CLAIMS

1. Apparatus (1) for drying and/or roasting beans, such as cocoa beans, or parts of beans, such as nibs, comprising a frame (2), a drum (3) for receiving the beans or the parts of beans, rotatably mounted in the frame (2) and provided with an inlet (8) for a fluid, in particular a gas, such as heated air, a fan (14) for feeding the fluid via the inlet (8) to the drum (3), a driving means (9-12) for rotating the drum (3), and a burner (13) or the like for heating the exterior wall of the drum (3), wherein the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12) are located on the same end of the drum (3), the inlet (8) is coaxial with the axis of rotation of the drum (3) and wherein a door (4) is located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12).

2. Apparatus (1) according to claim 1, wherein the inlet (8) extends through a part of the driving means (9-12).

3. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising an outlet (7) and/or inlet (5) for the beans or the parts of beans, which outlet (7) and/or inlet (5) is located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12), preferably in the door (4).

4. Apparatus (1) according to claim 3, comprising an outlet (15) for the fluid, in addition to the outlet (7) for the beans or the parts of beans, located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12).

5. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the inlet (8) for the fluid comprises a tube (8A) for containing the fluid and a means for returning materials originating from the drum to the drum.

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6. Apparatus (1) according to claim 5, wherein said means comprises a conveying screw positioned inside the tube (8A).

7. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising a heater (16) and a controller for heating the fluid to a temperature in a range from 110 to 200 °C.

8. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the drum (3) has a capacity of at least 2000 kg, preferably at least 3000 kg of beans or parts of beans.

9. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising a mechanism for moving the door (4) rearwards in axial direction thus providing sufficient clearance for the nibs to exit the drum (3).

10. Apparatus (1) according to claim 9, wherein the door (4) is movable over a distance in a range from 2 to 15 centimeters.

11. Apparatus (1) according to claim 11 or 12, wherein the clearance is at least substantially annular.

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CLAIMS

1. Apparatus (1) for drying and/or roasting beans, such as cocoa beans, or parts of beans, such as nibs, comprising a frame (2), a drum (3) for receiving the beans or the parts of beans, rotatably mounted in the frame (2) and provided with an inlet (8) for a fluid, in particular a gas, such as heated air, a fan (14) for feeding the fluid via the inlet (8) to the drum (3), a driving means (9-12) for rotating the drum (3), and a burner (13) or the like for heating the exterior wall of the drum (3), wherein the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12) are located on the same end of the drum (3), the inlet (8) is coaxial with the axis of rotation of the drum (3) and wherein a door (4) is located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12).

2. Apparatus (1) according to claim 1, wherein the inlet (8) extends through a part of the driving means (9-12).

3. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising an outlet (7) and/or inlet (5) for the beans or the parts of beans, which outlet (7) and/or inlet (5) is located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12), preferably in the door (4).

4. Apparatus (1) according to claim 3, comprising an outlet (15) for the fluid, in addition to the outlet (7) for the beans or the parts of beans, located on the end of the drum (3) opposite the fluid inlet (8) and the driving means (9-12).

5. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the inlet (8) for the fluid comprises a tube

(8A) for containing the fluid and a means for returning materials originating from the drum to the drum.

6. Apparatus (1) according to claim 5, wherein said means for returning materials comprises a conveying screw positioned inside the tube (8A).

7. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising a heater (16) and a controller for heating the fluid to a temperature in a range from 110 to 200 °C.

8. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the drum (3) has a capacity of at least 2000 kg, preferably at least 3000 kg of beans or parts of beans.

9. Apparatus (1) according to any one of the preceding claims, comprising a mechanism for moving the door (4) rearwards in axial direction thus providing sufficient clearance for the nibs to exit the drum (3).

10. Apparatus (1) according to claim 9, wherein the door (4) is movable over a distance in a range from 2 to 15 centimeters.

11. Apparatus (1) according to claim 11 or 12, wherein the clearance is at least substantially annular.