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(54) Title: CLOSING APPARATUS FOR USE WITH A MULTI-PIECE, HINGED, HYDROPONIC TOWER

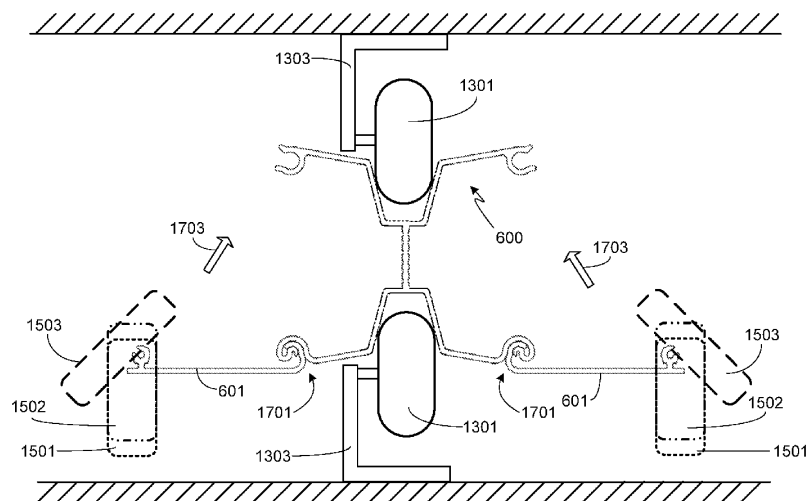


FIG. 17

(57) Abstract: A tower closing apparatus is provided that is configured to simplify the closing of a multi-piece, hinged hydroponic tower. The hydroponic tower closing apparatus utilizes a collection of static and continuously moving components (e.g., motor driven drive rollers, alignment rollers, tower body alignment rollers, face plate manipulation rollers, face closing rollers, etc.) to close a hydroponic tower as it passes through the apparatus. In particular, as the tower is driven through the closing apparatus, a series of face plate manipulation rollers gradually rotate the face plate(s) relative to the tower body, moving the face plate(s) from a fully open position to a partially closed position. Next a series of face closing rollers continue to rotate the face plate(s) from the partially closed position to the fully closed position, forcing the fasteners to latch the face plate(s) into position.

[Continued on next page]

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