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Filing date: 15 Jul 2019 (15.07.2019)

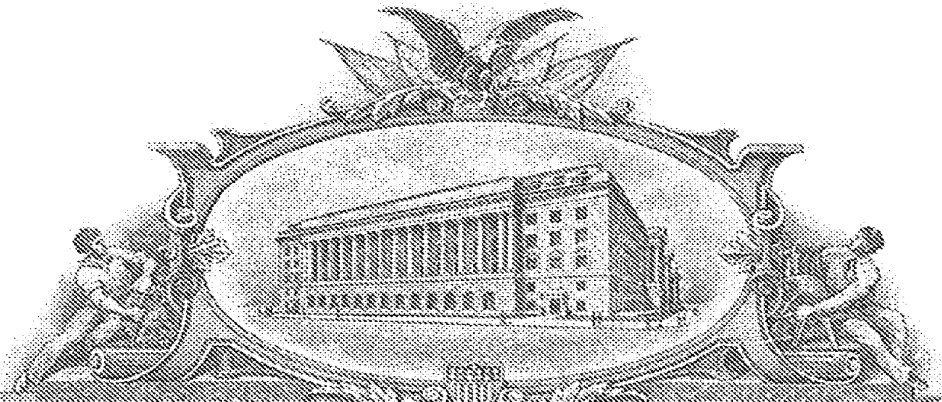
Application number: 62874193

Date of availability of document: 18 Jul 2019 (18.07.2019)

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THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

United States Patent and Trademark Office

August 03, 2020

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT ANNEXED HERETO IS A TRUE COPY FROM THE RECORDS OF THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE OF THOSE PAPERS OF THE BELOW IDENTIFIED PATENT APPLICATION THAT MET THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE GRANTED A FILING DATE UNDER 35 USC 111.

APPLICATION NUMBER: *62/874,193*

FILING DATE: *July 15, 2019*

THE COUNTRY CODE AND NUMBER OF YOUR PRIORITY APPLICATION, TO BE USED FOR FILING ABROAD UNDER THE PARIS CONVENTION, IS *US62/874,193*



Certified by

Andres Ibarra

Under Secretary of Commerce
for Intellectual Property
and Director of the United States
Patent and Trademark Office

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Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		
The application data sheet is part of the provisional or nonprovisional application for which it is being submitted. The following form contains the bibliographic data arranged in a format specified by the United States Patent and Trademark Office as outlined in 37 CFR 1.76. This document may be completed electronically and submitted to the Office in electronic format using the Electronic Filing System (EFS) or the document may be printed and included in a paper filed application.			

Secrecy Order 37 CFR 5.2:

☐	Portions or all of the application associated with this Application Data Sheet may fall under a Secrecy Order pursuant to 37 CFR 5.2 (Paper filers only. Applications that fall under Secrecy Order may not be filed electronically.)
--------------------------	---

Inventor Information:

Inventor	1				Remove	
Legal Name						
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix		
	Christopher	T.	Martin			
Residence Information (Select One) ☒ US Residency ☐ Non US Residency ☐ Active US Military Service						
City	North Attleboro	State/Province	MA	Country of Residence	US	
Mailing Address of Inventor:						
Address 1	51 Stoddard Drive					
Address 2						
City	North Attleboro	State/Province	MA			
Postal Code	02760	Country	US			
Inventor	2				Remove	
Legal Name						
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix		
	Thomas		Guerin			
Residence Information (Select One) ☒ US Residency ☐ Non US Residency ☐ Active US Military Service						
City	Boston	State/Province	MA	Country of Residence	US	
Mailing Address of Inventor:						
Address 1	109 D Street, #5					
Address 2						
City	Boston	State/Province	MA			
Postal Code	02127	Country	US			
Inventor	3				Remove	
Legal Name						
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix		
	Roger	Neil	Jackson			
Residence Information (Select One) ☐ US Residency ☒ Non US Residency ☐ Active US Military Service						

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

City	Cornwall	Country of Residence ⁱ	GB
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Mailing Address of Inventor:

Address 1	The Lodge, Hillside		
Address 2	Treburley, Launceston		
City	Cornwall	State/Province	
Postal Code	PL159PU	Country ⁱ	GB
Inventor	4	Remove	

Legal Name

Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix
	Joshua	D.	Anthony	

Residence Information (Select One) ☒ US Residency ☐ Non US Residency ☐ Active US Military Service

City	North Billerica	State/Province	MA	Country of Residence ⁱ	US
------	-----------------	----------------	----	-----------------------------------	----

Mailing Address of Inventor:

Address 1	3 Fieldstone Lane		
Address 2			
City	North Billerica	State/Province	MA
Postal Code	01862	Country ⁱ	US

All Inventors Must Be Listed - Additional Inventor Information blocks may be generated within this form by selecting the **Add** button.

Add

Correspondence Information:

Enter either Customer Number or complete the Correspondence Information section below.
For further information see 37 CFR 1.33(a).

☐ An Address is being provided for the correspondence Information of this application.

Customer Number	130401		
Email Address		Add Email	Remove Email

Application Information:

Title of the Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		
Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US	Small Entity Status Claimed	☐
Application Type	Provisional		
Subject Matter	Utility		
Total Number of Drawing Sheets (if any)	12	Suggested Figure for Publication (if any)	

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

Filing By Reference:

Only complete this section when filing an application by reference under 35 U.S.C. 111(c) and 37 CFR 1.57(a). Do not complete this section if application papers including a specification and any drawings are being filed. Any domestic benefit or foreign priority information must be provided in the appropriate section(s) below (i.e., "Domestic Benefit/National Stage Information" and "Foreign Priority Information").

For the purposes of a filing date under 37 CFR 1.53(b), the description and any drawings of the present application are replaced by this reference to the previously filed application, subject to conditions and requirements of 37 CFR 1.57(a).

Application number of the previously filed application	Filing date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Intellectual Property Authority or Country

Publication Information:

☐ Request Early Publication (Fee required at time of Request 37 CFR 1.219)

☐ **Request Not to Publish.** I hereby request that the attached application not be published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b) and certify that the invention disclosed in the attached application **has not and will not be** the subject of an application filed in another country, or under a multilateral international agreement, that requires publication at eighteen months after filing.

Representative Information:

Representative information should be provided for all practitioners having a power of attorney in the application. Providing this information in the Application Data Sheet does not constitute a power of attorney in the application (see 37 CFR 1.32). Either enter Customer Number or complete the Representative Name section below. If both sections are completed the customer Number will be used for the Representative Information during processing.

Please Select One:	☒ Customer Number	☐ US Patent Practitioner	☐ Limited Recognition (37 CFR 11.9)
Customer Number	130401		

Domestic Benefit/National Stage Information:

This section allows for the applicant to either claim benefit under 35 U.S.C. 119(e), 120, 121, 365(c), or 386(c) or indicate National Stage entry from a PCT application. Providing benefit claim information in the Application Data Sheet constitutes the specific reference required by 35 U.S.C. 119(e) or 120, and 37 CFR 1.78.

When referring to the current application, please leave the "Application Number" field blank.

Prior Application Status		Remove	
Application Number	Continuity Type	Prior Application Number	Filing or 371(c) Date (YYYY-MM-DD)
Additional Domestic Benefit/National Stage Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.			
			Add

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

Foreign Priority Information:

This section allows for the applicant to claim priority to a foreign application. Providing this information in the application data sheet constitutes the claim for priority as required by 35 U.S.C. 119(b) and 37 CFR 1.55. When priority is claimed to a foreign application that is eligible for retrieval under the priority document exchange program (PDX)¹ the information will be used by the Office to automatically attempt retrieval pursuant to 37 CFR 1.55(i)(1) and (2). Under the PDX program, applicant bears the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that a copy of the foreign application is received by the Office from the participating foreign intellectual property office, or a certified copy of the foreign priority application is filed, within the time period specified in 37 CFR 1.55(g)(1).

Application Number	Country ⁱ	Filing Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	Access Code ^j (if applicable)

Additional Foreign Priority Data may be generated within this form by selecting the **Add** button.

Statement under 37 CFR 1.55 or 1.78 for AIA (First Inventor to File) Transition Applications

☐ This application (1) claims priority to or the benefit of an application filed before March 16, 2013 and (2) also contains, or contained at any time, a claim to a claimed invention that has an effective filing date on or after March 16, 2013.

NOTE: By providing this statement under 37 CFR 1.55 or 1.78, this application, with a filing date on or after March 16, 2013, will be examined under the first inventor to file provisions of the AIA.

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

Authorization or Opt-Out of Authorization to Permit Access:

When this Application Data Sheet is properly signed and filed with the application, applicant has provided written authority to permit a participating foreign intellectual property (IP) office access to the instant application-as-filed (see paragraph A in subsection 1 below) and the European Patent Office (EPO) access to any search results from the instant application (see paragraph B in subsection 1 below).

Should applicant choose not to provide an authorization identified in subsection 1 below, applicant **must opt-out** of the authorization by checking the corresponding box A or B or both in subsection 2 below.

NOTE: This section of the Application Data Sheet is **ONLY** reviewed and processed with the **INITIAL** filing of an application. After the initial filing of an application, an Application Data Sheet cannot be used to provide or rescind authorization for access by a foreign IP office(s). Instead, Form PTO/SB/39 or PTO/SB/69 must be used as appropriate.

1. Authorization to Permit Access by a Foreign Intellectual Property Office(s)

A. Priority Document Exchange (PDX) - Unless box A in subsection 2 (opt-out of authorization) is checked, the undersigned hereby **grants the USPTO authority** to provide the European Patent Office (EPO), the Japan Patent Office (JPO), the Korean Intellectual Property Office (KIPO), the State Intellectual Property Office of the People's Republic of China (SIPO), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and any other foreign intellectual property office participating with the USPTO in a bilateral or multilateral priority document exchange agreement in which a foreign application claiming priority to the instant patent application is filed, access to: (1) the instant patent application-as-filed and its related bibliographic data, (2) any foreign or domestic application to which priority or benefit is claimed by the instant application and its related bibliographic data, and (3) the date of filing of this Authorization. See 37 CFR 1.14(h)(1).

B. Search Results from U.S. Application to EPO - Unless box B in subsection 2 (opt-out of authorization) is checked, the undersigned hereby **grants the USPTO authority** to provide the EPO access to the bibliographic data and search results from the instant patent application when a European patent application claiming priority to the instant patent application is filed. See 37 CFR 1.14(h)(2).

The applicant is reminded that the EPO's Rule 141(1) EPC (European Patent Convention) requires applicants to submit a copy of search results from the instant application without delay in a European patent application that claims priority to the instant application.

2. Opt-Out of Authorizations to Permit Access by a Foreign Intellectual Property Office(s)

☐ A. Applicant **DOES NOT** authorize the USPTO to permit a participating foreign IP office access to the instant application-as-filed. If this box is checked, the USPTO will not be providing a participating foreign IP office with any documents and information identified in subsection 1A above.

☐ B. Applicant **DOES NOT** authorize the USPTO to transmit to the EPO any search results from the instant patent application. If this box is checked, the USPTO will not be providing the EPO with search results from the instant application.

NOTE: Once the application has published or is otherwise publicly available, the USPTO may provide access to the application in accordance with 37 CFR 1.14.

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

Applicant Information:

Providing assignment information in this section does not substitute for compliance with any requirement of part 3 of Title 37 of CFR to have an assignment recorded by the Office.

Applicant	1	Remove
------------------	---	---------------------------------------

If the applicant is the inventor (or the remaining joint inventor or inventors under 37 CFR 1.45), this section should not be completed. The information to be provided in this section is the name and address of the legal representative who is the applicant under 37 CFR 1.43; or the name and address of the assignee, person to whom the inventor is under an obligation to assign the invention, or person who otherwise shows sufficient proprietary interest in the matter who is the applicant under 37 CFR 1.46. If the applicant is an applicant under 37 CFR 1.46 (assignee, person to whom the inventor is obligated to assign, or person who otherwise shows sufficient proprietary interest) together with one or more joint inventors, then the joint inventor or inventors who are also the applicant should be identified in this section.

