

**PAPER B: AMENDMENT OF A PATENT SPECIFICATION**  
**6 October 2009, Tuesday**  
**1330 – 1730 hrs**

Maximum Time: 4 Hours (includes reading time)

Maximum Marks: 100



INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY  
OFFICE OF SINGAPORE

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

1. This Paper consists of 21 pages, including this cover page.
2. Write your answers in English. Answers in any other language will not be marked. Answers in illegible handwriting will not be taken into consideration.
3. Two copies of the question paper are provided, one is for your reading and the other is for your use (optional) when answering the question(s) in the Answer Booklet(s).
4. Only your answers and/or drawings to the question(s) written or glued in the Answer Booklet(s) provided by the Examination Secretariat will be considered. You are to write on one side of each sheet in the Answer Booklet (s).
5. Information provided in the question(s) may be obtained from actual situations or modified therefrom for the purpose of this examination. You should accept the facts given in the Paper. Assume also that the prior art given is exhaustive.
6.
  - (a) Your task is to prepare a draft response to the Written Opinion, including amendment to the claims if necessary. The basis for any amendment proposed to the claims must be indicated.
  - (b) For the purpose of this Paper you do not need to propose any amendments to the description of the Patent Application.

To be continued

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7. Candidates may find more than one potential amendment that may render the claims valid by overcoming the objections in the Written Opinion. In the advice letter to client, candidates should identify the amendment (s) that give (s) the best protection to the client and give recommendations to client, including the option of using alternatives, if any.
8. The advice letter to client can be prepared in point form.
9. The documents provided in the question are:
  - (a) Document A – Letter from Client (includes questions) (1 page);
  - (b) Document B – Singapore Patent Application Number 20070001-1 (7 pages of description plus claims and 1 page of drawings);
  - (c) Document C – Written Opinion (2 pages);
  - (d) Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (4 pages of description plus claims and 2 pages of drawings); and
  - (e) Document D2 123,456 (2 pages of drawings).

End

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PATENT AGENTS QUALIFYING EXAMINATION 2009

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**Document A – Letter from Client (includes questions) (1/1)**

Dear Patent Agent

**RE: SINGAPORE PATENT APPLICATION NO. 20070001-1**

5

Many thanks for forwarding the Written Opinion.

I do not understand the Written Opinion and I am not sure whether a response must be filed.  
Please let me know whether there are any advantages or disadvantages of responding to the  
10 Written Opinion.

In any case, my invention is very important as the food and drinking bowls are now selling very  
well in the market. It also appears that there may be copycats trying to enter the market. Hence,  
please ensure that I get my patent as soon as possible.  
15

My invention is different from those bowls as shown in the documents you sent. In fact, from the  
figures, you can tell that they are different. Also, I don't understand why the examiner did not  
examine all the claims. All my bowls are the same, i.e. they prevent dogs from eating or drinking  
too fast.  
20

The material of my bowl is also very important. The bowl is made from a composite material of  
thermoplastic epoxy resin and natural fibers. As you know, natural fibers are environmentally  
friendly and I have not seen any dog bowl made from this material.

25 Please let me know what to do.

Best regards,  
Peter Bow

30 **QUESTION 1** – Prepare a draft response to the Written Opinion.

**QUESTION 2** – Prepare a letter to the client advising him what to do. Your letter should discuss,  
among other things, your proposed draft response. Provide him with alternative courses of  
action that provide varying levels of protection.

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**Document B – Singapore Patent Application Number 20070001-1 (1/8)**

**BOWL**

**5 Field of the invention**

This invention relates to a bowl for containing food or drinking water for an animal and, particularly but not exclusively, for a pet dog.

**10 Background of the invention**

There are a variety of bowls that are known in the art for containing food and drinking water for an animal to consume. These bowls may be made from any material such as plastics or ceramics and may have a base dimension greater than a rim dimension for providing stability  
15 when the animal is consuming the food or water contained in the bowl. The bowls may be circular or rectangular. The shape of the inside portion of the bowl is usually concave and the inside dimension of the bowl typically increases from the base upward. The wall thickness of the bowls is typically uniform.

20 Due to keen competition for food in the wild, animals such as dogs have developed an innate survival instinct of eating quickly. They tend to rip off chunks of meat with their strong canines and swallow their food without much chewing. For domesticated dogs that are fed with bite-sized processed food, this innate instinct of fast eating leads them to sweep up the food, such as kibbles (dry pellet dog food), swallowing almost immediately without chewing. This sweeping  
25 action is known as lapping. In addition to lapping, a dog may also gobble (or “inhale”) food. The lack of chewing leads to digestive problems in pet dogs.

In the case where an animal drinks water from a bowl too fast, they may end up choking and/or vomiting. Also, for animals with long ears such as Cocker Spaniels, Bedlington Terriers, etc,  
30 there is a problem of their ears getting dipped into water when they are drinking the water in a bowl. If not dried properly especially in climates with high humidity, these wet ears may allow fungus and other microorganisms to breed, thus leading to infections.

