CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of filling cartridges with either one or two pouches therein, comprising:

loading the cartridges in a puck;

maneuvering the puck to a first filling ~~station~~unit;

filling a first pouch within each cartridge having two pouches or filling the pouch in ~~a first number of~~ every other cartridge~~s~~ having one pouch at the first filling ~~station~~unit;

maneuvering the puck to a second filling ~~station~~unit; and

filling a second pouch within each cartridge having two pouches or filling the pouch in ~~a second number of~~the remaining cartridges having one pouch at the second filling ~~station~~unit.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the pouch filling steps comprise positioning a filling nozzle within a fitment of each pouch.

3. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of cleaning the cartridges.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of loading the cartridges in a puck comprises pushing the cartridges into the puck in a horizontal position.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising rotating the puck into a vertical position.

6. The method of claim ~~1~~2, wherein the step of positioning a filling nozzle within a fitment of each pouch comprises maneuvering the filling nozzle ~~in the~~ vertically ~~direction~~downward to the fitment.

7. The method of claim 1, further comprising unloading the cartridges from the puck.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the step of unloading the cartridges from the puck comprising rotating the puck into a horizontal position.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the step of unloading the cartridges from the puck comprises ~~removing~~ pushing the cartridges out of ~~from~~ the puck.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the filling steps comprise filling the cartridges with a micro-ingredient.

11. A system for filling cartridges with one or more pouches therein, comprising:

a puck loading station for loading the cartridges into a puck;

an in-feed conveyor for maneuvering the puck along a predetermined path;

a filling station positioned along the predetermined path for filling the one or more pouches in the cartridges with one or more micro-ingredients; and

an out-feed conveyor for maneuvering the puck along the predetermined path~~.~~,

~~12. The system of claim 11, wherein the cartridges comprise two pouches therein and~~

~~wherein~~ the filling station comprises a first filling unit ~~for filling the first pouch~~ and a second filling unit ~~for filling the second pouch.~~,

wherein the first filling unit is for filling a first pouch and the second filling unit is for filling a second pouch, when the cartridges comprise two pouches therein,

or

wherein

~~13. The system of claim 11, wherein the cartridges comprise one pouch therein and wherein the filling station comprises a~~ the first filling unit is for filling the pouch in ~~a first~~every other cartridge in the puck and ~~a~~ the second filling unit is for filling the pouch in ~~a second~~the remaining cartridges in the same puck, when the cartridges comprise one pouch therein.

~~14~~12. The system of claim 11, wherein the filling station comprises more than two ~~a plurality of~~ filling units.

~~15~~13. The system of claim 11, further comprising a cleaning station positioned on the predetermined pathway.

~~16~~14. The system of claim 11, further comprising a puck unloading station positioned on the predetermined pathway.