Assignee	Legal Representative under 35 U.S.C. 117	Joint Inventor
----------	--	----------------

☒ Person to whom the inventor is obligated to assign.
 ☐ Person who shows sufficient proprietary interest

If applicant is the legal representative, indicate the authority to file the patent application, the inventor is:

Name of the Deceased or Legally Incapacitated Inventor:

If the Applicant is an Organization check here. ☒

Organization Name	SHARKNINJA OPERATING LLC		
-------------------	--------------------------	--	--

Mailing Address Information For Applicant:

Address 1	39 A Street		
Address 2	Suite 100		
City	Needham	State/Province	MA
Country	US	Postal Code	02494
Phone Number		Fax Number	
Email Address			

Additional Applicant Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.

Assignee Information including Non-Applicant Assignee Information:

Providing assignment information in this section does not substitute for compliance with any requirement of part 3 of Title 37 of CFR to have an assignment recorded by the Office.

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

Assignee 1				
Complete this section if assignee information, including non-applicant assignee information, is desired to be included on the patent application publication. An assignee-applicant identified in the "Applicant Information" section will appear on the patent application publication as an applicant. For an assignee-applicant, complete this section only if identification as an assignee is also desired on the patent application publication.				
				Remove
If the Assignee or Non-Applicant Assignee is an Organization check here. ☐				
Prefix	Given Name	Middle Name	Family Name	Suffix
Mailing Address Information For Assignee including Non-Applicant Assignee:				
Address 1				
Address 2				
City		State/Province		
Country i		Postal Code		
Phone Number		Fax Number		
Email Address				
Additional Assignee or Non-Applicant Assignee Data may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.				Add

Signature:

NOTE: This Application Data Sheet must be signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.33(b). However, if this Application Data Sheet is submitted with the **INITIAL** filing of the application and either box A or B is not checked in subsection 2 of the "Authorization or Opt-Out of Authorization to Permit Access" section, then this form must also be signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.14(c).

This Application Data Sheet **must** be signed by a patent practitioner if one or more of the applicants is a **juristic entity** (e.g., corporation or association). If the applicant is two or more joint inventors, this form must be signed by a patent practitioner, **all** joint inventors who are the applicant, or one or more joint inventor-applicants who have been given power of attorney (e.g., see USPTO Form PTO/AIA/81) on behalf of **all** joint inventor-applicants.

See 37 CFR 1.4(d) for the manner of making signatures and certifications.

Signature	/Alicia Hayter, Reg. No. 67093/		Date (YYYY-MM-DD)	2019-07-15
First Name	Alicia	Last Name	Hayter	Registration Number
				67093
Additional Signature may be generated within this form by selecting the Add button.				Add

Application Data Sheet 37 CFR 1.76		Attorney Docket Number	EUP1549US
		Application Number	
Title of Invention	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF		

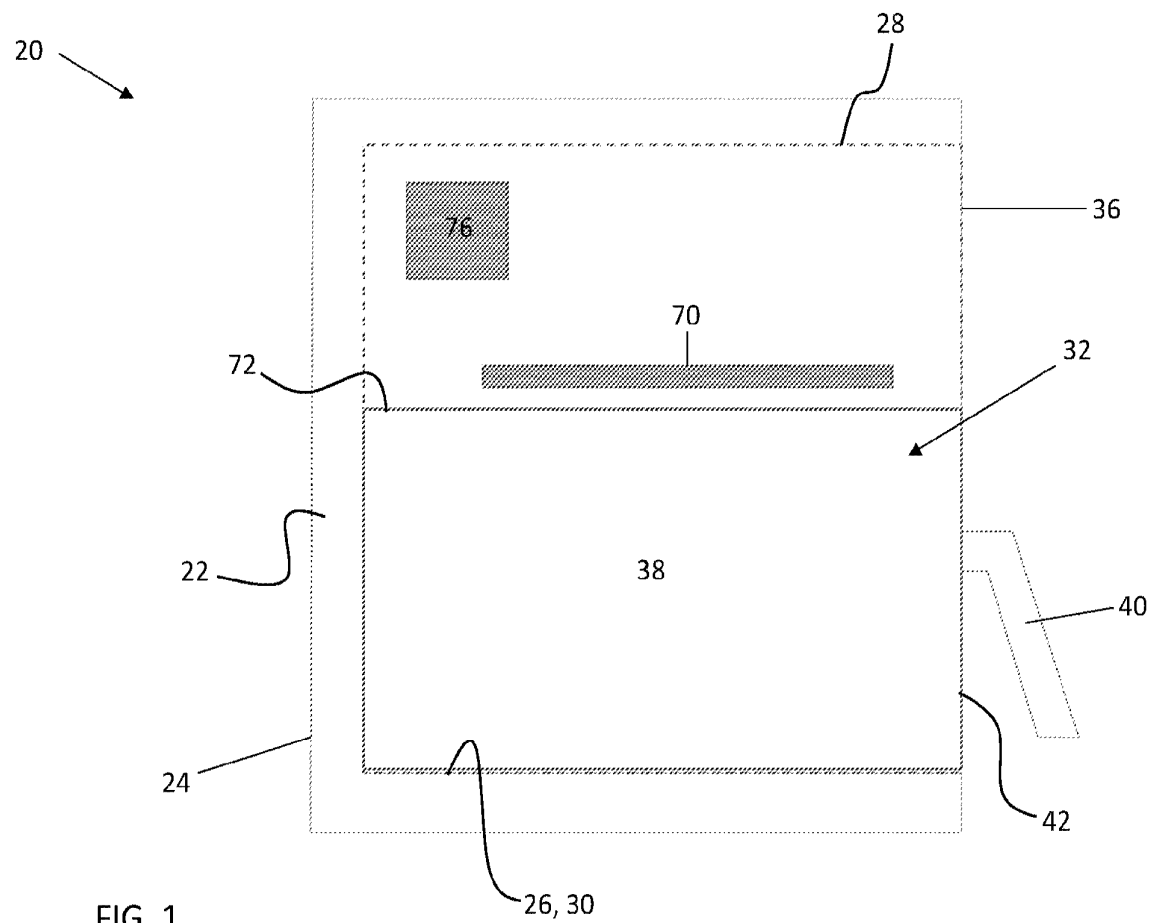
This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.76. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 23 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application data sheet form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. **SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.**

Privacy Act Statement

The Privacy Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-579) requires that you be given certain information in connection with your submission of the attached form related to a patent application or patent. Accordingly, pursuant to the requirements of the Act, please be advised that: (1) the general authority for the collection of this information is 35 U.S.C. 2(b)(2); (2) furnishing of the information solicited is voluntary; and (3) the principal purpose for which the information is used by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is to process and/or examine your submission related to a patent application or patent. If you do not furnish the requested information, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office may not be able to process and/or examine your submission, which may result in termination of proceedings or abandonment of the application or expiration of the patent.

The information provided by you in this form will be subject to the following routine uses:

- 1 The information on this form will be treated confidentially to the extent allowed under the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. 552a). Records from this system of records may be disclosed to the Department of Justice to determine whether the Freedom of Information Act requires disclosure of these records.
- 2 A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, in the course of presenting evidence to a court, magistrate, or administrative tribunal, including disclosures to opposing counsel in the course of settlement negotiations.
- 3 A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Member of Congress submitting a request involving an individual, to whom the record pertains, when the individual has requested assistance from the Member with respect to the subject matter of the record.
- 4 A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a contractor of the Agency having need for the information in order to perform a contract. Recipients of information shall be required to comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974, as amended, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552a(m).
- 5 A record related to an International Application filed under the Patent Cooperation Treaty in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the International Bureau of the World Intellectual Property Organization, pursuant to the Patent Cooperation Treaty.
- 6 A record in this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to another federal agency for purposes of National Security review (35 U.S.C. 181) and for review pursuant to the Atomic Energy Act (42 U.S.C. 218(c)).
- 7 A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the Administrator, General Services, or his/her designee, during an inspection of records conducted by GSA as part of that agency's responsibility to recommend improvements in records management practices and programs, under authority of 44 U.S.C. 2904 and 2906. Such disclosure shall be made in accordance with the GSA regulations governing inspection of records for this purpose, and any other relevant (i.e., GSA or Commerce) directive. Such disclosure shall not be used to make determinations about individuals.
- 8 A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to the public after either publication of the application pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 122(b) or issuance of a patent pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 151. Further, a record may be disclosed, subject to the limitations of 37 CFR 1.14, as a routine use, to the public if the record was filed in an application which became abandoned or in which the proceedings were terminated and which application is referenced by either a published application, an application open to public inspections or an issued patent.
- 9 A record from this system of records may be disclosed, as a routine use, to a Federal, State, or local law enforcement agency, if the USPTO becomes aware of a violation or potential violation of law or regulation.



