

PATENT SPECIFICATION (11)

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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO A CONTAINER SUCH AS A SERVING DISH

(71) We, DART INDUSTRIES INC, a corporation organised and existing under the Laws of the State of Delaware, United States of America of 8480 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90048, United States of America, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to a container and more particularly to a serving dish for foodstuffs.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a serving dish that with a minimum of separate elements can be used as a server, warmer/server and drainer.

According to this invention there is provided a serving dish for foodstuffs comprising a container having an integral bottom wall and side wall structure, said container side wall including an upper terminal edge and incorporating a ledge portion immediately adjacent said edge, a colander having a bottom wall having a plurality of openings extending therethrough, and a side wall formed integrally therewith, said colander side wall having a peripheral flange adapted to engage with said ledge portion thereby to support the colander within said container but with its walls spaced from the walls of the container, and a divider having a top wall and depending walls from the bottom edges of which a plurality of protruberances depend, said protruberances being positioned so as to facilitate engagement thereof with certain of the openings in the bottom wall of said colander thereby firmly to support the divider therein.

In order that the invention may be more readily understood and so that further features thereof may be appreciated the invention will now be described by way of example and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which;

Figure 1 is a top perspective view of a closed serving dish in accordance with the invention;

Figure 2 is a side elevational view of the closed serving dish shown in Figure 1;

Figure 3 is an end elevational view of the closed serving dish shown in Figure 1;

Figure 4 is an exploded perspective view of the serving dish shown in Figure 1 and the cover therefor;

Figure 5 is a partial cross section of the closed serving dish taken along line 5—5 of Figure 1;

Figure 6 is a partial cross section of the closed serving dish taken along line 6—6 of Figure 5;

Figure 7 is a part cut away perspective view of a colander and divider taken along line 7—7 of Figure 6; and

Figure 8 is a partial cross section of the cover taken along the line 8—8 of Figure 5.

Referring to the drawings and more particularly to Figures 1 and 4 a serving dish 10 comprises a container 12, a colander 14 and a divider 16. The serving dish 10 may be closed as shown in Figures 1 to 3 by means of a cover 18. These four elements are interengagable in the fashions shown thereby to create an item of substantial versatility.

The container 12 incorporates an integral bottom wall 20 and side wall 22 (see Figure 5). The bottom wall 20 further includes a downwardly extending bead 24 which acts as a foot portion to support the container. The side wall 22 extends outwardly and upwardly from bottom wall 20 to an upper terminal edge 26 having immediately radially inwardly thereof and stepped down therefrom a ledge portion 28 and immediately radially outwardly thereof a peripherally extending outwardly and downwardly protruding flange 30. The flange 30 includes, at appropriate opposed positions, handle portions 32.

The colander 14 which can best be seen in Figure 4 is formed of an integral bottom wall 36 and a side wall 38. The bottom wall 36 thereof includes several downwardly protruding foot portions 40 at appropriate locations about the periphery thereof and has a plurality of openings 42 extending therethrough. The side wall 38 flares upwardly

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from the bottom wall 36 to an upper terminus 44. A peripheral wall 48 extends outwardly and downwardly from the upper terminus 44 and has a skirt portion 50 depending from the lowermost edge thereof. The skirt portion 50 terminates in an outwardly extending peripheral flange 52 (See Figures 6 and 7).

Both the container 12 and the colander 14 are adapted to be closed by the cover 18 which includes a downturned wall portion 54 having a terminal edge 56 and a handle portion 46. The size and shape of the cover 18 is such that the cover 18 loosely fits over the colander, the terminal edge 56 of the cover engaging with the flange 52 of the colander. It will be appreciated that, if desired the colander 14 and the cover 18 can be used separately and apart from the other mentioned elements as a closed drainer unit. The cover 18, of course, provides protection to the covered foodstuff as it drains and in appropriate instances serves to minimise heat loss from the foodstuff.

When used in combination with the container 12, the colander 14 is supported by its flange 52 upon the ledge portion 28 of the container 12 (Figures 5 and 6). When supported in this way the walls of the colander 14 and container 12 are spaced from each other, there being defined between the bottom wall 36 of the colander and the bottom wall 20 of the container 12 a well 58 in which a heating or cooling medium may be placed to appropriately affect the foodstuff in the colander. Furthermore, since the cover 18 is loosely positioned about the colander, condensate formed on the interior thereof will drain out of the colander area and because the colander is supported interiorly of the container 12 as at the mating of lip 52 and ledge portion 28, this condensate will find its way to well 58 as opposed to the exterior of the container 12.

Additionally, the invention includes the use of a divider 16 for colander 14 so that two separate foodstuff items may be simultaneously retained therein without becoming mixed. This divider 16 is integrally formed of a top wall 59 and depending flexible walls 60 each having a bottom edge 62. These edges 62 have positioned therealong a plurality of depending protruberances 64 of substantially the same size and shape as the openings 42 in the bottom wall 36 of the colander 14. The lateral extremities of the walls 60 flare outwardly, as at 65 to provide support means for the divider 16 against the side wall 38 of the colander 14. The wall 38 of the colander is provided with two oppositely positioned protrusions under which the divider top wall

snaps into place. The bottom protruberances 64 of the respective walls 60 are laterally spaced from each other a different distance than are the respective openings 42 into which the protruberances 64 are intended to be positioned. Accordingly, the walls 60 must be flexed to enable such engagement, such flexing tending to assist in firmly retaining the divider 16 in place. The walls 60 are enabled to be flexed in this way primarily because of the hinge effect created by their intersection with top wall 59.

