

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO A RECEPTACLE

(71) We, DART INDUSTRIES INC., a corporation organised and existing under the laws 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 it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

This invention relates to a receptacle and more particularly to a receptacle for spoons, ladles, forks and similar utensils used for culinary purposes. More particularly, the invention relates to a receptacle that occupies a minimum of space and yet affords the user a device that will accommodate the aforementioned implements in a stable and readily accessible position.

Prior proposed receptacles that are intended for similar usage have been of a box type configuration and of a size that somewhat restricted the user's effective placement thereof. Furthermore, these prior proposed devices have characteristically included numerous individual retention means of various sizes based upon the various sizes of implements employed in culinary processing. This, accordingly, increased the size of the receptacle and in many instances, a substantial portion of such receptacle was not used during the culinary process.

This invention seeks to provide a small and compact unit that overcomes these prior objectionable features. Likewise, it is an object of the present invention to provide a conveniently arranged tray which will protect the surrounding supporting surface therefor and also retain culinary implements such as spoons, ladles, knives, forks, spatulas or the like in a position convenient for the user to grasp same again.

According to one aspect of this invention there is provided a multi-purpose receptacle for supporting a variety of culinary implements, said receptacle comprising a

curvilinear tray having a downwardly directed peripheral supporting wall emanating from the edge thereof, said tray having formed therein at least one elongate recess, a first portion adjacent one end of said at least one elongate recess, that extends above all other portions of the receptacle, a ledge adjacent said one end which lies between said at least one recess and said first portion and a second portion adjacent the other end of said at least one elongate recess, that extends above some portions of the said edge of said tray, said receptacle being provided with at least one groove formed in said second portion and extending over said wall and into said at least one recess.

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 with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Figure 1 is a plan view of a multi-purpose receptacle, in accordance with the present invention;

Figure 2 is a front elevational view of the receptacle shown in Figure 1 more clearly illustrating the retentive means for various culinary implements;

Figure 3 is a side elevational view of the receptacle;

Figure 4 is a cross-sectional view of the receptacle taken along line 4—4 of Figure 1;

Figure 5 is a cross-sectional view of the receptacle taken along line 5—5 of Figure 2; and

Figure 6 is an enlarged cross-sectional view taken along line 6—6 of Figure 5.

Referring now specifically to Figures 1, 2, and 3, a multi-purpose receptacle 10 may be seen to include a variety of surface areas to support, retain and restrain a variety of culinary implements. The receptacle 10 comprises a curvilinear tray 12, having elongated recesses 14 and a ledge 16 formed therein. As will be more fully discussed hereinafter, the receptacle 10 can function

in a multiplicity of ways to retain effectively a variety of implements.

The multi-purpose receptacle 10 is formed as a single integral moulding of a plastics material. Basically the receptacle comprises the curvilinear tray 12 and an integral peripheral supporting wall 18 that protrudes downwardly from such tray in a slightly angled manner. This wall terminates in a lower edge 20 which is of substantially planar nature and is adapted to rest on any suitable supporting surface 21, such as a stove, table or countertop. The peripheral edge 22 of the curvilinear tray 12 includes a substantially horizontal first portion 24 that is located above all other tray portions and a second portion 26 having a substantially horizontal upper surface, opposite portion 24, that is located above some other portions of the curvilinear tray but not above portion 24. Accordingly, as can best be seen in Figure 3, the tray 12 forms a cradle-like member that can be suitably employed to retain basting or similar type implements of an elongated and/or circular nature.

As is apparent, the receptacle 10, in its preferred form, includes a plurality of recesses 14 such as the two recesses shown in the drawings, although further recesses could also be provided. The recesses are formed by the concave wall members 25 and as can best be seen in Figures 4 and 5, the recesses 14 are elongate in nature and extend transversely to the longitudinal axis of the curvilinear tray 12.

The recesses 14 further include, as an integral part thereof, channels, grooves, openings or slots 28 which extend from a front portion of the supporting wall 18 over the wall and into the recess proper. These channels, grooves, openings, or slots, 28 thereby provide a retentive means for spoon, fork or ladle handles, knives or the like. Furthermore, due to the curvilinear character of the recesses themselves, spoon bowls and similarly shaped items and even food items, such as eggs, are readily retained therein.

It should be noted that the recesses 14 are of such size and shape that they form a substantial portion of the tray 12, the remainder of the tray comprising the aforementioned portions 24 and 26, the ledge 16 and narrow boundary areas 30 that circumscribe the recesses 14.

The last of the above-mentioned implement supporting areas, is the ledge 16. This ledge is positioned in the curvilinear tray surface 12 adjacent the portion 24. The ledge 16 intersects or interengages the recesses 14 along the uppermost edges thereof. Accordingly, any drainage into the ledge area will find its way into recesses 14 rather than onto the receptacle supporting surface 21. As is best seen in Figure 6, the

ledge 16 may usually be employed to support a spatula member 32 as is shown in phantom. As was indicated hereinabove, the front-back depth of receptacle member 10 and the respective heights of the first and second portions 24 and 26, make it possible for the user to support knife-like members 34 across these elements and into the slot 28 so that such will be firmly retained thereby. Likewise, when spoons 36, or other similar handled members, are supported within recesses 14, the handle portions thereof extend through the mentioned slots 28. The handle portions are thereby exposed for easy retrieval by the user. However, it may be readily appreciated that because of the low profile these handle portions are retained in an out-of-the-way position very close to the mentioned supporting surface 21 for receptacle 10. Accordingly, the user will be less likely accidentally to engage such thereby spilling the contents or dislodging the culinary implement from the holder receptacle 10.