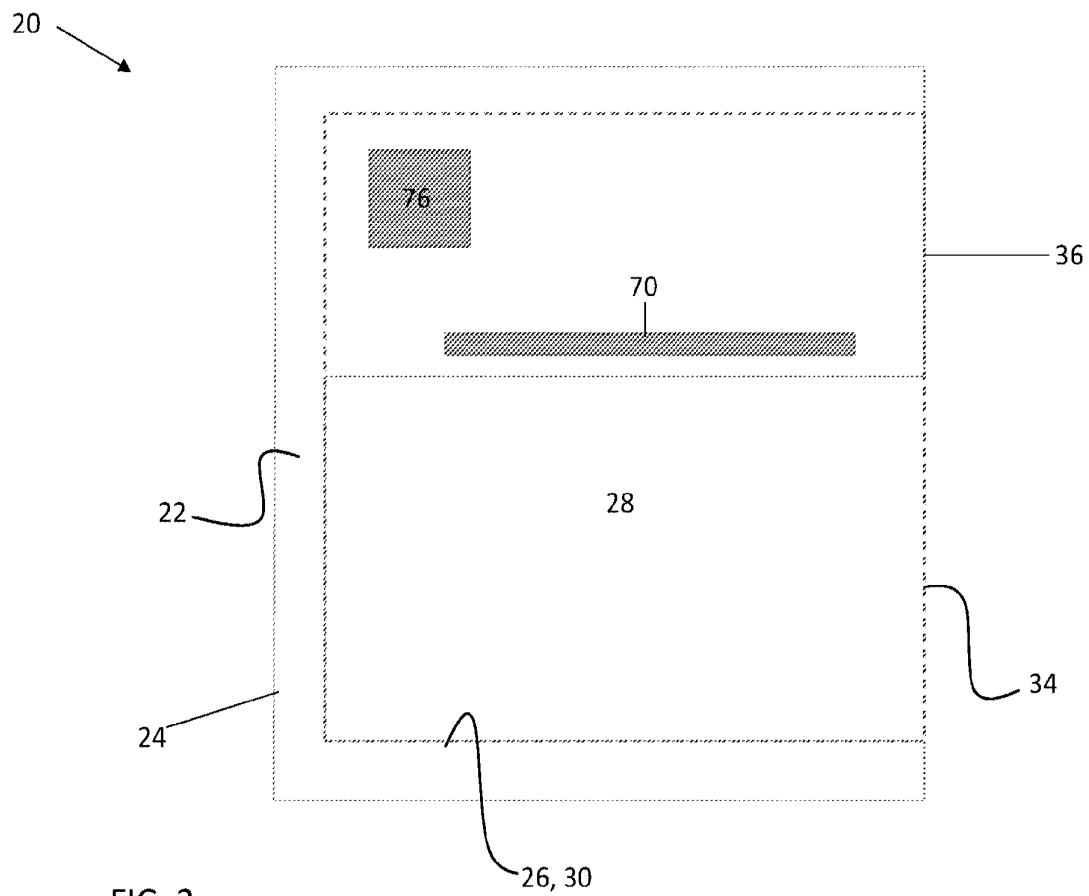


FIG. 2

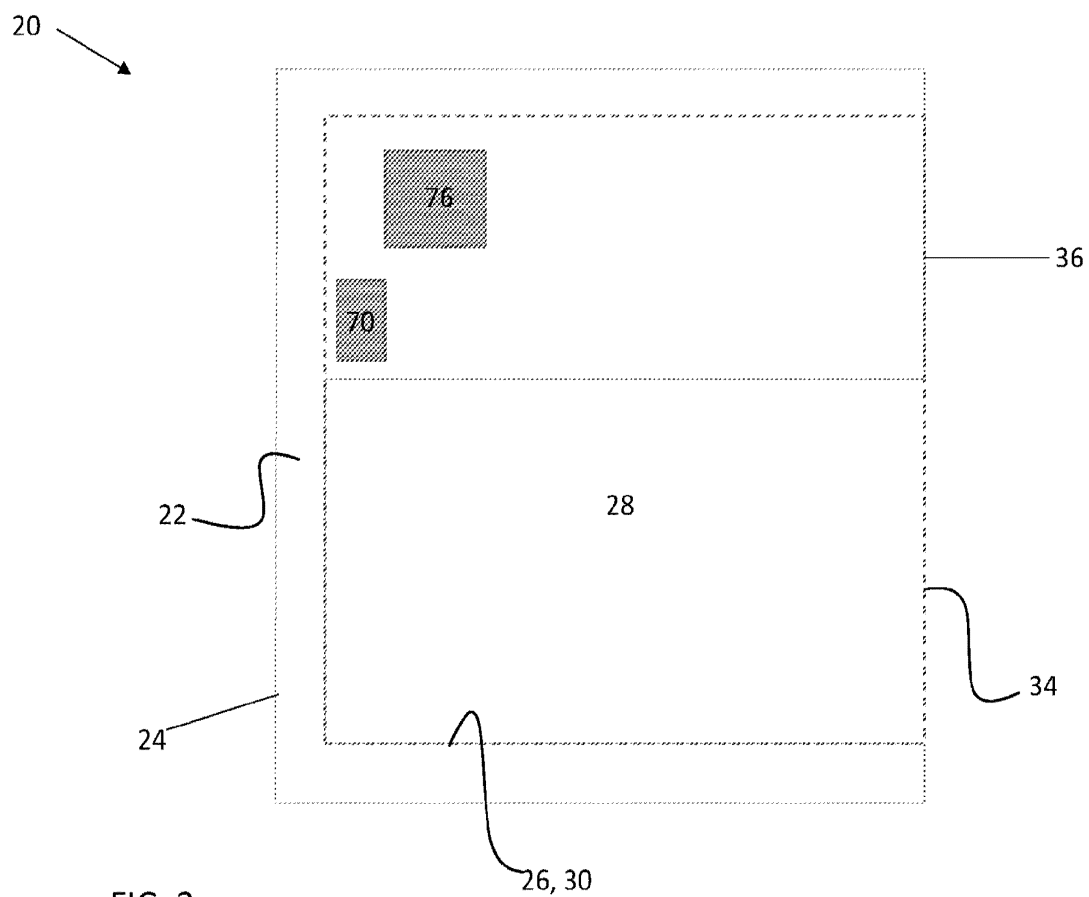


FIG. 3

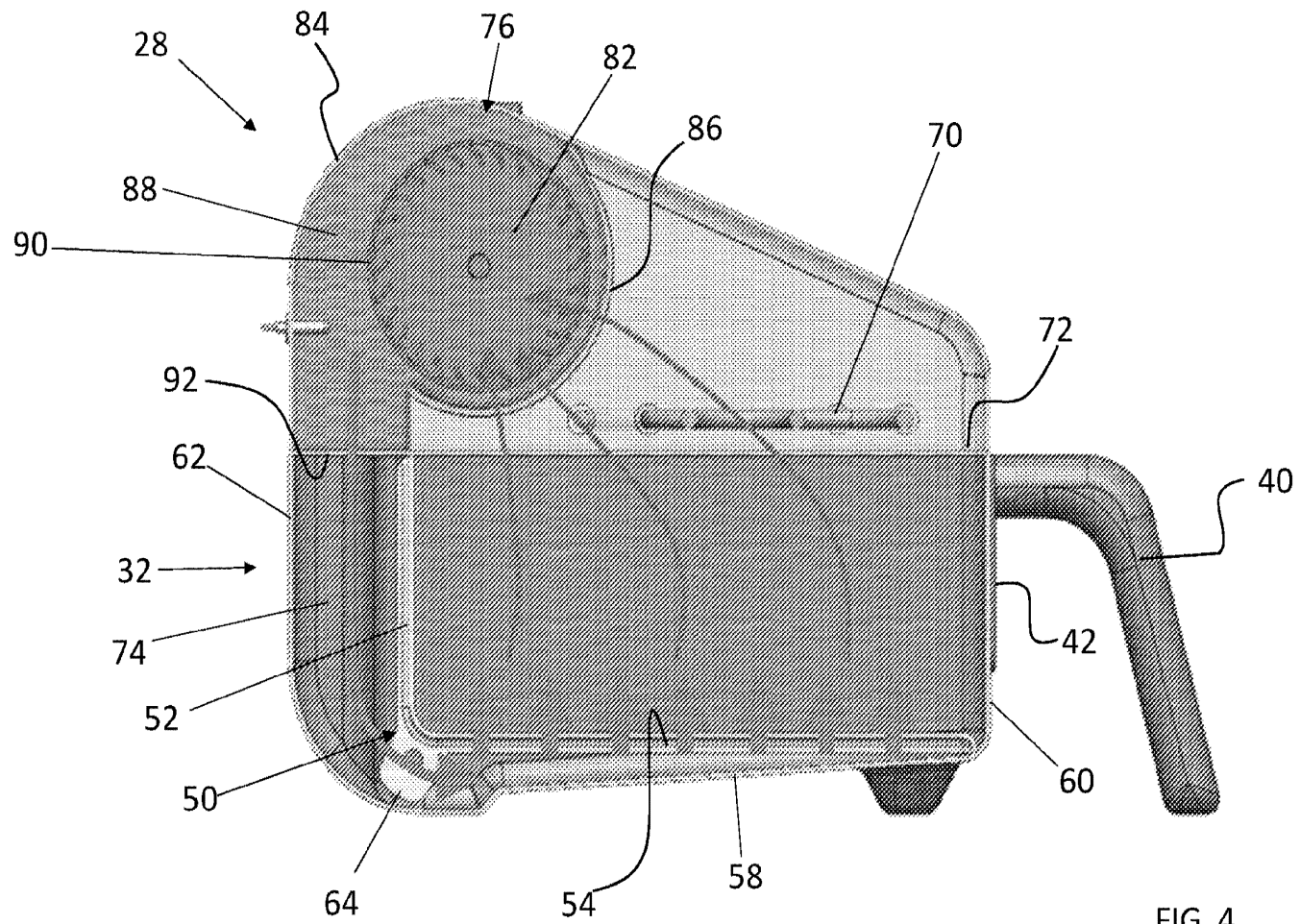


FIG. 4

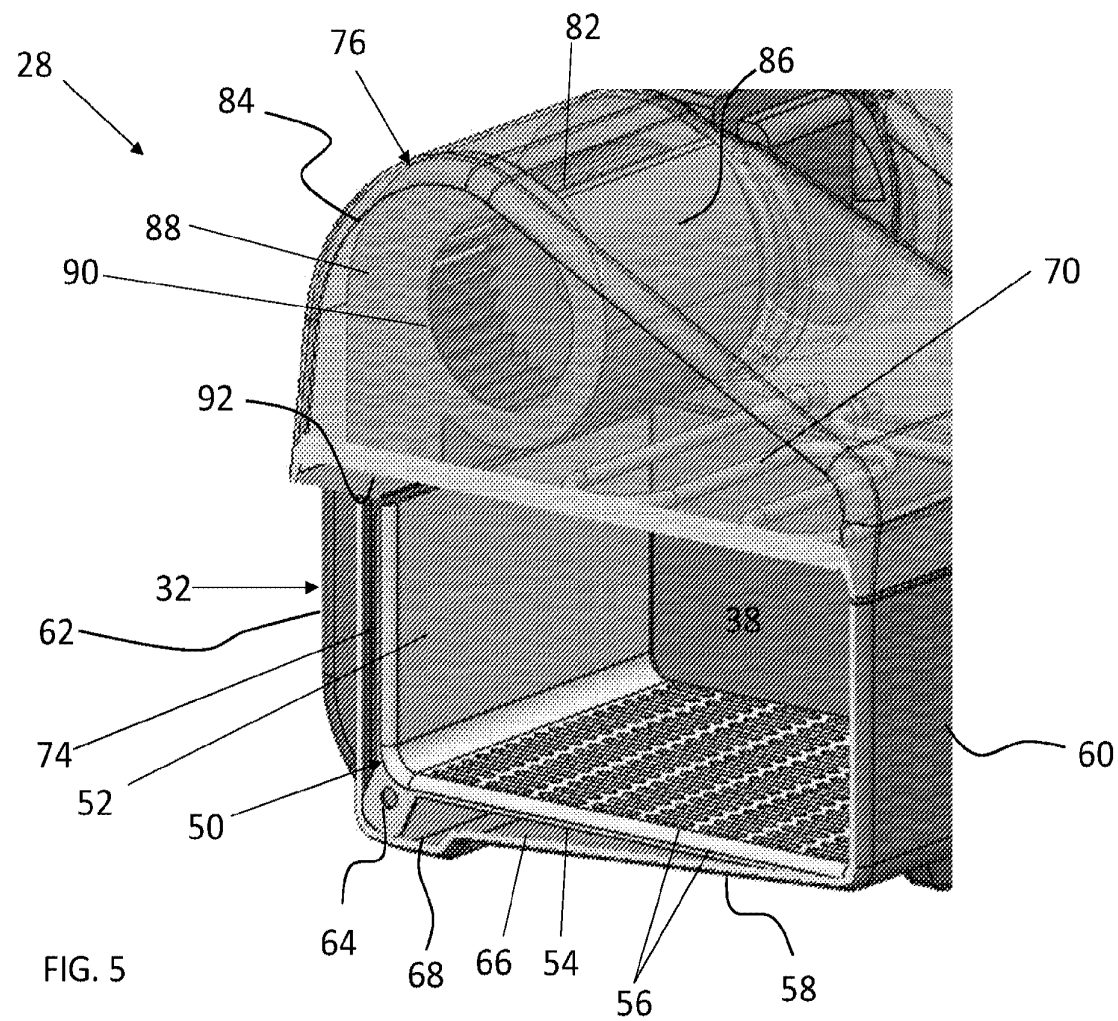


FIG. 5