It will be appreciated that the container 12 and cover 18 may be used alone in a service or storage function with the terminal edge 56 of the cover resting upon the ledge portion 28 of the container 12.

It may seem from the foregoing description that the unique arrangement of parts provides for the multipurpose use of this dish.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A serving dish for foodstuffs comprising a container having an integral bottom wall and side wall structure, said container side wall including an upper terminal edge and incorporating a ledge portion immediately adjacent said edge, a colander having a bottom wall having a plurality of openings extending therethrough and a side wall formed integrally therewith, said colander side wall having a peripheral flange adapted to engage with said ledge portion thereby to support the colander within said container but with its walls spaced from the walls of the container, and a divider having a top wall and depending walls from the bottom edges of which a plurality of protruberances depend, said protruberances being positioned so as to facilitate engagement thereof with certain of the openings in the bottom wall of said colander thereby firmly to support the divider therein.

2. A serving dish according to claim 1 wherein the depending walls of the divider are adapted flexibly to be distorted in effecting the engagement between said protruberances and openings.

3. A serving dish according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein a cover having a downturned wall portion is provided, said cover being adapted to be positioned over said serving dish with terminal edge of said wall portion abutting the flange of said colander.

4. A serving dish substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

5. A serving dish provided with a cover, substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.



from the bottom wall 36 to an upper terminus 44. A peripheral wall 48 extends outwardly and downwardly from the upper terminus 44 and has a skirt portion 50 depending from the lowermost edge thereof. The skirt portion 50 terminates in an outwardly extending peripheral flange 52 (See Figures 6 and 7).

Both the container 12 and the colander 14 are adapted to be closed by the cover 18 which includes a downturned wall portion 54 having a terminal edge 56 and a handle portion 46. The size and shape of the cover 18 is such that the cover 18 loosely fits over the colander, the terminal edge 56 of the cover engaging with the flange 52 of the colander. It will be appreciated that, if desired the colander 14 and the cover 18 can be used separately and apart from the other mentioned elements as a closed drainer unit. The cover 18, of course, provides protection to the covered foodstuff as it drains and in appropriate instances serves to minimise heat loss from the foodstuff.

When used in combination with the container 12, the colander 14 is supported by its flange 52 upon the ledge portion 28 of the container 12 (Figures 5 and 6). When supported in this way the walls of the colander 14 and container 12 are spaced from each other, there being defined between the bottom wall 36 of the colander and the bottom wall 20 of the container 12 a well 58 in which a heating or cooling medium may be placed to appropriately affect the foodstuff in the colander. Furthermore, since the cover 18 is loosely positioned about the colander, condensate formed on the interior thereof will drain out of the colander area and because the colander is supported interiorly of the container 12 as at the mating of lip 52 and ledge portion 28, this condensate will find its way to well 58 as opposed to the exterior of the container 12.

Additionally, the invention includes the use of a divider 16 for colander 14 so that two separate foodstuff items may be simultaneously retained therein without becoming mixed. This divider 16 is integrally formed of a top wall 59 and depending flexible walls 60 each having a bottom edge 62. These edges 62 have positioned therealong a plurality of depending protruberances 64 of substantially the same size and shape as the openings 42 in the bottom wall 36 of the colander 14. The lateral extremities of the walls 60 flare outwardly, as at 65 to provide support means for the divider 16 against the side wall 38 of the colander 14. The wall 38 of the colander is provided with two oppositely positioned protrusions under which the divider top wall

snaps into place. The bottom protruberances 64 of the respective walls 60 are laterally spaced from each other a different distance than are the respective openings 42 into which the protruberances 64 are intended to be positioned. Accordingly, the walls 60 must be flexed to enable such engagement, such flexing tending to assist in firmly retaining the divider 16 in place. The walls 60 are enabled to be flexed in this way primarily because of the hinge effect created by their intersection with top wall 59.

It will be appreciated that the container 12 and cover 18 may be used alone in a service or storage function with the terminal edge 56 of the cover resting upon the ledge portion 28 of the container 12.

It may seem from the foregoing description that the unique arrangement of parts provides for the multipurpose use of this dish.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A serving dish for foodstuffs comprising a container having an integral bottom wall and side wall structure, said container side wall including an upper terminal edge and incorporating a ledge portion immediately adjacent said edge, a colander having a bottom wall having a plurality of openings extending therethrough and a side wall formed integrally therewith, said colander side wall having a peripheral flange adapted to engage with said ledge portion thereby to support the colander within said container but with its walls spaced from the walls of the container, and a divider having a top wall and depending walls from the bottom edges of which a plurality of protruberances depend, said protruberances being positioned so as to facilitate engagement thereof with certain of the openings in the bottom wall of said colander thereby firmly to support the divider therein.

2. A serving dish according to claim 1 wherein the depending walls of the divider are adapted flexibly to be distorted in effecting the engagement between said protruberances and openings.

3. A serving dish according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein a cover having a downturned wall portion is provided, said cover being adapted to be positioned over said serving dish with terminal edge of said wall portion abutting the flange of said colander.

4. A serving dish substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

5. A serving dish provided with a cover, substantially as herein described with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

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FORRESTER, KETLEY & CO.,
Chartered Patent Agents,
Forrester House, 52 Bounds Green Road,
London N11 2EY,
and also at

Rutland House, 148 Edmund Street,
Birmingham B3 2LD,
and
Scottish Provident Building,
29 St. Vincent Place, Glasgow G1 2DT.
Agents for the Applicants.

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