

TITLE OF INVENTION

Tableware And Support Means For The Same

TECHNICAL FIELD

5 This invention relates to tableware in the form of a tray, and more particularly to a tray which has a plurality of hollowed through cavities that appropriately snug with corresponding shapes of dinning wares such as plate, bowl, spoon, fork, knife and cup. The present invention also relates to a support means for the tableware when users at meals.

BACKGROUND ART

10 Tablewares or trays for holding dinning utensils such as spoons, forks and cups or glasses have been used in food courts or canteen . However these trays that available today do not provide the most desired demand or function in saving cleaning cost or cleaning with minimum labour cost. Besides, these trays are not well adapted for saving space when they are used in canteens or food court where more space is needed during lunch or dinner time.
15 The tablewares and the support means for the tableware will solve the cleaning cost and space limitation problems.

U.S. Pat. No. 5,172,826 describes a food bowl which includes a depression in its bottom for collecting the last of foods remaining in the bowl so that the bowl does not have to be tipped
20 in order to spoon the remainder of the food in the bowl. The aforesaid food bowls, dishes, and the like are not designed for any particular segment of the general populace, each being designed for use in limited environs.

U.S. Pat. No. 4,986,434 discloses a dish which is provided with a cavity on one side of the
25 dish, which cavity is operable to receive a food such as spaghetti, and to allow a fork to be inserted into the cavity to facilitate removal of the spaghetti from the dish. and useful only in particular situations.

U.S. Pat. No. 269,054 discloses a cooking vessel which has a specially configured rim that
30 engages the handle of a spoon to prevent the spoon from sliding into the vessel.

US Patent No. 5,638,981 discloses tableware in the form of a dinner plate which is formed with a food-receiving surface having a hollowed out recess that is sized to snugly, but removably, receive the bowl of a spoon or fork.

- 5 US Publication No.2010/0282761 discloses a meal plate for portion control comprising: architectural barriers (walls and depressions) that control/allow for pre-determined portion sizes, representative colors and keywords that correspond to food items and groups approximating current balanced diet recommendations, and portholes that surround the outer rim of said meal plate.

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- US Publication No. 20080173567 discloses a system for holding food and a beverage in a vehicle, the system comprising: a. a cup holder adaptor comprising: i. a tubular component for insertion into a vehicle cup holder, and ii. at least one support structure attached to the tubular component and configured for attachment to another component, b. a tray
15 comprising: i. a generally planar structure having at least one recess for receiving and holding food and at least one opening for receiving and holding a beverage cup, and ii. attachment structure for attachment of the tray to the cup holder adaptor support structure.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

- 20 This present invention relates to a tableware which is a tray having a recess at the center lower section of the tray, characterized in that a hollow cup holder and a plurality of hollow food container holders are provided around the recess, and a fork/spoon and a cutter are mounted at the top edge of the tray and are secured by pairs of brackets, thereby cup and food containers are removably snugged respectively into the cup holder and the container
25 holders.

- The present invention also relates to a hanging support means for use together with the tableware, characterized in that an adjustable telescopic pole mounted perpendicularly with a plurality of H shaped configuration horizontal tray support, and the ends of the tray
30 supports are raised so as to engage with the securing hole provided at the corners of the tray.

It is therefore an object of this present invention to provide a tableware, wherein the four corners of the tray are each provided with a securing hole.

5 It is a further object of this present invention to provide a tableware, wherein the central recess of the tray holds a plate containing rice or the like.

It is another object of this invention to provide a tableware, wherein the fork and the cutter or the like are secured to the tray by the brackets.

10 It is an additional object of this invention to provide a tableware, wherein the distance between the edge of the tray support is the distance between the securing holes along the X-axis so as to allow the engagement of the tray onto the support means.

15 It is an additional object of this invention to provide a hanging support means, wherein one end of the telescopic pole is mounted either onto the floor or above the floor.

20 It is yet another object of this invention to provide a hanging support means, wherein the height of the horizontal tray support is adjusted to a position at which the user can comfortably eat at a standing position, avoiding the use of a sitting mean for the user.

Yet a further object of the present invention is to provide a tableware and a support means for the tableware, wherein the tableware can be machined washed and the tableware can be retrieved by inserting coins to a tableware dispensing machine.

25 These and other objects and advantages of the invention will become more readily apparent from the following detailed description of the invention when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings in which:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

30 FIG. 1 is a plan view of a preferred embodiment of a tableware in accordance with the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a bottom view of the preferred embodiment of the tableware shown in FIG. 1 in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 3 is a schematic view of the tableware supporting means for the tableware shown in FIG. 1 in accordance with the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, there is shown in FIG. 1 a preferred embodiment of a tableware or a tray 100 in accordance with the present invention. The tray 100 has a plurality of hollowed through cavities that appropriately snug with corresponding shapes of dinning wares such as plate, bowl, spoon, fork, knife and cup. In accordance with the preferred embodiment, the tray 100 has a recess 50 which in general for the holding for rice or noodle, either on the recess 50 itself or on a plate and then placed onto of the recesses 50. The depth of the recesses are not the same and therefore the tray 100 cannot be placed onto a normal flat table.