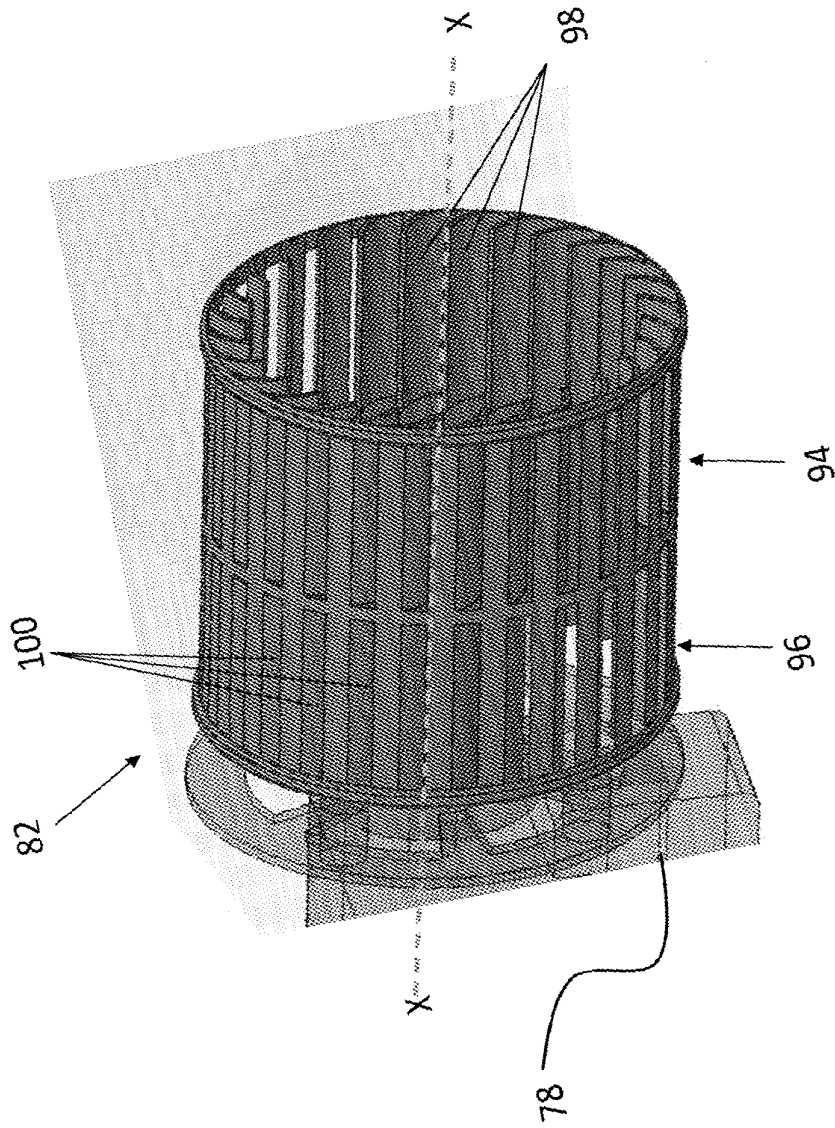


FIG. 6

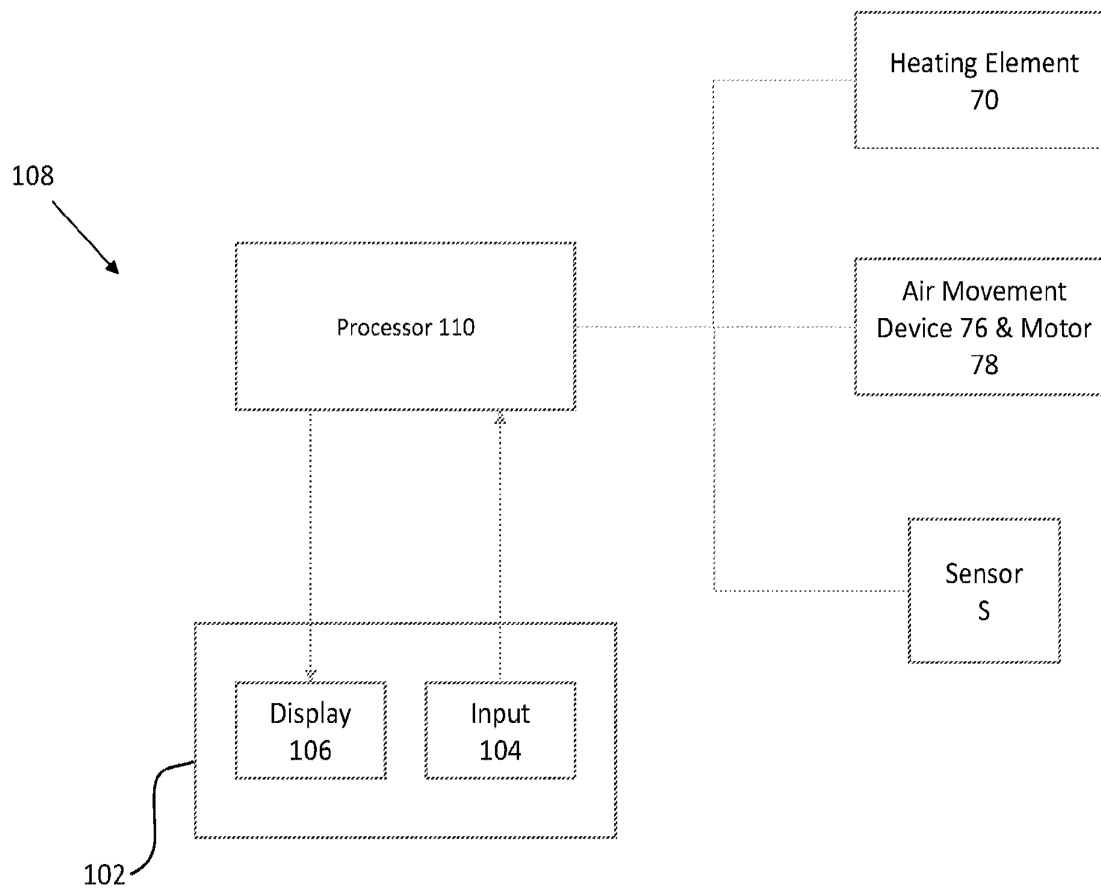
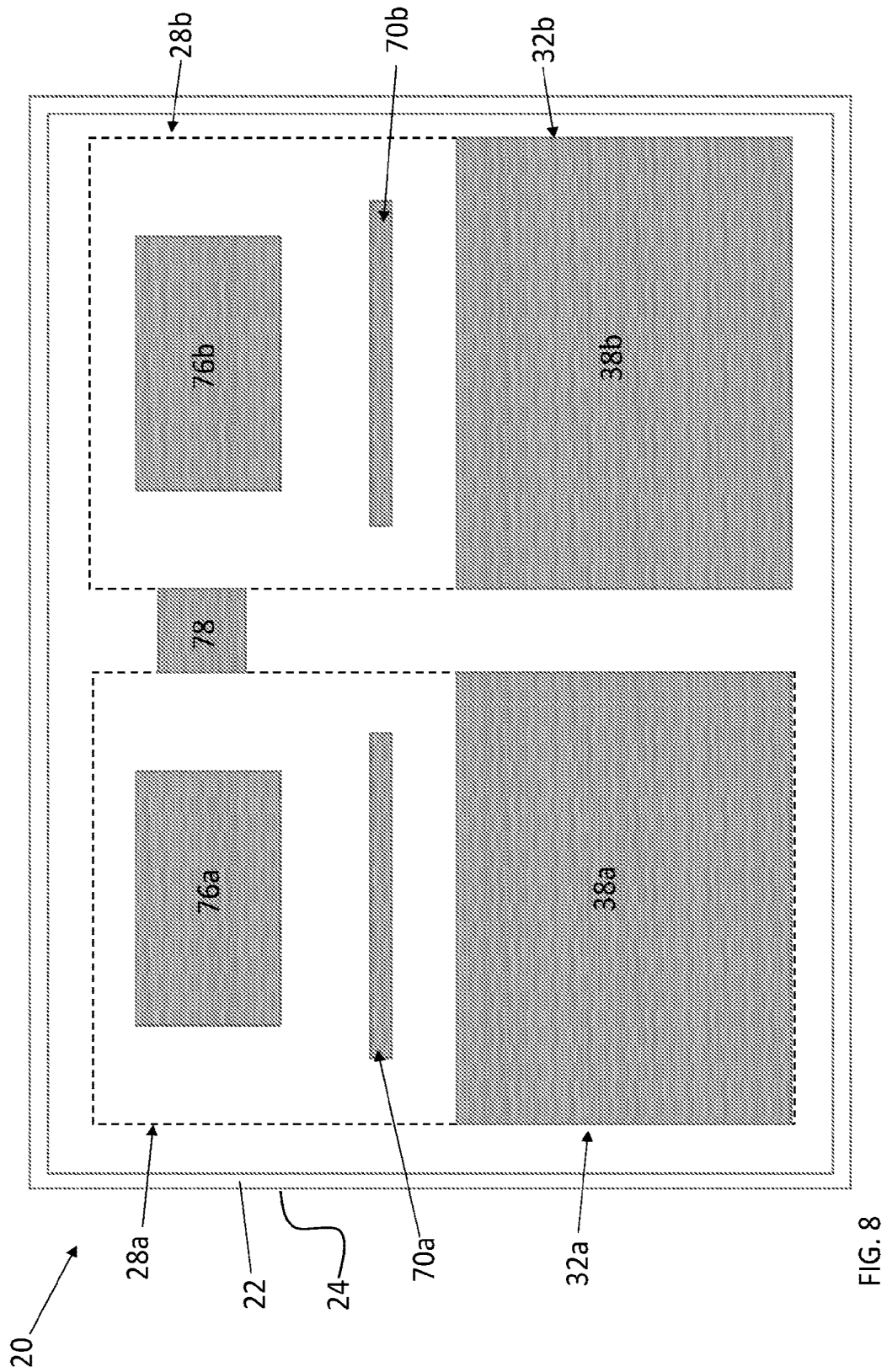


FIG. 7



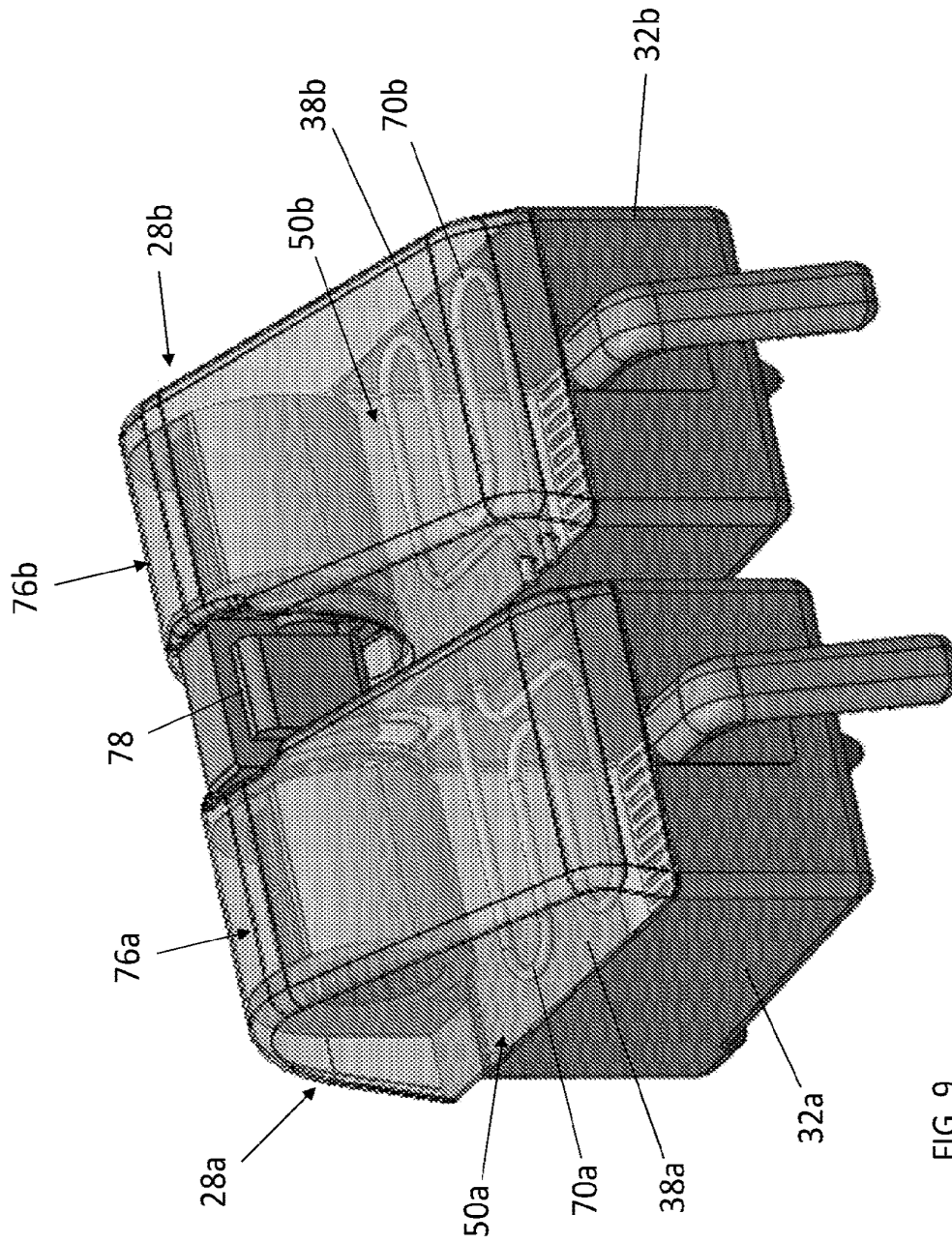
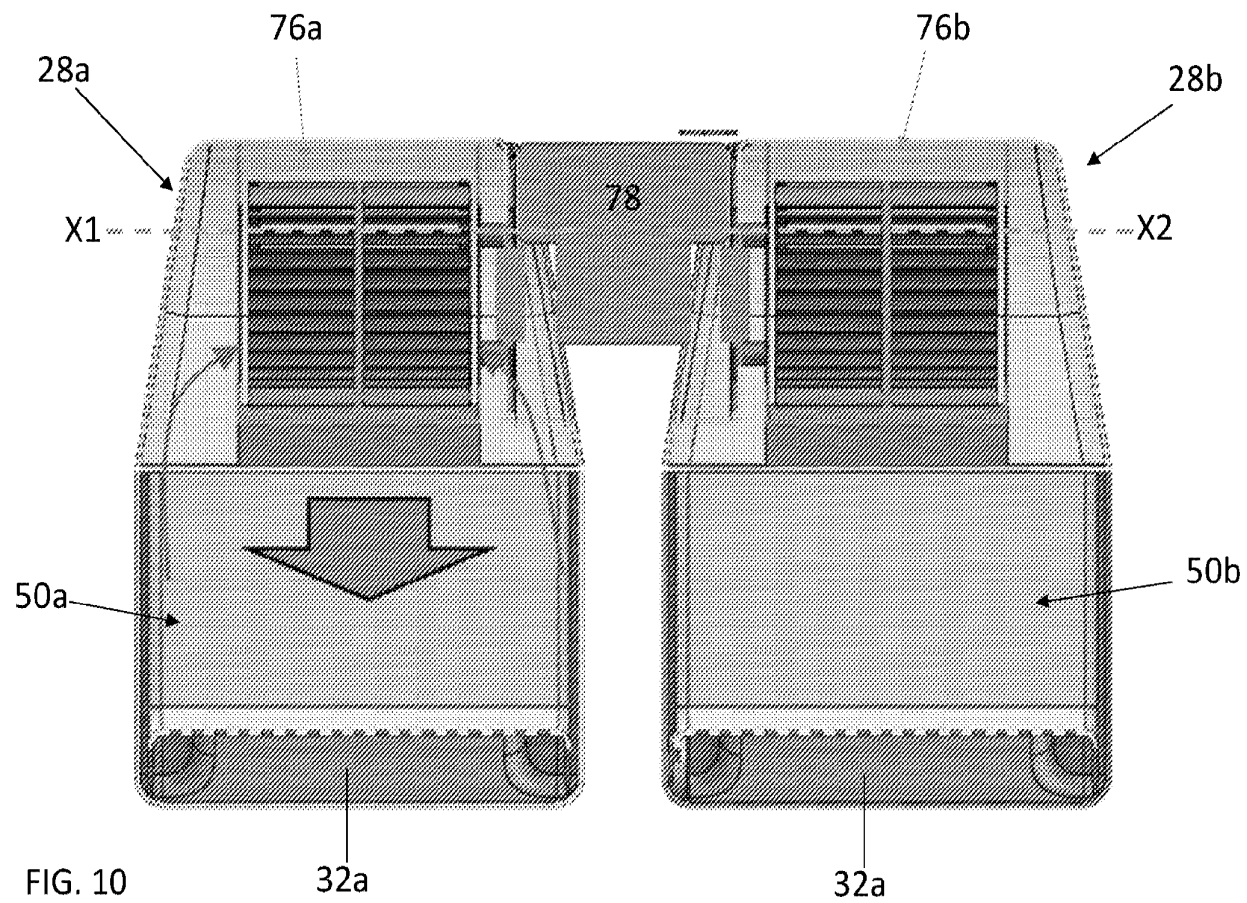


