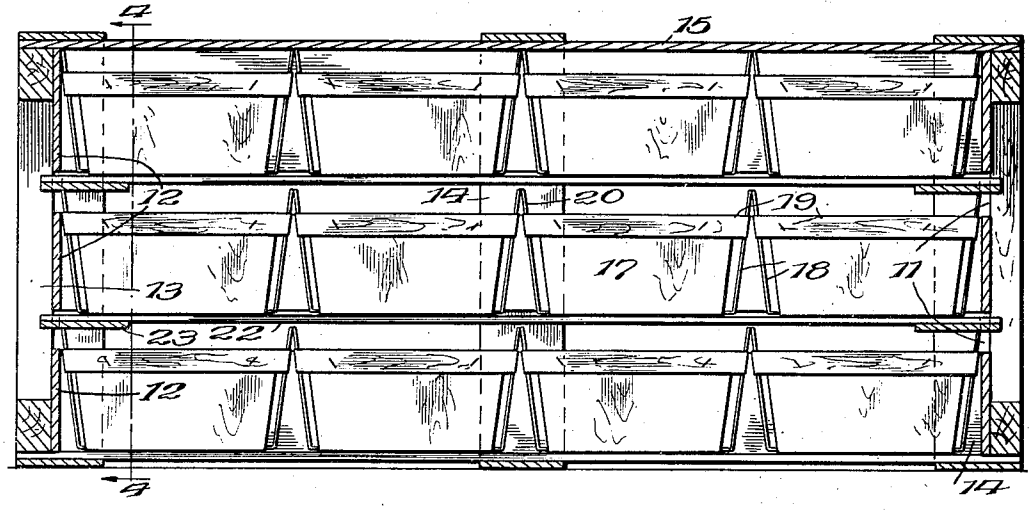
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Nov. 13, 1934. J. C. MILLER 1,980,283

SHIPPING CONTAINER

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Fig. 3.



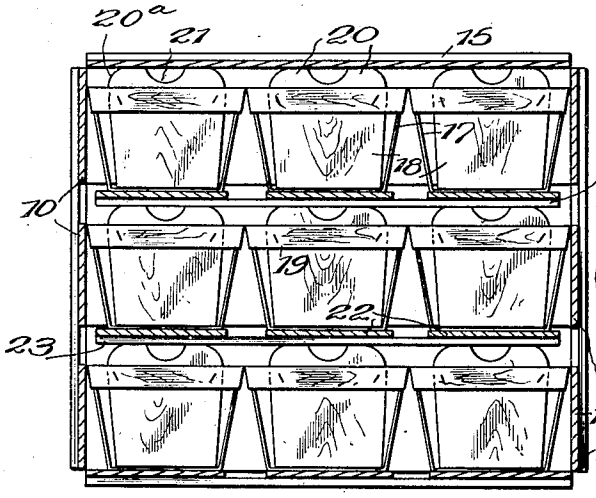
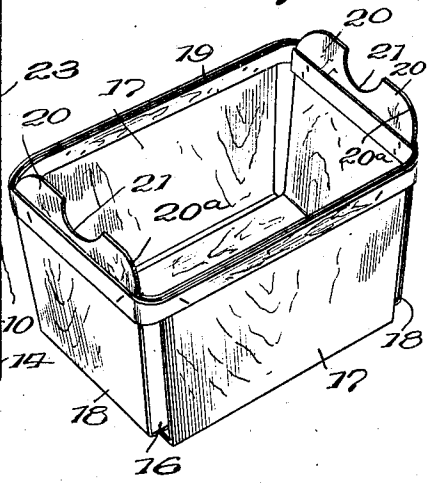




Fig. 4.

Fig. 5.



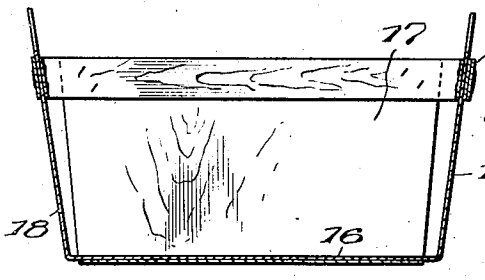




Fig. 6.

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# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

1,980,283

## SHIPPING CONTAINER

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Application April 9, 1934, Serial No. 719,764

4 Claims. (Cl. 217—40)

This invention relates to improvements in containers, such as shipping crates, and particularly a crate used for shipping a plurality of fruit receptacles or berry baskets. Primarily, the object of the invention is to provide a shipping crate, especially a crate used for shipping strawberries and like fruit, wherein all likelihood of the berries being damaged by being cut or bruised is eliminated.

