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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR MONITORING THE PERFORMANCE OF AUTOMATED EGG REMOVAL

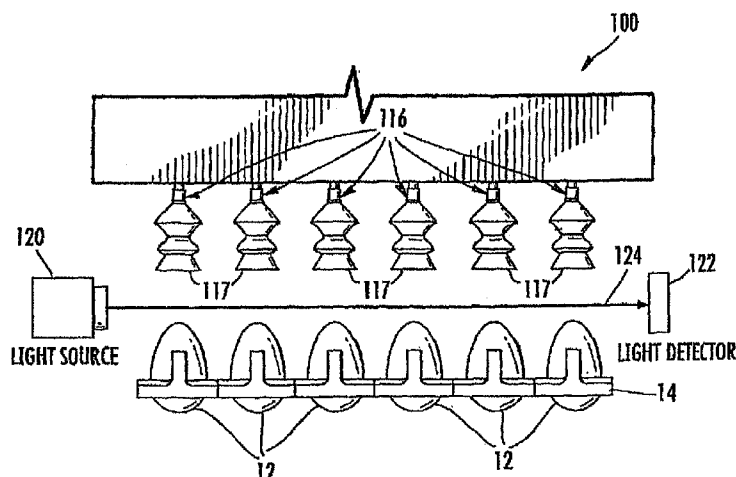


FIG. 3A

(57) Abstract: Methods and apparatus are provided that automatically determine whether or not eggs designated for removal from an egg carrier have been removed by an egg removal apparatus. Light is emitted along a path above and across an egg carrier as an egg picker moves to pick up an egg. The length of time that the light path is blocked when the egg picker is moved is measured and used to determine whether or not the egg has been removed from the carrier. Another apparatus and method is provided for detecting a malfunctioning egg picker. A detection device detects a number of eggs in the egg carrier. A control device monitors the egg picker and the detection device. The control device calculates the number of eggs in the egg carrier for determining when the number of eggs varies a predetermined amount from an egg count number for the egg carrier.

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