FIG. 9



10/12

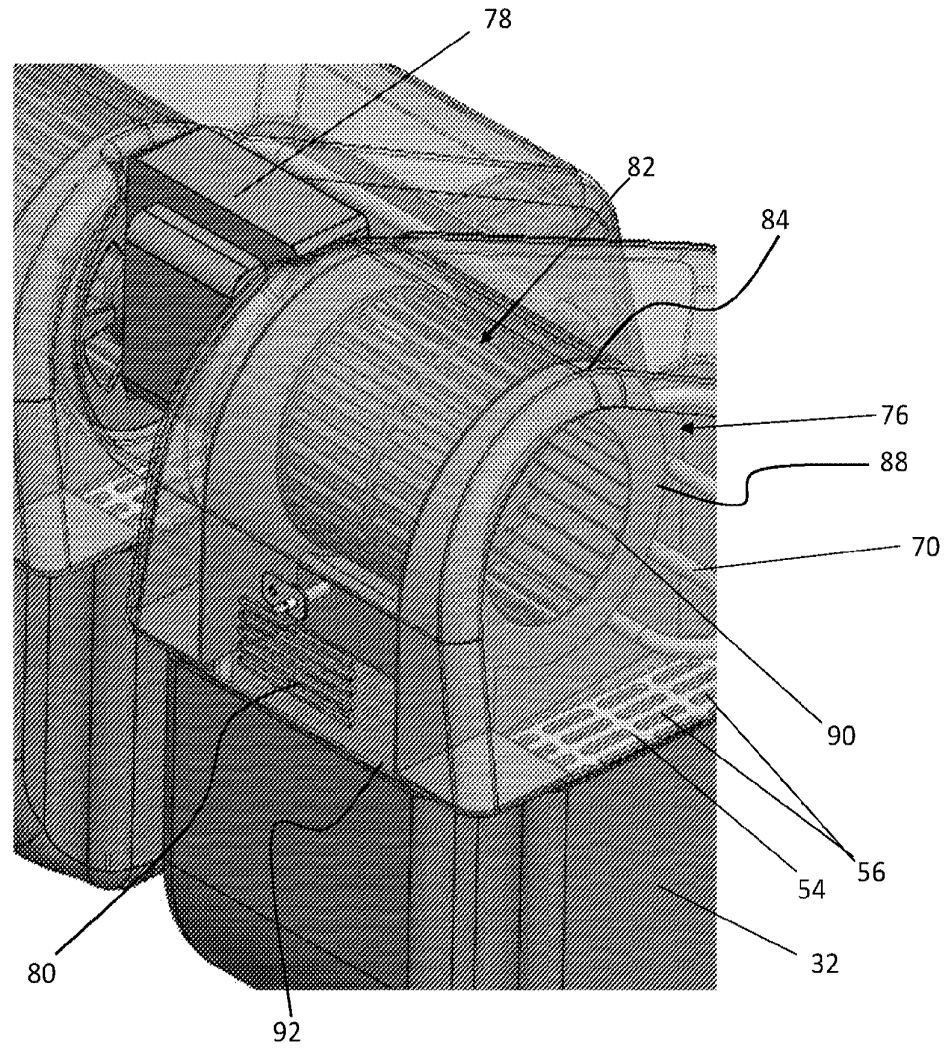


FIG. 11

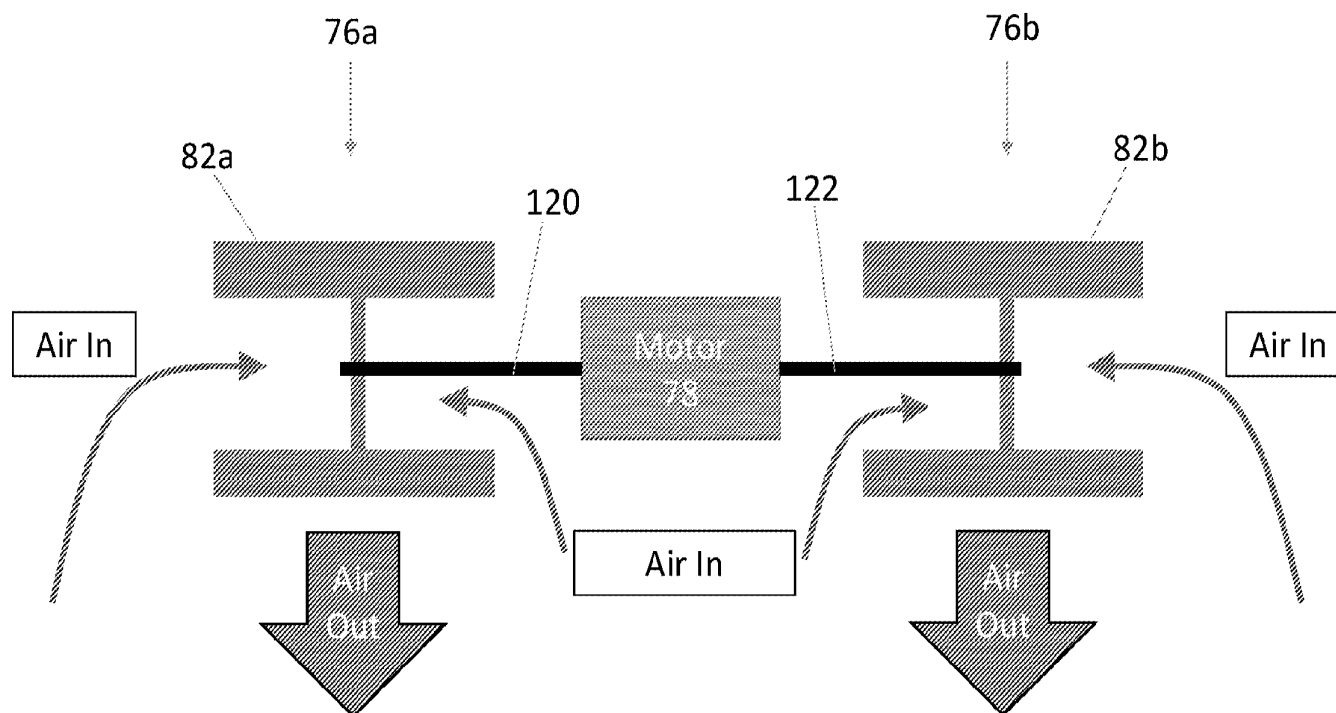


FIG. 12

Electronic Acknowledgement Receipt

EFS ID:	36585278
Application Number:	62874193
International Application Number:	
Confirmation Number:	1001
Title of Invention:	COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF
First Named Inventor/Applicant Name:	Christopher T. Martin
Customer Number:	130401
Filer:	Alicia Anne Hayter/Jennelle Masotti
Filer Authorized By:	Alicia Anne Hayter
Attorney Docket Number:	EUP1549US
Receipt Date:	15-JUL-2019
Filing Date:	
Time Stamp:	15:49:16
Application Type:	Provisional

Payment information:

Submitted with Payment	yes
Payment Type	CARD
Payment was successfully received in RAM	\$ 280
RAM confirmation Number	071619INTEFSW15494600
Deposit Account	061130
Authorized User	Jennelle Masotti

The Director of the USPTO is hereby authorized to charge indicated fees and credit any overpayment as follows:

37 CFR 1.16 (National application filing, search, and examination fees)

37 CFR 1.19 (Document supply fees)

File Listing:

Document Number	Document Description	File Name	File Size(Bytes)/ Message Digest	Multi Part /.zip	Pages (if appl.)
1	Application Data Sheet	8CE2501.PDF	1256266	no	9
			dd138207d580ca9a2f8ccf6be481f4d65aebb a43f		
Warnings:					
Information:					
2	Specification	8CF4989.PDF	115583	no	31
			a75bb4a6ef277c5b949ccbd871badfb6c86 59bd0		
Warnings:					
Information:					
3	Drawings-only black and white line drawings	8CF3949.PDF	909755	no	12
			d52b1383cc4948737979ead8bcd147a038 be5e08		
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Information:					
4	Fee Worksheet (SB06)	fee-info.pdf	29772	no	2
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Warnings:					
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Total Files Size (in bytes):			2311376		

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New Applications Under 35 U.S.C. 111

If a new application is being filed and the application includes the necessary components for a filing date (see 37 CFR 1.53(b)-(d) and MPEP 506), a Filing Receipt (37 CFR 1.54) will be issued in due course and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the filing date of the application.

National Stage of an International Application under 35 U.S.C. 371

If a timely submission to enter the national stage of an international application is compliant with the conditions of 35 U.S.C. 371 and other applicable requirements a Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicating acceptance of the application as a national stage submission under 35 U.S.C. 371 will be issued in addition to the Filing Receipt, in due course.

New International Application Filed with the USPTO as a Receiving Office

If a new international application is being filed and the international application includes the necessary components for an international filing date (see PCT Article 11 and MPEP 1810), a Notification of the International Application Number and of the International Filing Date (Form PCT/RO/105) will be issued in due course, subject to prescriptions concerning national security, and the date shown on this Acknowledgement Receipt will establish the international filing date of the application.

COOKING DEVICE AND COMPONENTS THEREOF

BACKGROUND

[0001] Embodiments of the present disclosure relate generally to a cooking system, and more specifically, to a countertop cooking system operable in a plurality of distinct cooking modes.

SUMMARY

[0002] According to an embodiment, cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment and a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment. A cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container. A bottom surface of said cooking container is angled upwardly. A heating element is associated with said at least one internal compartment.

[0003] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said bottom surface of said cooking container is oriented at an angle to a surface for supporting the cooking system.

[0004] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said bottom surface of said cooking container is not orthogonal to a back wall of said cooking container.

[0005] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said cooking container includes a front wall and a back wall, and a height of said cooking container adjacent said back wall of said cooking container is greater than a height of said cooking container adjacent said front wall of said cooking container.

[0006] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container, said insert including a food support surface having at least one opening formed therein.

[0007] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said insert at least partially defines said cooking volume within said interior of said cooking container.

