DE 2900195 describes an insert for a frying pan which requires no oil or fat for the frying of meat. The insert consists of a disc having a diameter slightly larger than the bottom of the frying pan, and is made of paper with a silicone polymer coating.

The Japanese patent application published as JP 2000-037171 concerns a spice containing sheet capable of uniformly and moderately imparting a spice, such as salt or a condiment, to a food preparation. According to this patent application, hydrocolloids, like corn starch, potato starch, rice starch or tapioca are used to adhere herbs, spices and flavouring substances to the sheet. The drawback of this practice is that hydrocolloids are poor transmitters of heat. They tend to get too hot and do not to melt. There is therefore a high risk of burning the preparation, especially any herbs and spices used as garnishes, and also the sheet. The hydrocolloids function solely as a glue.

The applicant has now found a simple and effective way to flavour food in readiness for cooking and to cook the food so that there is a minimum of splashing and splattering of cooking juices onto walls and other surfaces, without burning of garnishes or any cooking materials, and where the addition of oil or fat by the cook for cooking the food is avoided.

The object of a preferred embodiment of the invention is to provide a cooking aid that overcomes, at least in part, one or more of the above problems with known cooking methods.

Any discussion of the prior art throughout the specification should in no way be considered as an admission that such prior art is widely known or forms part of common general knowledge in the field.

It is an object of the present invention to overcome or ameliorate at least one of the disadvantages of the prior art, or to provide a useful alternative.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a cooking aid comprising:

a) a sheet of flexible burn resistant material;

b) a composition disposed on one face of the sheet, the composition comprising a mixture of:

i. vegetable or animal oil with a melting point below 20 °C;

ii. vegetable or animal fat with a melting point above 20 °C; and

iii. one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers, wherein the herbs, spices and flavor enhancers are coated with oil~~.~~, and

wherein the composition comprises oil in the amount of 1 to 34% by weight and fat in the amount of 66 to 99% by weight.

The sheet may be made of any material suitable for the purpose, but is preferably a baking paper.

Preferably, the oil is selected from the group consisting of sunflower oil, rape seed oil, cotton seed oil, peanut oil, soya oil, olive oil, palm oil, coconut oil, and palm kernel oil. The fat is preferably selected from the group consisting of pork fat, tallow, lard, bone fats, butter, fractionated palm fat, and any fully or partially hydrogenated or inter-esterified palm oil, cotton seed oil, peanut oil, soya oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, or rape seed oil.

In preferred embodiments of the invention, the composition comprises oil in the amount of 1 to 34 % by weight and fat in the amount of 66 to 99 % by weight. Preferably, the oil and fat together comprise 5 to 20 % by weight of the composition. The composition may also comprise 0.01 to 1 % by weight of a monoglyceride, sterol, or lecithin. The one or more herbs and spices are preferably selected from the group consisting of parsley, rosemary, pepper, and chives. The one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers preferably comprise 0.5 to 75 % by weight of the composition. The flavour enhancers may comprise 10 to 80 % by weight of the composition. Preferred flavour enhancers may be inorganic salts, salts of amino acids, protein hydrolysates, flavouring preparations, and yeast extracts.

In a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a process for the preparation of a cooking aid as claimed in the first aspect, comprising: ~~of the first aspect of the invention comprising:~~

a) extending the sheet of flexible burn resistant material on a flat surface;

b) spreading a blend of fat and oil on the sheet; ~~and~~

c) distributing the one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers over the blend of fat and oil; ~~,~~ and

d) coating the one or more herbs, spices and flavor enhancers with oil.

The process may also include the step of coating the one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers with oil, for example sunflower oil, preferably by spraying the oil.

In a further aspect, there is provided a use of a cooking aid of the first aspect of the invention for cooking food, where pieces of the food are placed on the cooking aid in direct contact with the composition and are cooked. Preferably, the food is meat such as beef, lamb, chicken, or fish. Alternatively, the food may be vegetables or vegetable pieces such as zucchinis, egg plant, tomatoes, or any other fleshy vegetable suitable for cooking in this manner.