Heretofore, it has been common practice in crates for strawberries and the like to place individual receptacles, usually quart baskets, in the crate, layer upon layer, with each layer spaced from the adjacent layer or layers by partition or divider members, and in a great many instances these partitions or dividers have been provided with transverse ribs adapted to rest upon the rims of juxtaposed baskets, so as to space the divider from the fruit in the baskets. In crates such as these, the transverse ribs cannot be maintained in position on the rims of the baskets, but, due to a slight movement of the dividers, these ribs impinge upon and bruise or cut the berries. In accomplishing the principal object of the invention, i. e., protecting the fruit, the present crate is provided with dividers or partition members that are supported on the baskets themselves in such fashion as to prevent damage to the fruit, regardless of any movement of the dividers in a horizontal plane. More, specifically, the invention contemplates berry baskets having projections at opposite sides or ends thereof extending above the rim at the top of the baskets and divider members of such length or breadth as to extend beyond the extremities of the layers of baskets in a crate, so as to be firmly supported on the basket projections, the height of the projections above the basket rims being such as to afford the desired protection to the fruit in the baskets.

Furthermore, to insure against slippage of any edge of the divider off of the basket projections by which it is supported, the corners of the dividers are recessed to accommodate the structural parts or corner standards of the crate proper, so that the dividers can project through openings in two opposite vertical walls of the crate, with the result that there is an ample overhang, so to speak, of the divider beyond opposite extremities of a layer of baskets, whereby it will be impossible for the dividers to slip off the basket projections and be depressed against fruit in the baskets.

With these and other objects in view, the invention consists in certain details of construction and combinations and arrangements of parts, all as will hereinafter be more fully described and the novel features thereof particularly pointed out in the appended claims.

In the accompanying drawings,—

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a crate constructed in accordance with the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a horizontal sectional view through the crate in a plane just above one of the dividers;

Fig. 3 is a longitudinal sectional view on the line 3—3 of Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a transverse sectional view on the line 4—4 of Fig. 3;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of one of the baskets;

Fig. 6 is a longitudinal sectional view of the basket; and

Fig. 7 is a perspective view of one of the partition or divider members.

So far as outside configuration is concerned, the crate is like the ordinary crate in common use today, and, of course, its dimensions will depend upon the number and size of the individual receptacles or berry baskets that are to be packed therein. The major portion of the crate may also be of any desired construction, it only being essential that its opposite vertical walls be provided with openings such as indicated at 11. Preferably, the crate has its side walls 10 and end walls 12 formed of strips or slats secured to corner posts 13 and reinforced at the exterior by vertically disposed strips 14. The top 15, as well as the bottom, may be solid and, if desired, provided with suitable reinforcing members.

The berry baskets themselves are preferably formed of two pieces of thin wood bent, as shown in Figs. 5 and 6, to form the bottom 16, the sides 17 and the ends 18, the ends 18 adjacent the upper extremities and the upper extremities of the sides 17 being reinforced or attached to strips of material 19 which constitute the rim of the basket. It will be observed that portions of the end members 18 project above the rim 19, constituting projections 20, preferably rounded at their corners $20^a$ and cut away intermediate their ends, as at 21, to facilitate handling the baskets and to provide better ventilation.

The divider members shown in Fig. 7 are preferably formed of a plurality of strips or slats 22 secured at their ends to cross members 23, the vertical walls of the crate and these partition members being formed of spaced strips not only for other purposes which will hereinafter appear, but also to provide proper ventilation of

the contents of the crate and easy inspection of the contents.