[0008] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said food support surface has a generally horizontal orientation when said insert is arranged within said interior of said cooking container.

[0009] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said food support surface is offset from said bottom surface of said cooking container by a clearance.

[0010] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said clearance defined between said food support surface and said bottom surface of said cooking container varies over at least one dimension of the cooking container.

[0011] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said insert further comprises at least one protrusion and said bottom surface of said cooking container further comprises at least one channel, said at least one protrusion being positioned within said at least one channel when said insert is properly installed in said interior of said cooking container.

[0012] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined between said insert and a portion of said cooking container.

[0013] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said insert further comprises a blocking wall arranged at an angle to said food support surface and said air duct is defined between said blocking wall and a back wall of said cooking container.

[0014] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising an air movement mechanism disposed in said housing.

[0015] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about an axis of rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

[0016] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism further comprises a fan housing having a first inlet, a second inlet and an outlet, the first inlet and the second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet and a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

[0017] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

[0018] According to an embodiment, a cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment, a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, a cooking volume being defined within an interior of said cooking container, and a heating element associated with said at least one internal compartment. An air movement mechanism is disposed in said housing. The air movement mechanism is rotatable about an axis of rotation oriented relatively horizontally.

[0019] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said axis of rotation is oriented substantially perpendicular to a flow provided at an outlet of said air movement mechanism towards a relative bottom of said housing.

[0020] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said cooking container is movable relative to said housing along an axis of translation, and said axis of rotation is oriented perpendicularly to said axis of translation.

[0021] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism includes a first inlet, a second inlet, and an outlet, said first inlet and said second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet.

[0022] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined within said cooking container, and said outlet of said air movement mechanism is aligned with said air duct.

[0023] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about said axis or rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

[0024] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism further comprises a fan housing and a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

[0025] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

[0026] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments a configuration of said first plurality of impeller blades is substantially identical to a configuration of said second plurality of impeller blades.

[0027] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments a configuration of said first plurality of impeller blades is different than a configuration of said second plurality of impeller blades.

[0028] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is disposed vertically above said cooking volume.

[0029] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is disposed vertically above said cooking container.

[0030] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container,

wherein a portion of said air movement mechanism is disposed in vertical alignment with said insert.

[0031] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is horizontally offset from said heating element.

[0032] According to an embodiment, a cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment, and a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment. A cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container. A heating element associated with said cooking volume. A rotatable air movement mechanism has a first inlet arranged in a first plane of said air movement mechanism and a second inlet arranged in a second plane of said air movement mechanism, said second plane being distinct from said first plane. An outlet of the air movement mechanism is arranged in fluid communication with both said first inlet and said second inlet.

[0033] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is rotatable about an axis of rotation and during operation of said air movement mechanism, said first inlet and said second inlet being fixed relative to said axis of rotation.

[0034] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said cooking container is movable relative to said housing along an axis of translation, and said axis of rotation is oriented perpendicularly to said axis of translation.

[0035] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said first plane and said second plane are substantially parallel.

[0036] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said first plane is defined at a first side of said air movement mechanism and said second plane is defined at a second side of said air movement mechanism.

[0037] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said second side is opposite said first side.

[0038] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined within said cooking container, and said outlet of said air movement mechanism is aligned with said air duct.

[0039] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about an axis or rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

[0040] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism further comprises a fan housing and a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

[0041] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

[0042] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is positioned vertically above at least one of said cooking volume and said cooking container.

[0043] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container, wherein a portion of said air movement mechanism is disposed in vertical alignment with said insert.

[0044] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said air movement mechanism is horizontally offset from said heating element.

[0045] According to yet another embodiment, a cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment and a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment. A cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container. A heating element is associated with said cooking volume. A plurality of air

movement mechanism is disposed within said housing and a motor is operably coupled to said plurality of air movement mechanisms.

[0046] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor is located externally to said at least one internal compartment.

[0047] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said plurality of air movement mechanisms includes a first air movement mechanism and a second air movement mechanism.

[0048] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor includes a first output shaft and a second output shaft, said first air movement mechanism being operably coupled to said first output shaft and said second air movement mechanism being operably coupled to said second output shaft.

[0049] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said first air movement mechanism and a second air movement mechanism are arranged coaxially.

[0050] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor operates said first air movement mechanism at a first speed and said motor operates said second air movement mechanism at a second speed, said first speed and said second speed being substantially identical.

[0051] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor operates said first air movement mechanism at a first speed and said motor operates said second air movement mechanism at a second speed, said first speed being different than said second speed.

[0052] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one internal compartment includes a first internal compartment and a second internal compartment, said first internal compartment being fluidly separate from said second internal compartment.

[0053] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said first air movement mechanism is positioned within said first internal compartment and said second air movement mechanism is positioned within said second internal compartment.

[0054] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor is positioned between said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

[0055] According to yet another embodiment, a cooking system includes a housing having a fluidly separate first internal compartment and second internal compartment. At least one cooking container is receivable within one of said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment, wherein at least one cooking volume is defined within an interior of said at least one cooking container. At least one heating element is disposed in said housing.

[0056] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one cooking includes a first cooking container receivable within said first internal compartment and a second cooking container receivable within said second internal compartment, wherein a first cooking volume is defined within an interior of said first cooking container and a second cooking volume is defined within an interior of said second cooking container.

[0057] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one heating element includes a first heating element positioned within said first internal compartment and a second heating element positioned within said second internal compartment.

[0058] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising at least one air movement mechanism disposed within said housing.

[0059] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one air movement mechanism includes a first inlet, a second

inlet, and an outlet, said first inlet and said second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet.

[0060] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one air movement mechanism further comprises a fan housing and a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

[0061] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

[0062] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said at least one air movement mechanism includes a first air movement mechanism associated with said first internal compartment and a second air movement mechanism associated with said second internal compartment.

[0063] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments comprising a motor operably coupled to said at least one air movement mechanism.

[0064] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor is located externally from said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

[0065] In addition to one or more of the features described above, or as an alternative, in further embodiments said motor is positioned between said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

[0066] According to another embodiment, a cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment and a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment. A cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container. A heating element is associated with said at least one internal compartment and an air movement mechanism is disposed in said housing. The air movement mechanism is positioned vertically above said cooking volume and horizontally offset from said heating element.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

[0067] The accompanying drawings incorporated in and forming a part of the specification embodies several aspects of the present disclosure and, together with the description, serves to explain the principles of the disclosure. In the drawings:

[0068] FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a cooking system having a cooking container installed therein according to an embodiment;

[0069] FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of the cooking system of FIG. 1 absent the cooking container according to an embodiment;

[0070] FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram of another cooking system absent the cooking container according to an embodiment;

[0071] FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view of a portion of a cooking system according to an embodiment;

[0072] FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a portion of a cooking system according to an embodiment;

[0073] FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a fan wheel of an air movement mechanism of the cooking system according to an embodiment;

[0074] FIG. 7 is a schematic diagram of a control system of the cooking system according to an embodiment;

[0075] FIG. 8 is a front perspective view of a portion of the cooking system according to another embodiment;

[0076] FIG. 9 is a front view of the portion of the cooking system of FIG. 8 according to an embodiment;

[0077] FIG. 10 is a rear perspective view of the portion of the cooking system of FIG. 8 according to an embodiment;

[0078] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of a motor of the cooking system of FIG. 8 according to an embodiment; and

[0079] FIG. 12 is a schematic diagram of the motor and the air movement mechanisms of the cooking system according to an embodiment.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0080] With reference now to the FIGS., an example of a cooking system is illustrated at numeral 20. As best shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, the cooking system 20 includes a housing 22 having an exterior heat resistant or non-conductive surface 24 and an interior surface 26 that defines an at least partially hollow compartment 28 arranged within an interior of the housing 22. The housing 22 may be formed as a single unitary body, or alternatively, may be formed by connecting a plurality of pieces together. In addition, the housing 22 may be made of any suitable material, including but not limited to glass, aluminum, plastic, or stainless steel for example. A liner 30 may be disposed within at least a portion of the housing 22. The liner 30 may be formed from any suitable conductive material, such as aluminum for example. In an embodiment, the liner 30 forms at least a portion of the interior surface 26 and thereby defines at least a portion of the internal compartment 28 of the housing 22. However, it should be understood that other components of the cooking system 20, or surfaces thereof, may also define the internal compartment 28.

[0081] A cooking container 32 is receivable within a portion of the internal compartment 28 of the housing 22, such as a bottom portion of the internal compartment 28 for example. Although the cooking container 32 is described herein as being separable from the housing 22, embodiments where the cooking container 32 is movably connected with or integrally formed with the housing 22 are also contemplated herein. The cooking container 32 may be a pot formed from a ceramic, metal, or die cast aluminum material. However, any suitable material capable of withstanding the high temperatures required for cooking food products are also within the scope of the disclosure. In an embodiment, the cooking container 32 is configured to translate along an axis relative to the housing 22 such that the cooking container 32 is slidably received within an opening 34 formed in a wall 36 of the housing 22. Accordingly, in such embodiments, a size and shape of the cooking container 32 may be complementary to the size and shape of the opening

34. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the cooking container 32 is generally square in shape. However, in other embodiments, the cooking container 32 may have another configuration.

[0082] The cooking container 32 has a generally hollow interior 38 for supporting one or more consumable products, such as food products for example, therein. Examples of food products suitable for use with the cooking system 20, include but are not limited to, meats, fish, poultry, bread, rice, grains, pasta, vegetables, fruits, and dairy products, among others.

[0083] At least one handle 40 may be associated with the cooking container 32 to allow a user to easily grasp and manipulate the cooking container 32 relative to the housing 22. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the cooking container 32 includes a single handle 40 extending from a first, front surface 42 of the cooking container 32. Although the cooking container 32 illustrated and described herein has a single handle 40, in other embodiments, the cooking container 32 may have two or more handles, or alternatively, a handle or groove formed into a surface of the cooking container 32. Any suitable configuration of the cooking container 32 and/or handle(s) 40 is within the scope of the disclosure.

[0084] One or more inserts or food support structures 50 may be positionable within the interior 38 of the cooking container 32. In such embodiments, the insert 50 provides a surface on which food is supported. An example of an insert 50 suitable for use with the cooking container 32 is best shown in FIGS. 4 and 5. As shown, the insert 50 includes a solid blocking wall 52 and a food support surface 54 having a plurality of perforations or openings 56 formed therein. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the blocking wall 52 and the food support surface 54 are arranged generally perpendicular to one another. Although the insert 50 is shown as being an L-shaped plate, in other embodiments, the insert 50 may include additional side walls such that the insert 50 is a basket for example. When the insert 50 is installed within the interior 38 of the cooking container 32, the blocking wall 52 and the food support surface 54 of the insert 50 cooperate with one or more walls of the cooking container 32 to define an area there between referred to herein as a “cooking volume.” Further, in embodiments where an insert is not disposed within the cooking container 32, the interior 38 of the cooking container 32 may define the cooking volume.

[0085] In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32 is sloped relative to a bottom surface of the housing 22 or to a surface on which the cooking system 20 may be positioned and supported. As shown, the slope extends generally upwardly towards a front wall 60 of the cooking container 32. As a result, a height of the interior 38 of the cooking container 32 adjacent a back wall 62 is greater than a height of the interior 38 of the cooking container 32 adjacent the front wall 60 thereof. When the insert 50 is installed within the interior 38 of the cooking container 32, the food support surface 54 has a generally horizontal orientation. As shown, the insert 50 may include one or more protrusions 64, such as tabs for example, configured to contact the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32 to achieve this desired orientation. The food support surface 54 is therefore at least partially offset from the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32. Because of the angled configuration of the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32, the clearance 66 between the bottom surface 58 and the food support surface 54, varies, and more specifically, gradually decreases from a back to a front of the cooking container 32.

[0086] The insert 50 and the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32 may cooperate to properly position the insert within the interior 38 such that the blocking wall 52 of the insert 50 is offset from the back wall 62 of the cooking container 32. This clearance between the blocking wall 52 and the back wall 62 defines an air duct 74 within the cooking container 32, separate from the cooking volume, and through which air is circulated during operation of the cooking system 20. In an embodiment, a contour of the cooking container 32 facilitates positioning of the insert 50 relative to the cooking container 32. As previously described, one or more protrusions 64 extend from a bottom surface of the insert 50, and as best shown in FIGS. 4 and 5, the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32 may be contoured to define one or more channels 68 therein. When the insert 50 is positioned within the cooking container 32, the one or more protrusions 64 are received within the one or more channels 68. The engagement between the at least one protrusion 64 and the sidewalls of the channel(s) 68 properly positions the insert 50 within the cooking container 32 to create a suitably sized air duct 74.

