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(54) Title: DISPENSING MACHINE VALVE AND METHOD

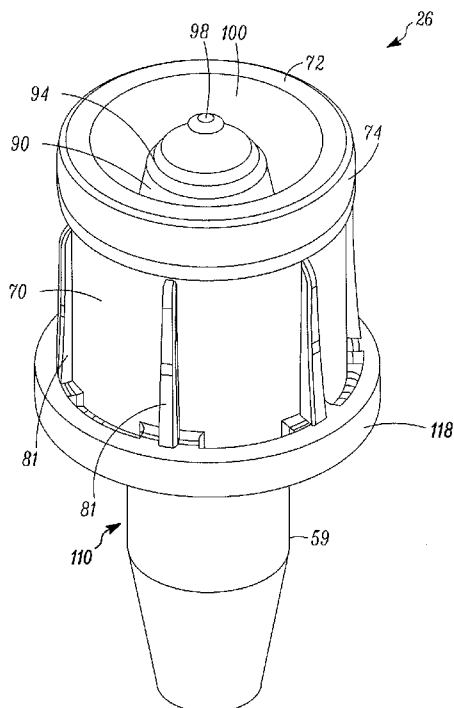


FIG. 5

(57) Abstract: A one-way valve is connectable in fluid communication with a fluid-receiving chamber, such as a dilution chamber or a mixing chamber for diluting or mixing a perishable food product, such as a milk product or chocolate product, and forming a substantially fluid-tight seal therebetween. The valve comprises a relatively rigid valve seat, and a relatively flexible valve member overlying the valve seat and forming an axially-elongated, normally-closed valve opening therebetween defining an inlet at one end of the valve seat, an outlet at an opposite end of the valve seat, and an axially-extending seal therebetween that forms a fluid-tight seal between the inlet and outlet of the normally-closed valve opening. An axially-extending valve body is radially spaced relative to the valve member and forms a space therebetween allowing fluid-flow therethrough for cleaning the valve and the fluid-receiving chamber.

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