In another aspect, there is provided a cooking aid prepared by the process according to the invention.

Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, throughout the description and the claims, the words “comprise”, “comprising”, and the like are to be construes in an inclusive sense as opposed to an exclusive or exhaustive sense; that is to say, in the sense of “including, but not limited to”.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The invention provides a simple and effective way to cook food with a minimum of splashing and splattering of cooking juices onto walls and other surfaces and with a

coating of garnishes and flavour enhancers without burning of garnishes or any cooking materials.

The consumer can pan fry or oven cook using a conventional baking paper coated with a mix of fat, oil, herbs, spice mixes and flavour enhancers. An important advantage is that no additional fat or oil needs to be added to the pan or oven dish. In other words, the fat and oil used for coating the baking paper with herbs, spice mixes and flavour enhancers have a dual purpose, i.e. to adhere the herbs, spice mixes and flavour enhancers to the paper and to provide the fat or oil needed for cooking.

CLAIMS

1. A cooking aid comprising:
    a) a sheet of flexible burn resistant material;
    b) a composition disposed on one face of the sheet, the composition comprising a mixture of:
        i. vegetable or animal oil with a melting point below 20 °C;
        ii. vegetable or animal fat with a melting point above 20 °C; and
        iii. one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers, wherein the herbs, spices and flavor enhancers are coated with oil.; and

    wherein the composition comprises oil in the amount of 1 to 34% by weight and fat in the amount of 66 to 99% by weight.

2. A cooking aid as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sheet is baking paper.

3. A cooking aid as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2, wherein the oil is selected from the group consisting of sunflower oil, rape seed oil, cotton seed oil, peanut oil, soya oil, olive oil, palm oil, coconut oil, and palm kernel oil.

4. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the fat is selected from the group consisting of pork fat, tallow, lard, bone fats, butter, fractionated palm fat, and any fully or partially hydrogenated or inter-esterified palm oil, cotton seed oil, peanut oil, soya oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, or rape seed oil.

~~5. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, wherein the composition comprises oil in the amount of 1 to 34 % by weight and fat in the amount of 66 to 99 % by weight.~~

~~6.~~5. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~5~~4, wherein the composition further comprises 0.01 to 1 % by weight of a monoglyceride, sterol, or lecithin.

~~7.~~6. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~6~~5, wherein the oil and fat together comprise 5 to 20 % by weight of the composition.

~~8.~~7. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~7~~6, wherein the one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers comprise 0.5 to 75 % by weight of the composition.

~~9.~~8. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~8~~7, wherein the one or more herbs and spices are selected from the group consisting of parsley, rosemary, pepper, and chives.

~~10.~~9. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~9~~8, wherein the flavour enhancers comprise 10 to 80 % by weight of the composition.

~~11.~~10. A cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~10~~9, wherein the one or more flavour enhancers are selected from the group consisting of inorganic salts, salts of amino acids, protein hydrolysates, flavouring preparations, and yeast extracts.

~~12.~~11. A process for the preparation of a cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~11~~10, comprising:

a) extending the sheet of flexible burn resistant material on a flat surface;

b) spreading a blend of fat and oil on the sheet; and

c) distributing the one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers over the blend of fat and oil;~~.~~ and

d) coating the one or more herb, spices and flavor enhancers with oil.

~~13. The process as claimed in claim 12, further including the step of coating the one or more herbs, spices and flavour enhancers with oil.~~

~~14.~~12. The use of a cooking aid as claimed in any of claims 1 to ~~11~~10 for cooking meat, where pieces of the meat are placed on the cooking aid in direct contact with the composition and are cooked.

~~15.~~13. The use of a cooking aid as claimed in any one of claims 1 to ~~11~~10 for cooking vegetables, where vegetable pieces are placed on the cooking aid in direct contact with the composition and are cooked.

14. A cooking aid prepared by the process as claimed in claim 11.