[0087] The cooking system 20 additionally includes at least one heating element 70 operable to impart heat to the cooking volume during one or more modes of operation of the cooking system 20. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment best shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 4-5,

the at least one heating element 70 is positioned within the internal compartment 28, generally at or above an upper extent or surface 72 of the cooking container 32, such as proximate a center of the cooking container 32 for example. In an embodiment, the heating element 70 is disposed adjacent a center of the cooking volume and/or the cooking container 32. In such embodiments, the at least one heating element 70 is mounted completely outside of the cooking container 32, and vertically offset from the upper extent or surface 72 thereof. In another embodiment, best shown in FIG. 3, the at least one heating element 70 may be located adjacent the rear of the internal compartment 28, such as in vertical alignment with the air duct 74 formed between the blocking wall 52 of the insert 50 and the back wall 62 of the cooking container 32. However, it should be understood that a heating element 70 located at any suitable location is within the scope of the disclosure.

[0088] The at least one heating element 70 may be capable of performing any suitable type of heat generation. For example, a heating element 70 configured to heat one or more food items located within the cooking volume of the cooking container 32 via conduction, convection, radiation, and induction are all within the scope of the disclosure. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the heating element 70 is a convective heating element, and the cooking system 20 additionally includes an air movement mechanism 76, such as a fan for example, operable to circulate air through the cooking volume. The air is heated as it flows along a path of circulation, such as by flowing over a portion of the at least one heating element 70. As shown, the air movement mechanism 76 is located within the internal compartment 28 at a position entirely above the upper extent 72 of the cooking container 32. In addition, at least a portion of the air movement mechanism 76, and in some embodiment, the entirety of the air movement mechanism 76, is disposed vertically above the cooking volume, and therefore the insert 50. As shown, the air movement mechanism 76 is horizontally offset from the at least one heating element 70. However, embodiments where the air movement mechanism 76 vertically or horizontally overlaps or is aligned with the at least one heating element 70 are also contemplated herein.

[0089] The air movement mechanism 76, or at least a portion thereof may be removable from the internal compartment. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the air movement mechanism 76 is driven by a motor 78 located at least partially externally to the internal

compartment 28. Further, the cooking system 20 may include a vent 80 for exhausting hot air generated by operation of at least one of the air movement mechanism 76 or the motor 78 to the exterior of the cooking system 20. Although the vent 80 is illustrated as being formed at the rear of the internal compartment 28, embodiments where the vent 80 is formed at another location are also contemplated herein.

[0090] An example of the air movement mechanism 76 is illustrated in more detail in FIGS. 5 and 6. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the air movement mechanism 76 includes a fan wheel 82 positioned within a fan housing 84. As shown, the fan wheel 82 is configured to rotate about an axis X oriented generally horizontally, and in some embodiments, the axis of the fan wheel is oriented perpendicular to the translational axis along which the cooking container 32 is configured to move relative to the housing 22. The fan housing 84 has an outer wall 86 having a scroll-shaped length, a first sidewall 88 including a first inlet aperture 90 and a second sidewall (not shown) including a second inlet aperture. Although the outlet opening 92 of the fan housing 84 is illustrated as being generally rectangular in shape, embodiments where the outlet opening 92 is another shape are also contemplated herein.

[0091] With specific reference now to FIG. 6, the fan wheel 82 is typically formed with first wheel portion 94 and a second wheel portion 96. Both the first wheel portion 94 and the second wheel portion 96 function as an air inlet and are configured to provide air to a single plenum. The air inlet defined by the first wheel portion 94 is arranged in a first plane at a first side of the air movement mechanism 76 and the air inlet defined by the second wheel portion 96 is arranged in a second plane at a second side of the air movement mechanism 76, the first and second planes being generally parallel. Accordingly, the air inlets defined by the first and second wheel portions 94, 96 remain generally fixed relative to both the fan housing 84 and an axis of rotation of the fan wheel 82. The first wheel portion 94 includes a first plurality of impeller blades 98 and the second wheel portion 96 similarly includes a second plurality of impeller blades 100. One or both of the first plurality and the second plurality of impeller blades 98, 100 may have a backward curved configuration, a forward curved configuration, or another configuration.

[0092] With reference now to FIG. 7, a control panel or user interface 102 may be positioned at an exterior surface of the housing 22. The control panel 102 includes one or more inputs 104 associated with energizing the heating element 70 of the cooking system 20 and for selecting various modes of operation of the cooking system 20. One or more of the inputs 104 may include a light or other indicator to show that the respective input has been selected. The control panel 102 may additionally include a display 106 separate from and associated with the at least one input 104. However, embodiments where the display 106 is integrated into the at least one input 104 are also contemplated herein.

[0093] Operation of the one or more inputs 104 will be described in more detail below. FIG. 7 illustrates an example of a control system 108 of the cooking system 20 including a controller or processor 110 for controlling operation of the heating element 70 and air movement device 76 (including the motor 78 associated therewith), and in some embodiments for executing stored sequences of heating operation. The processor 110 is operably coupled to the control panel 102 and to the heating element 70 and the air movement mechanism 76.

[0094] In addition, the cooking system 20 may include one or more sensors S for monitoring one or more parameters associated with the temperature of the heating element 70, the cooking volume, the airflow being delivered to the cooking volume and/or the insert 50 positioned within the cooking container 32 during a cooking operation. Accordingly, operation of the cooking system 20, and in particular of the one or more heating elements 70, may be regulated in response to the parameters sensed by the one or more sensors S. In an embodiment, the one or more sensors S includes a temperature sensor arranged in communication with the processor 110. In an embodiment, the temperature sensor(s) S, such as a negative temperature coefficient (NTC) sensor for example, is positioned adjacent the rear of the internal compartment 28, upstream from the air duct 74 defined between the back wall 62 of the cooking container 32 and the blocking wall 52 of the insert 50. In embodiments of the cooking system 20 including one or more temperature sensors S, adjustment of an operating parameter, such as operation of the heating element 70 for example, may be performed using the control algorithm in response to the temperature of the heated airflow, measured by the temperature sensor S disposed in the heated airflow. For example, power provided to the heating element 70 may be increased if the sensed airflow temperature is below a set point, and the power provided to the heating element

70 may be reduced or ceased completely if the sensed airflow temperature is above a set point, thereby allowing the cooking volume to cool.

[0095] In an embodiment, the air movement mechanism 76 of the cooking system 20 is a variable speed fan operable at a plurality of rotational speeds. In an embodiment, the operational speed of the air movement mechanism 76 may vary based on the cooking mode selected. For example, the speed of the air movement mechanism 76 during operation in a first cooking mode may be different than the speed of the air movement mechanism 76 during operation in a second cooking mode. The operational speed of the air movement mechanism 76 may be controlled by the processor 110 in response to one or more inputs 104, including selection of a cooking mode. However, the processor 110 may also be configured to adjust the operational speed of the air movement mechanism 76, or alternatively, the power supplied to the at least one heating elements 70 to control the temperature and/or pressure within the interior 38 of the cooking container 32.

[0096] In an embodiment, at least one input 104 on the control panel 102 is an on/off button which allows the user to activate or deactivate the control panel 102. When the control panel 102 is deactivated, the one or more heating elements 70 are not energized. In an exemplary embodiment, the at least one input 104 is operable to select one or more manual modes of operation of the heating element 70. Alternatively, or in addition, at least one input 104 is operable to select a stored sequence of operation of the heating element 70. In some cases, the stored sequences may be particularly well suited for a given method of food preparation and/or for particular ingredients or types of ingredients. The plurality of stored sequences associated with the at least one input 104 may be stored within a memory accessible by the processor 110. Alternatively, the plurality of stored sequences may be stored remotely from the cooking system 20, and may be accessed by the processor 110, such as via wireless communication for example.

[0097] In addition, a user may be able to enter a time associated with operation of the cooking system 20 in a desired manual mode. The time may be entered via the same input 104 or a separate input 104 as used to select a mode of operation. Further in embodiments where the cooking system 20 is in a mode configured to perform a stored sequence in response to selection

of one of the inputs 104, the display 106 may indicate a time remaining. Temperature or other parameters may also be entered via inputs 104 and/or shown on the display 106.

[0098] The at least one input 104 may include a distinct start button intended to initiate operation in a desired mode, a distinct stop button to cease all operation, or a stop/start button intended to initiate and cease functions. Alternatively, the cooking system 20 may be operable to automatically start operation after a predetermined time has elapsed once an input 104 has been selected and any necessary information has been provided to the control panel 102. Alternatively, one or more of the other inputs 104 may be operable to start and stop operation of the cooking system 20, regardless of whether the cooking system 20 is following a stored sequence or is in a manual mode.

[0099] As previously noted, the one or more inputs 104 may be operable to initiate operation of the cooking system 20 in a plurality of cooking modes. In an embodiment, the cooking system 20 is operable in a cooking mode where the heating element 70 is employed to perform a non-contact heating operation, such as a convective or radiative heating operation. Suitable cooking operations that may be performed in this first cooking mode include, but are not limited to air frying, broiling, baking/roasting, and dehydrating.

[0100] During operation in the first cooking mode, the air movement mechanism 76 is operable to circulate a heated air flow through the cooking volume. As previously described, the air movement mechanism 76 is operable to draw air upwards, through the adjacent heating element 70 and into the two inlets arranged at opposing sides of the fan wheel 82. The heated air is expelled outwardly from the outlet opening 92 of the fan housing 84 in a single direction. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the air output from the air movement mechanism 76 is provided within a plane directed downwardly into the cooking container 32. In the illustrated, non-limiting embodiment, the outlet opening 92 arranged directly adjacent the upper extent 72 of the cooking container 32, such that the air is expelled from the outlet opening 92 directly into the air duct 74 formed within the cooking container 32. Once the heated air reaches the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32, the hot air will be deflected off the bottom surface 58 towards the cooking volume. Because the bottom surface 58 of the cooking container 32 is sloped, the interaction between the heated air and the sloped bottom surface 58 directs the heated

air both forwards and upwardly, causing the air to evenly distribute from the back to the front of the cooking container 32 before passing through the openings 56 formed in the food support surface 54 of the insert 50. The hot air is drawn by the air movement mechanism 76 through the openings 56 and over the exterior of the food items positioned on the food support surface 54. From within the cooking volume, the air is then drawn back into one of the inlets of the air movement mechanism 76 for further circulation within the interior 28.

[0101] With reference now to FIGS. 8-12, in an embodiment of the cooking system 20, the housing 22 includes a plurality of internal compartments arranged within the interior of the housing 22. For example, the housing 22 is illustrated as having a first internal compartment 28a and a second internal compartment 28b. As shown, the plurality of internal compartments 28a, 28b are fluidly separate from one another. Although two internal compartments 28a, 28b are illustrated and described herein, it should be understood that embodiments including any number of internal compartments, such as more than two compartments are also within the scope of the disclosure. The plurality of internal compartments 28a, 28b may be substantially similar in size and shape, or alternatively, may be different.

[0102] Each of the internal compartments 28a, 28b formed in the housing 22 is substantially identical to the internal compartment 28 previously described with respect to FIGS. 1-6. More specifically, a respective cooking container 32a, 32b is insertable into each internal compartment 28a, 28b, and an insert 50a, 50b may be removably installed within the interior 38a, 38b of each cooking container 32a, 32b. In addition, each internal compartment 28a, 28b includes at least one heating element 70a, 70b and an air movement mechanism 76a, 76b configured to circulate air through the internal compartment 28a, 28b, respectively.

[0103] As noted above, the cooking system 20 includes a motor 78 located external to the internal compartment 28 and operable to rotate an air movement mechanism 76 about an axis of rotation X. In embodiments of the cooking system 20 including two distinct internal compartments, a single motor 78 may be used to drive both a first air movement mechanism 76a associated with the first internal compartment 28a and a second air movement mechanism 76b associated with the second internal compartment 28b. In such embodiments, the motor 78 may be disposed within the housing 22 between the first and second compartments 28a, 28b, such that

the first air movement mechanism 76a is mounted to a first output shaft 120 extending from a first side of the motor 78 and the second air movement mechanism 76b is mounted to a second output shaft 122 extending from a second side of the motor 78. As a result, the first air movement mechanism 76a and the second air movement mechanism 76b may be positioned coaxially (see FIG. 10). However, embodiments, where the axis of rotation X1 of the first air movement mechanism 76a is offset from the axis of rotation X2 of the second air movement mechanism 76b are also contemplated herein.