When the requisite number of baskets is assembled in a crate, the baskets are disposed in layers therein, with one of the divider members being interposed between each two contiguous layers, as clearly shown in Figs. 3 and 4. In view of the fact that the projections 20 on the baskets prevent the cover 15 coming in contact with the berries, a divider member is not necessary for the top layer. As shown in Figs. 2 to 4, the divider member interposed between two superposed layers of baskets rests on the projections $20^a$ of the layer of baskets immediately beneath it and, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, two opposite extremities of a divider project an appreciable distance beyond the extremities of the layer of baskets on which it is supported. These two outer extremities of the divider member are preferably its ends, the ends of said divider member projecting beyond the ends of the layer of baskets and through the horizontal openings 11 in the vertical end walls of the crate. This is possible, due to the fact that the corners of each divider are recessed as indicated at 24 to accommodate the corner post 13 of the crate. In other words, the ends of the dividers do not have to terminate at the inner surfaces of the corner posts, but may project beyond those posts through the openings 11 so as to overhang, to a considerable extent, the outer sides of the baskets constituting the ends of any one layer of baskets. In this way, accidental displacement of the extremities of the divider off of the comparatively thin side walls of the baskets, under which circumstances the divider could impinge upon the fruit in the baskets, is absolutely prevented. The cross members 23 of the dividers will, of course, provide additional clearance between the dividers proper and fruit in the baskets, but this is immaterial. The projections 20 of the baskets afford ample clearance. In fact, as shown in the drawings, the cross pieces 23 are of no appreciable thickness, corresponding to the thickness of the slats 22 of the dividers. In other words, where the divider is composed of slats, for ventilation purposes, the cross pieces 23 need only be of a thickness to give it sufficient strength to stand up under ordinary usage, as ample clearance for protecting the fruit will be afforded by the projections 20 of the baskets.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the peculiar formation of the baskets and dividers permit them to be combined or arranged with respect to one another in such a fashion as to absolutely preclude any damage to the fruit by pressure being placed upon the fruit in the baskets by the dividers. Other advantages that might be enumerated are that no top divider is necessary and there is decidedly more ventilation of the fruit in the baskets. Inspection of the fruit, without uncrating, is also had with greater ease. What is more important is that each and every basket is firmly or steadily positioned in the crate, due to the fact that the weight of the upper baskets is supported by the baskets beneath them, and another important advantage is that, by having the dividers supported on the baskets themselves and not on the cross-piece by which the vertical walls are formed, no great care need be exercised in determining the positions of the wall pieces. In other words, the positions of the dividers are determined by the upper extremities of the basket projections 20, and it is only necessary to provide spaces of sufficient width or height in the end walls of the crate. It will also be obvious that no great degree of accuracy is required in recessing the corners of the dividers.

What is claimed is:—

1. In combination, a shipping crate for fruit receptacles such as berry baskets, said crate having vertical side and end walls with openings in said end walls, baskets adapted to be arranged in two superposed layers in said crate, vertical projections extending above the rims of said baskets, and a divider or partition member interposed between said two superposed layers of baskets, said divider being supported entirely by said vertical projections on the baskets, the ends of said divider constituting extended bearing surfaces for the projections of the baskets, said bearing surfaces extending beyond said projections into the openings in the end walls of the crate.

2. In combination, a shipping crate for fruit receptacles such as berry baskets, said crate having vertical side and end walls with openings in the two end walls, corner posts at the angles formed by the side walls, baskets arranged in superposed layers in said crate, a divider or partition member interposed between the two layers, the length of said divider exceeding the length of a layer of baskets and the corners of said divider being removed to permit the ends of said divider to extend into the end wall openings, and projections extending above the rims of said baskets, said divider and the layer of baskets imposed upon it being supported solely on the projections of the layer of baskets beneath it.

3. In combination, a shipping crate for fruit receptacles such as berry baskets, said crate having vertical side and end walls with openings in two opposite walls, baskets adapted to be arranged in two superposed layers in said crate, vertical projections extending above the rims of said baskets, and a divider member interposed between said two superposed layers of baskets, said divider being supported entirely by said vertical projections on the baskets intermediate the two opposite apertured walls of the crate, two opposite extremities of said divider constituting extended bearing surfaces for the projections of the baskets, said bearing surfaces extending beyond said projections into the openings in the said two opposite walls of the crate.

4. In combination, a shipping crate for fruit receptacles such as berry baskets, said crate having vertical side and end walls, baskets adapted to be arranged in two superposed layers in said crate, vertical projections extending above the rims of said baskets, and a divider member interposed between said two superposed layers of baskets, said divider being supported by the vertical projections of the baskets beneath it in spaced relation to fruit in the lower baskets, the weight of said divider and basket carried thereon holding the baskets of said lower layer substantially stationary in the crate, and two extremities of said divider constituting extended bearing surfaces extending an appreciable distance beyond two opposite boundaries of the lower layer of baskets whereby said extremities cannot be depressed against fruit in the baskets, two opposite walls of the crate having spaces provided therein to accommodate the extending extremities of said divider.

JULIEN C. MILLER.