As shown in FIG. 1, around the recess 50, a plurality of food container holders 52, 54, 56, 58 are provided. On the tray 100, there is an appropriate space to provide a hollowed cavity as cup holder 60 where the cup containing a drink, such as coffee, tea, soft drink is placed thereon. The diameter of the cup holder 60 is smaller than the edge of a cup such that the bottom section of the cup is snugly fitted to the cup holder 60.

On the top edge of the tray 100, there is provided a fork holder 10 and a knife holder 30. There are pairs of brackets 20 at the fork holder 10 and the knife holder 30 for securedly fastening the same to the allocated position on the tray 100. One end of the knife is made to form the scooping area 40 and is used as a spoon. At the four corners of the tray 100, a securing hole 81, 82, 83, 84 is provided for the securing the tray 100 onto a supporting means to be described below. As an alternative, the securing holes 81, 82, 83, 84 can be replaced by other devices which can secure the tray 100 onto the supporting means when in used. One of the alternative could be a fastening clip.

In application, the user retrieves the tray 100 by inserting coins into a tray dispensing machine (not shown) and proceeds to stall to purchase food. The owner of the stall places

food onto the tray at the allocated cavities on the tray 100. For instance, the rice or noodle on the recess 50, and drink on the cup holder 60.

Referring to FIG. 2, there is shown a hanging support means 200 for use together with the tableware 100 described above. The supporting means 200 comprises an adjustable telescopic pole 90 of which one end is mounted to a ceiling on onto the ground. In the present preferred embodiment, the supporting means 200 are mounted to the ceiling by the telescopic pole 90. The other end of the telescopic pole 90 is mounted perpendicularly with a plurality of H shaped configuration horizontal tray supports 92, 94. The end of the tray supports are raised so as to engage with the securing holes 81, 82, 83, 84 provided at the corners of the tray 100.

The user holds the tray 100 after purchased food will have to find a supporting means 200 to place the tray 100 in order to have a meal. First the user will find the supporting means 200 and place the tray 100 onto the tray supports 92, 94 such that the securing holes 81, 82, 83, 84 are respectively engaged with the raised ends of the plate holder or the supporting means 200. The user stands in front of the tray 100 to eat with the fork and spoon that fitted to the tray 100.

In accordance with the present invention, the distance between the edge of the tray support 92, 94 is the distance between the securing holes 81, 82, 83, 84 along the X-axis so as to allow the engagement of the tray 100 onto the support means 200. One end of the telescopic pole 90 is mounted either onto a ceiling or on the floor while the other end is fitted perpendicularly to the H-configuration of the tray support or the plate holder. The height of the horizontal tray support 200 is adjusted to a position at which the user can comfortably eat at a standing position, avoiding the use of a sitting mean for the user.

The material used for making the supporting means 200 could be any material which is strong enough to hold the tableware with food. In other words, metal such as stainless steel or iron can be used.

Referring now again to FIGS. 1 and 2, the manner in which the fork and knife are held in place onto the tray 100 can be seen. It will be noted that the fork and knife are positioned well and are secured by the brackets 20, 30 so that the fork and knife will not drop even the tray 100 is place vertically. In another preferred embodiment, the tray 100 can be provided

with a handle for easier carrying of the tray 100, and the handle is thus readily accessible to the user.

5 In accordance with the present invention, the food containers, and the cup on the cup holder, the fork and knife on the tray 100 are held snugly onto the tray 100 during meal time .

10 It will be readily appreciated that the tableware of this invention can be easily used together with the tableware support means and therefore limited space of a canteen or foodcourt is used at maximum. The figures depict merely exemplary embodiments of this invention, which can be fabricated in various shapes and configurations. The figures well communicate the snugly fitted cup-holde, dinner plate, bowl, forks and spoons, or the like, enabling persons skilled in the relevant arts to practice this invention in both the illustrated and numerous alternative embodiments, all within the spirit of this invention and the scope of the following claims.

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What is claimed is:

1. A tableware which is a tray having a recess at the center lower section of the tray, characterized in that a hollow cup holder and a plurality of hollow food container holders are provided around the recess, and a fork/spoon and a cutter are mounted at the top edge of the tray and are secured by pairs of brackets, thereby cup and food containers are removably snugged respectively into the cup holder and the container holders.
2. The tableware as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the four corners of the tray are each provided with a securing hole.
3. The tableware as set forth in Claim 1, wherein central recess of the tray with a depth sufficient to hold a plate containing rice or the like.
4. The tableware as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the fork and the cutter or the like are secured to the tray by the brackets.
5. A hanging support means for use together with the tableware as set forth in Claim 1, characterized in that an adjustable telescopic pole mounted perpendicularly with a plurality of H shaped configuration horizontal tray support, and the ends of the tray supports are raised so as to engage with the securing hole provided at the corners of the tray.
6. The hanging support means as set forth in Claim 3, wherein the distance between the edge of the tray support is the distance between the securing holes along the X-axis so as to allow the engagement of the tray onto the support means.
7. The hanging support means as set forth in Claim 3, wherein the other end of the telescopic pole is mounted either onto a ceiling or on the floor.
8. The hanging support means as set forth in Claim 4, wherein the height of the horizontal tray support is adjusted to a position at which the user can comfortably eat at a standing position, avoiding the use of a sitting mean for the user.
9. The hanging support means as set forth in Claim 3, wherein the tray support is made from material which is strong enough to hold the tray with food.

10. The hanging support means as set forth in Claim 9, wherein the tray support is made from stainless steel or iron.