[0104] Because a single motor 78 is used to drive the both the first and second air movement mechanisms 76a, 76b, in an embodiment, both the first and second air movement mechanisms 76a, 76b are driven about their axes, even when only one of the first and second internal compartment 28a, 28b is being used to perform a cooking operation. Accordingly, an air movement mechanism 76 may rotate about its axis even when the adjacent heating mechanism 70 associated therewith is non-operational. In other embodiments, the first and second air movement mechanisms 76a, 76b may be independently operable via a shared motor 78. Further, in an embodiment, the motor 78 is operable to rotate the first and second air movement mechanisms 76a, 76b, at the same speed. However, embodiments where the first and second air movement mechanisms 76a, 76b, are rotated at different speeds, such as via a coupling for example, are also within the scope of the disclosure.

[0105] In embodiments of the cooking system 20 including a plurality of internal compartments, a single control system 108, as previously described with respect to FIG. 7, may be suitable to selectively perform one or more cooking operations associated with both the first internal compartment 28a and the second internal compartment 28b. Accordingly, the same inputs 104 may be used to provide control for the plurality of internal compartments 28a, 28b, or alternatively, distinct inputs 104 may be associated with each of the plurality of internal compartments 28a, 28b, respectively.

[0106] All references, including publications, patent applications, and patents cited herein are hereby incorporated by reference to the same extent as if each reference were individually and specifically indicated to be incorporated by reference and were set forth in its entirety herein.

[0107] The use of the terms “a” and “an” and “the” and similar referents in the context of describing the disclosure (especially in the context of the following claims) is to be construed to cover both the singular and the plural, unless otherwise indicated herein or clearly contradicted by context. The terms “comprising,” “having,” “including,” and “containing” are to be construed as open-ended terms (i.e., meaning “including, but not limited to,”) unless otherwise noted. Recitation of ranges of values herein are merely intended to serve as a shorthand method of referring individually to each separate value falling within the range, unless otherwise indicated herein, and each separate value is incorporated into the specification as if it were individually recited herein. All methods described herein can be performed in any suitable order unless otherwise indicated herein or otherwise clearly contradicted by context. The use of any and all examples, or exemplary language (e.g., “such as”) provided herein, is intended merely to better illuminate the disclosure and does not pose a limitation on the scope of the disclosure unless otherwise claimed. No language in the specification should be construed as indicating any non-claimed element as essential to the practice of the disclosure.

[0108] Exemplary embodiments of this disclosure are described herein, including the best mode known to the inventors for carrying out the disclosure. Variations of those embodiments may become apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art upon reading the foregoing description. The inventors expect skilled artisans to employ such variations as appropriate, and the inventors intend for the disclosure to be practiced otherwise than as specifically described herein. Accordingly, this disclosure includes all modifications and equivalents of the subject matter recited in the claims appended hereto as permitted by applicable law. Moreover, any combination of the above-described elements in all possible variations thereof is encompassed by the disclosure unless otherwise indicated herein or otherwise clearly contradicted by context.

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A cooking system comprising:

a housing having at least one internal compartment;

a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, wherein a cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container, wherein a bottom surface of said cooking container is angled upwardly; and

a heating element associated with said at least one internal compartment.
2. The cooking system of claim 1, wherein said bottom surface of said cooking container is oriented at an angle to a surface for supporting the cooking system.
3. The cooking system of claim 1, wherein said bottom surface of said cooking container is not orthogonal to a back wall of said cooking container.
4. The cooking system of claim 1, wherein said cooking container includes a front wall and a back wall, and a height of said cooking container adjacent said back wall of said cooking container is greater than a height of said cooking container adjacent said front wall of said cooking container.
5. The cooking system of claim 1, further comprising an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container, said insert including a food support surface having at least one opening formed therein.
6. The cooking system of claim 5, wherein said insert at least partially defines said cooking volume within said interior of said cooking container.
7. The cooking system of claim 5, wherein said food support surface has a generally horizontal orientation when said insert is arranged within said interior of said cooking container.
8. The cooking system of claim 5, wherein said food support surface is offset from said bottom surface of said cooking container by a clearance.

9. The cooking system of claim 8, wherein said clearance defined between said food support surface and said bottom surface of said cooking container varies over at least one dimension of the cooking container.

10. The cooking system of claim 5, wherein said insert further comprises at least one protrusion and said bottom surface of said cooking container further comprises at least one channel, said at least one protrusion being positioned within said at least one channel when said insert is properly installed in said interior of said cooking container.

11. The cooking system of claim 5, wherein an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined between said insert and a portion of said cooking container.

12. The cooking system of claim 11, wherein said insert further comprises a blocking wall arranged at an angle to said food support surface and said air duct is defined between said blocking wall and a back wall of said cooking container.

13. The cooking system of claim 1, further comprising an air movement mechanism disposed in said housing.

14. The cooking system of claim 13, further comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about an axis of rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

15. The cooking system of claim 13, wherein said air movement mechanism further comprises:

a fan housing having a first inlet, a second inlet and an outlet, the first inlet and the second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet; and

a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

16. The cooking system of claim 15, wherein said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

17. A cooking system comprising:

a housing having at least one internal compartment;

a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, wherein a cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container;

a heating element associated with said at least one internal compartment; and

an air movement mechanism disposed in said housing, said air movement mechanism being rotatable about an axis of rotation, wherein said axis of rotation is oriented relatively horizontally.

18. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said axis of rotation is oriented substantially perpendicular to a flow provided at an outlet of said air movement mechanism towards a relative bottom of said housing.

19. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said cooking container is movable relative to said housing along an axis of translation, and said axis of rotation is oriented perpendicularly to said axis of translation.

20. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said air movement mechanism includes a first inlet, a second inlet, and an outlet, said first inlet and said second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet.

21. The cooking system of claim 20, wherein an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined within said cooking container, and said outlet of said air movement mechanism is aligned with said air duct.

22. The cooking system of claim 17, further comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about said axis of rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

23. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said air movement mechanism further comprises:

a fan housing; and

a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

24. The cooking system of claim 23, wherein said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

25. The cooking system of claim 24, wherein a configuration of said first plurality of impeller blades is substantially identical to a configuration of said second plurality of impeller blades.

26. The cooking system of claim 24, wherein a configuration of said first plurality of impeller blades is different than a configuration of said second plurality of impeller blades.

27. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said air movement mechanism is disposed vertically above said cooking volume.

28. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said air movement mechanism is disposed vertically above said cooking container.

29. The cooking system of claim 17, further comprising an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container, wherein a portion of said air movement mechanism is disposed in vertical alignment with said insert.

30. The cooking system of claim 17, wherein said air movement mechanism is horizontally offset from said heating element.

31. A cooking system comprising:

a housing having at least one internal compartment;

a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, wherein a cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container;

a heating element associated with said cooking volume;

a rotatable air movement mechanism having:

a first inlet arranged in a first plane of said air movement mechanism;

a second inlet arranged in a second plane of said air movement mechanism, said second plane being distinct from said first plane; and

an outlet arranged in fluid communication with both said first inlet and said second inlet.

32. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said air movement mechanism is rotatable about an axis of rotation and during operation of said air movement mechanism, said first inlet and said second inlet being fixed relative to said axis of rotation.

33. The cooking system of claim 32, wherein said cooking container is movable relative to said housing along an axis of translation, and said axis of rotation is oriented perpendicularly to said axis of translation.

34. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said first plane and said second plane are substantially parallel.

35. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said first plane is defined at a first side of said air movement mechanism and said second plane is defined at a second side of said air movement mechanism.

36. The cooking system of claim 35, wherein said second side is opposite said first side.

37. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein an air duct separate from said cooking volume is defined within said cooking container, and said outlet of said air movement mechanism is aligned with said air duct.

38. The cooking system of claim 31, further comprising a motor operable to rotate said air movement mechanism about an axis of rotation, wherein said motor is located at least partially external to said at least one internal compartment.

39. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said air movement mechanism further comprises:

a fan housing; and

a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

40. The cooking system of claim 39, wherein said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

41. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said air movement mechanism is positioned vertically above at least one of said cooking volume and said cooking container.

42. The cooking system of claim 31, further comprising an insert positionable within said interior of said cooking container, wherein a portion of said air movement mechanism is disposed in vertical alignment with said insert.

43. The cooking system of claim 31, wherein said air movement mechanism is horizontally offset from said heating element.

44. A cooking system comprising:

a housing having at least one internal compartment;

a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, wherein a cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container;

a heating element associated with said cooking volume;

a plurality of air movement mechanisms disposed within said housing; and

a motor operably coupled to said plurality of air movement mechanisms.

45. The cooking system of claim 44, wherein said motor is located externally to said at least one internal compartment.

46. The cooking system of claim 44, wherein said plurality of air movement mechanisms includes a first air movement mechanism and a second air movement mechanism.

47. The cooking system of claim 46, wherein said motor includes a first output shaft and a second output shaft, said first air movement mechanism being operably coupled to said first output shaft and said second air movement mechanism being operably coupled to said second output shaft.

48. The cooking system of claim 46, wherein said first air movement mechanism and a second air movement mechanism are arranged coaxially.

49. The cooking system of claim 46, wherein said motor operates said first air movement mechanism at a first speed and said motor operates said second air movement mechanism at a second speed, said first speed and said second speed being substantially identical.

50. The cooking system of claim 46, wherein said motor operates said first air movement mechanism at a first speed and said motor operates said second air movement mechanism at a second speed, said first speed being different than said second speed.

51. The cooking system of claim 46, wherein said at least one internal compartment includes a first internal compartment and a second internal compartment, said first internal compartment being fluidly separate from said second internal compartment.

52. The cooking system of claim 51, wherein said first air movement mechanism is positioned within said first internal compartment and said second air movement mechanism is positioned within said second internal compartment.

53. The cooking system of claim 51, wherein said motor is positioned between said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

54. A cooking system comprising:

a housing having at first internal compartment and a second internal compartment, said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment being fluidly separate;

at least one cooking container receivable within one of said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment, wherein at least one cooking volume is defined within an interior of said at least one cooking container; and

at least one heating element disposed in said housing.

55. The cooking system of claim 54, wherein said at least one cooking includes a first cooking container receivable within said first internal compartment and a second cooking container receivable within said second internal compartment, wherein a first cooking volume is defined within an interior of said first cooking container and a second cooking volume is defined within an interior of said second cooking container.

56. The cooking system of claim 54, wherein said at least one heating element includes a first heating element positioned within said first internal compartment and a second heating element positioned within said second internal compartment.

57. The cooking system of claim 54, further comprising at least one air movement mechanism disposed within said housing.

58. The cooking system of claim 57, wherein said at least one air movement mechanism includes a first inlet, a second inlet, and an outlet, said first inlet and said second inlet being arranged in fluid communication with said outlet.

59. The cooking system of claim 57, wherein said at least one air movement mechanism further comprises:

a fan housing; and

a fan wheel rotatably mounted within said fan housing.

60. The cooking system of claim 59, wherein said fan wheel includes a first wheel portion having a first plurality of impeller blades and a second wheel portion having a second plurality of impeller blades.

61. The cooking system of claim 57, wherein said at least one air movement mechanism includes a first air movement mechanism associated with said first internal compartment and a second air movement mechanism associated with said second internal compartment.

62. The cooking system of claim 61, further comprising a motor operably coupled to said at least one air movement mechanism.

63. The cooking system of claim 62, wherein said motor is located externally from said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

64. The cooking system of claim 62, wherein said motor is positioned between said first internal compartment and said second internal compartment.

65. A cooking system comprising:

- a housing having at least one internal compartment;
- a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment, wherein a cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container;
- a heating element associated with said at least one internal compartment; and
- an air movement mechanism disposed in said housing, said air movement mechanism being positioned vertically above said cooking volume and horizontally offset from said heating element.

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ABSTRACT

A cooking system includes a housing having at least one internal compartment and a cooking container receivable within said at least one internal compartment. A cooking volume is defined within an interior of said cooking container. A bottom surface of said cooking container is angled upwardly. A heating element is associated with said at least one internal compartment.

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