Although in the preferred embodiment, it is anticipated that the receptacle 10 will be moulded from suitable plastics material, it should be understood that any other material might be used in the formation of such devices and that such may be made in solid form rather than in the form of the embodiment illustrated in the various cross-sections of Figures 4 to 6, in which the underside of the receptacle is recessed.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A multi-purpose receptacle for supporting a variety of culinary implements, said receptacle comprising a curvilinear tray having a downwardly directed peripheral supporting wall emanating from the edge thereof, said tray having formed therein at least one elongate recess, a first portion adjacent one end of said at least one recess, that extends above all other portions of the receptacle, a ledge adjacent said one end which lies between said at least one recess and said first portion and a second portion adjacent the other end of said at least one elongate recess, that extends above some portions of the said edge of said tray, said receptacle being provided with at least one groove formed in said second portion and extending over said wall and into said at least one recess.

2. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed in claim 1 wherein said tray has formed therein a plurality of elongate recesses, said ledge extending adjacent one end of each of said recesses and said second portion extending adjacent the other ends of said recesses, there being grooves in said second portion extending over said wall and into each of said elongate recesses.

3. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed

in a multiplicity of ways to retain effectively a variety of implements.

The multi-purpose receptacle 10 is formed as a single integral moulding of a plastics material. Basically the receptacle comprises the curvilinear tray 12 and an integral peripheral supporting wall 18 that protrudes downwardly from such tray in a slightly angled manner. This wall terminates in a lower edge 20 which is of substantially planar nature and is adapted to rest on any suitable supporting surface 21, such as a stove, table or countertop. The peripheral edge 22 of the curvilinear tray 12 includes a substantially horizontal first portion 24 that is located above all other tray portions and a second portion 26 having a substantially horizontal upper surface, opposite portion 24, that is located above some other portions of the curvilinear tray but not above portion 24. Accordingly, as can best be seen in Figure 3, the tray 12 forms a cradle-like member that can be suitably employed to retain basting or similar type implements of an elongated and/or circular nature.

As is apparent, the receptacle 10, in its preferred form, includes a plurality of recesses 14 such as the two recesses shown in the drawings, although further recesses could also be provided. The recesses are formed by the concave wall members 25 and as can best be seen in Figures 4 and 5, the recesses 14 are elongate in nature and extend transversely to the longitudinal axis of the curvilinear tray 12.

The recesses 14 further include, as an integral part thereof, channels, grooves, openings or slots 28 which extend from a front portion of the supporting wall 18 over the wall and into the recess proper. These channels, grooves, openings, or slots, 28 thereby provide a retentive means for spoon, fork or ladle handles, knives or the like. Furthermore, due to the curvilinear character of the recesses themselves, spoon bowls and similarly shaped items and even food items, such as eggs, are readily retained therein.

It should be noted that the recesses 14 are of such size and shape that they form a substantial portion of the tray 12, the remainder of the tray comprising the aforementioned portions 24 and 26, the ledge 16 and narrow boundary areas 30 that circumscribe the recesses 14.

The last of the above-mentioned implement supporting areas, is the ledge 16. This ledge is positioned in the curvilinear tray surface 12 adjacent the portion 24. The ledge 16 intersects or interengages the recesses 14 along the uppermost edges thereof. Accordingly, any drainage into the ledge area will find its way into recesses 14 rather than onto the receptacle supporting surface 21. As is best seen in Figure 6, the

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Although in the preferred embodiment, it is anticipated that the receptacle 10 will be moulded from suitable plastics material, it should be understood that any other material might be used in the formation of such devices and that such may be made in solid form rather than in the form of the embodiment illustrated in the various cross-sections of Figures 4 to 6, in which the underside of the receptacle is recessed.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A multi-purpose receptacle for supporting a variety of culinary implements, said receptacle comprising a curvilinear tray having a downwardly directed peripheral supporting wall emanating from the edge thereof, said tray having formed therein at least one elongate recess, a first portion adjacent one end of said at least one recess, that extends above all other portions of the receptacle, a ledge adjacent said one end which lies between said at least one recess and said first portion and a second portion adjacent the other end of said at least one elongate recess, that extends above some portions of the said edge of said tray, said receptacle being provided with at least one groove formed in said second portion and extending over said wall and into said at least one recess.

2. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed in claim 1 wherein said tray has formed therein a plurality of elongate recesses, said ledge extending adjacent one end of each of said recesses and said second portion extending adjacent the other ends of said recesses, there being grooves in said second portion extending over said wall and into each of said elongate recesses.

3. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed





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in claim 2 wherein said recesses are positioned transversely of the tray.

4. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed in claim 1 claim 2 or claim 3 wherein said first portion has an upper surface which is substantially horizontal and said second portion has an upper surface, adjacent said at least one groove, which is substantially horizontal.

5. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein said ledge and said at least one recess have a common edge portion.

6. A multi-purpose receptacle as claimed in any one of the preceding claims formed of plastics material.

7. A multi-purpose receptacle sub-

stantially as hereinbefore 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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