[0009] PTL 1: Japanese Examined Patent Application Publication No. 56-28135

PTL 2: Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application Publication No. 61-74554

PTL 3: Japanese Laid-Open Patent Application Publication No. 2006-288239

Summary of Invention

Technical Problem

[0010] The present inventors have set as an object of the present invention the realization of instant noodles, especially straight-type noodles not subjected to the waving treatment, which can prevent the sticking of the noodle string, are easily loosened at the time of cooking and eating, do not cause non-uniformity of drying, and have excellent texture. Then, the present inventors have studied various loosening agents, various dusting powder, and the like.

Solution to Problem

[0011] As a result, the present inventors have found that an extremely excellent sticking preventing effect can be obtained in such a manner that in a step before steaming the noodle strings in an instant noodles producing process, the powdered oil not in a liquid state but in a solid state is applied to the surface of the dough sheet or the surfaces of the noodle strings to be caused to adhere to the surface of the dough sheet or the surfaces of the noodle strings, especially, the powdered oil is applied to the surface of the dough sheet when the dough sheet is located between a compound rolling machine configured to form the dough sheet and a last roll-out roller configured to roll out the dough sheet.

Thus, the present inventors have achieved the first, second, and third aspects of the present invention. In accordance with the first aspect, there is provided a method of producing instant noodles, comprising: a kneading step; a rolling-out step; a slitting step; a steaming step; and a drying step, wherein before the steaming step, powdered oil is applied to a surface of a dough sheet and/or surfaces of noodle strings. In accordance with the second aspect, there is provided a method of preventing sticking of instant noodles, comprising the step of applying powdered oil to a surface of dough sheet and/or surfaces of noodle strings before a steaming step. In accordance with the third aspect, there is provided instant noodles obtained such that powdered oil is applied to a dough sheet or noodle strings before a steaming step. Hereinafter~~In the present invention~~, the "surface" denotes a portion exposed to the atmosphere and denotes one or all of an upper surface, lower surface, and side surface.

[0012] In an embodiment, ~~To be specific, the present invention is~~ a method of producing instant noodles is disclosed, including: a kneading step; a rolling-out step; a slitting step; a steaming step; and a drying step, wherein before the steaming step, powdered oil is applied to a surface of a dough sheet and/or surfaces of noodle strings. In addition, the present embodiment~~invention~~ is instant noodles which are easily loosened and obtained such that powdered oil is applied to a dough sheet or noodle strings before a steaming step. Especially, the present ~~invention~~embodiment can effectively prevent the sticking of hot-air dried noodles which conventionally tend to cause the sticking and the sticking of straight-type instant noodles obtained by slitting without using a waving box. Since the sticking can be prevented, the noodles are easily loosened at the time of cooking and eating. In addition, the noodles can be dried uniformly, and the non-uniformity of the drying does not occur. Thus, the instant noodles having excellent texture can be obtained. Herein, "applying the powdered oil" denotes that the powdered oil is used as the dusting powder instead of wheat flour or starch typically used as the dusting powder.

[0013] It is preferable that in the rolling-out step or after the rolling-out step and before the slitting step in the producing method of the present ~~invention~~embodiment, the powdered oil be applied to the surface of the dough sheet.

[0014] As above, by applying the powdered oil to the dough sheet before the steaming, a dramatically high sticking preventing effect can be obtained by the smaller amount of the oil than the amount in a conventional method of adding the powdered oil to the ingredient or the amount in a method of applying or spraying liquid oil to the surfaces of the noodle strings. In addition, the noodle quality and taste are not so affected, and this is extremely good. Especially, since the method of applying the powdered oil is performed with respect to the dough sheet, the powdered oil can be more evenly applied to the noodles than a case where the powdered oil is applied to the noodle strings after

slitting. This is because although the powdered oil is unlikely to reach portions where the noodle strings overlap one another when the powdered oil is applied after the slitting, this problem can be solved by applying the powdered oil to the dough sheet.

[0015] Especially, in a case where the powdered oil is applied to the dough sheet, in a process in which the dough sheet is rolled out by a plurality of rollers, the powdered oil is applied to the surface of the dough sheet before the dough sheet reaches the last one of the plurality of rollers. With this, after the powdered oil is applied to the surface of the dough sheet, the dough sheet is rolled out at least once by the roll-out roller. Therefore, the powdered oil is firmly fixed to the surfaces of the noodle strings, and the effect is higher. In the case of applying the dusting powder to the dough sheet, an adequate effect can be obtained by applying the dusting powder to only the upper surface or lower surface of the dough sheet. However, a higher effect can be expected by applying the dusting powder to both surfaces of the dough sheet.

[0016] It is preferable that in the producing method of the present ~~invention~~embodiment, the powdered oil be applied to the surfaces of the noodle strings after the slitting step and before the steaming step.

As above, by applying the powdered oil to the noodle strings before the steaming, a dramatically high sticking preventing effect can be obtained by the smaller amount of the powdered oil than the amount in the method of adding the powdered oil to the ingredient or the amount in the conventional method of applying or spraying the liquid oil to the surfaces of the noodle strings.

Advantageous Effects of Invention

[0017] According to the aspects of the present invention, solid powdered oil is caused to adhere to the surface of the dough sheet or the surfaces of the noodle strings before the steaming.

With this, the solid powdered oil melts during the steaming at high temperature and may act so as to coat the surfaces of the noodle strings. Therefore, the sticking of the noodle strings may be prevented. As above, by causing the powdered oil to adhere to the surfaces of the noodle strings, a dramatically high effect can be obtained by the smaller amount of the oil than the amount in the method of adding the oil to the ingredient or the amount in the method of dusting the liquid oil before or after the steaming. In addition, the taste of the noodles is not so affected, and the oil does not drip off during the rolling-out, the slitting, and the steaming and before or after the steaming. Thus, manufacturing problems are unlikely to occur.

[0018] Especially, although the noodle strings overlap one another, the powdered oil can be caused to uniformly adhere to the dough sheet by applying the powdered oil to the dough sheet. By rolling out the dough sheet once or more after the powdered oil is applied to the dough sheet, the powdered oil is firmly fixed to the dough sheet so as to get into the dough sheet by the rolling-out performed after the application of the powdered oil. Therefore, the oil melted during the steaming is prevented from dropping off from the noodle strings without achieving the effect of adequately coating the surfaces of the noodle strings. Thus, the high effect is obtained. Since particles of the powdered oil get into the surfaces of the noodles by the rolling-out, minute depressions and projections are formed on the surfaces of the noodles. Thus, an effect of reducing the contact area among the noodle strings by the depressions and projections on the surfaces of the noodle strings and preventing the sticking may be obtained.

[0019] As above, according to the instant noodles of the present ~~invention~~embodiment, the sticking is prevented. Since the sticking of the noodle strings does not occur, the noodles are satisfactorily loosened at the time of cooking and eating. Further, since the sticking of the noodle strings do not occur, the noodles can be dried uniformly, the non-uniformity