**Claims**

1. A twin spreader assembly for engaging at least two containers, the assembly comprising:

   a pair of head blocks, each for engaging at least one spreader, said head blocks connected by an intermediate linkage, said linkage having at least one actuator and arranged to selectively space the head blocks along a horizontal axis, and;

   a locking device mounted to the linkage;

   wherein said locking device is arranged to selectively prevent movement of the linkage corresponding to spacing of the head blocks along a vertical axis.

2. The assembly according to claim 1, wherein the linkage is a parallelogram linkage comprising an upper and lower beam, with upright members at opposed ends of said beams;
   said locking device mounted between one of the beams and one of the upright members so as to selectively prevent relative rotation of the beam and upright member.

3. The assembly according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the locking device comprises a ram, such that prevention of the corresponding movement is achieved by locking the ram from extension or retraction.

4. The assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the twin spreader assembly is engaged with cables at corners of said head blocks, such that on locking of the locking device, extension or retraction of diagonally opposed cables results in the skew of the twin spreader assembly.

5. The assembly according to any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the linkage is arranged such that on release of the locking device, on application of an external load the linkage is movable so as to permit relative movement of the head blocks along the vertical axis.

6. The assembly according to claim 5, wherein the ram is a hydraulic ram such that releasing of the hydraulic ram includes the engagement of a low pressure relief valve having a first pre-determined pressure threshold.

7. The assembly according to claim 6, wherein the ram is a hydraulic ram such that locking of the hydraulic ram includes the engagement of a high pressure relief valve having a second pre-determined pressure threshold.

8. A method of skewing a twin spreader assembly, said twin spreader assembly comprising a pair of head blocks connected by an intermediate linkage, the method comprising the steps of:

applying an external force to diagonally opposed corners of said head blocks;

locking the linkage and so;

preventing movement of the linkage corresponding to spacing of the head blocks along a vertical axis;

redistributing the applied force so as to asymmetrically arrange the twin spreader, and so

rotating the twin spreader about the vertical axis corresponding to a skew arrangement.

~~9. A trolley assembly for use in a hoist system, the trolley assembly comprising~~

~~a trolley;~~

~~a pair of sheave sets for directing cables in engagement with a twin spreader assembly, said sheave sets in spaced relation within said trolley;~~

~~wherein said sheave sets linearly movable within said trolley along parallel axes to each other, said sheaves sets arranged such that on moving said pair of sheaves sets in opposed direction along their respective axes, the twin spreader assembly rotates about a vertical axis in a skew arrangement.~~