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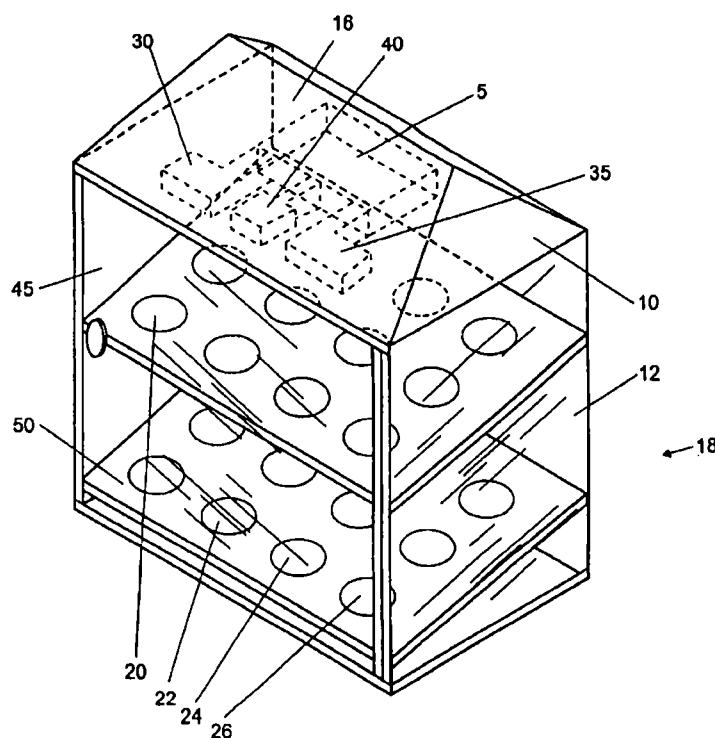
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR CONTROLLING THE DRYING OF PREVIOUSLY BAKED GOODS



(57) **Abstract:** A merchandiser and method for displaying and warming previously baked dough products, such as cookies (20, 22, 24, 26), under controlled drying conditions, including an enclosure (18) having one or more wall members (11, 14, 16) that define an interior space, with at least a portion of one of the wall members being transparent, an aperture for access into the interior space, at least one support surface (45, 50) for supporting one or more previously baked dough products that contain a predetermined average moisture level therein, and at least one mounting structure associated with the enclosure for mounting and positioning each support surface at a user accessible location in the interior space of the enclosure, and a heat source (5) for providing heated air in the enclosure wherein the support surface contacts at least a portion of the previously baked products so that those portions are shielded from direct contact with the heated air such that the drying of moisture in the baked products is controlled to maintain the organoleptic and/or texture properties of the products at essentially the same level as those of freshly baked products for a period of at least about 2 hours.

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ACTION

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Declarations under Rule 4.17:

- as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MA, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MZ, NO, NZ, OM, PH, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZM, ZW, ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZM, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GQ, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG)
- as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii)) for the following designations AE, AG, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, BZ, CA, CH, CN, CO, CR, CU, CZ, DE, DK, DM, DZ, EC,

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