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It is fairly common for animal or pet owners to leave a filled water bowl on the ground. This might be done routinely or while the owner is away. However, the water in such bowls is exposed to the environmental elements and may be fouled with dust and microorganisms.

There is, therefore, a need for a bowl for containing food or drinking water for an animal that should try to solve some the above problems in the art. Particularly, there is a need for a bowl that allows an animal to moderate its speed of eating and drinking.

**Summary of the invention**

In accordance with a preferred aspect of the invention, there is provided a bowl for containing food for an animal, the bowl comprising (a) a base; (b) a circumferential wall defining an interior volume for accommodating the food; and (c) a protrusion extending upwardly from the base of the bowl into the interior volume to allow the animal to moderately consume the food. More particularly, the protrusion prevents the animal from consuming the food too fast.

Preferably, the protrusion comprises a plurality of limbs. There may be any number of limbs in the bowl. Preferably, the protrusion has three limbs. More preferably, the three limbs are spaced equally apart. Still more preferably, the three limbs are joined together. Any plurality of limbs may be connected to each other to form any kind of arrangement such that the protrusions form an obstruction to an animal's access to the food in the bowl. The heights of the limbs may also be different from one another.

Advantageously, the different heights of the limbs accommodate different animals having different muzzle sizes. This "one size fits all" feature allows an animal or pet owner to use the same bowl for feeding more than one type of animal. The bowl also acts as a useful weight management tool to prevent obese pet animals.

Preferably, the protrusion is not joined to the circumferential wall of the bowl, i.e. there is a gap that separates the protrusion from the circumferential wall. Preferably, the bowl is sized to hold a quantity of the food, the quantity being consumed in a single feeding. More preferably, the food may be dry and/or wet pet food.

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In accordance with another preferred aspect of the invention, there is provided a bowl for containing drinking water for an animal, the bowl comprising (a) an interior volume for  
5 accommodating said water, the interior volume is defined by a base and an upwardly extending circumferential sidewall; and (b) a floating device for floating on said water, wherein the floating device has a conduit for allowing said water to form a reservoir of sufficient amount of water on a drinking surface of the floating device for the animal to moderately consume the water.

10 Preferably, the floating device further comprises an interior cavity and the buoyancy of the floating device is determined by an amount of water introduced into the cavity. More preferably, the floating device has a water inlet for allowing the introduction of water into the interior cavity of the floating device. Any stopper such as a plug, valve, screw, cap or the like, may be used to prevent water from flowing out of the interior cavity of the floating device.

15 Preferably, the floating device has a depressed portion for allowing the reservoir of water to collect on the drinking surface of the floating device. To this end, the floating device may be cone-shaped. More preferably, the conduit is on the depressed portion. Advantageously, the buoyancy of the device may be adjusted so that the size of the reservoir of water formed on the  
20 upper surface of the floating device will be ideal to suit an animal's optimal drinking speed. Also, the ears of the animal will not dip into the water in the bowl, and thus, will not get wet and the floating device minimises the contamination of the water remaining in the drinking bowl.

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a bowl according to an embodiment of a preferred aspect of  
25 the present invention;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a bowl according to an embodiment of another preferred aspect of the present invention; and

30 Figure 3 is a perspective view of the floating device according to a bowl as shown in Figure 2.

**Detailed description of the preferred embodiments**

By "protrusion", it means any part of the bowl that protrudes from the base of the bowl and

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includes humps, bumps, bulge, lump, swelling, and the like.

- 5 By “spaced apart”, it means that the protrusions may be spaced equally apart or not equally apart so long as these protrusions provide an obstruction to an animal’s access to the food in the bowl.

Referring to the accompanying drawings, Figure 1 shows a bowl 5 for containing food for an animal. The bowl 5 has a base 10 and a circumferential wall 15 defining an interior volume for accommodating the food. A protrusion 18 extends upwardly from the base 10 of the bowl 5 into the interior volume of the bowl 5. The protrusion 18 comprises two or more interconnected elongate limbs 20 that extend upwardly from the base 10 into the interior volume in a radial fashion along a radius of the bowl 5. Each radially extending elongate limb 20 has a radial outer portion 22 and a radial inner portion 24, wherein the outer portion 22 is higher than the inner portion 24. As can be seen from the Figure, the outer portion 22 is located nearer the circumferential wall 15 relative to the inner portion 24. In each limb 20, the higher outer portion 22 and the lower portion 24 form a gradual gradient.

- 20 In a preferred embodiment of the present invention, as shown in Figure 1, the protrusion 18 comprises three interconnected elongate limbs 20 that extend upwardly from the base 10 of the bowl 5 into the interior volume, and the inner portions 24 of each limb 20 being joined to each other. The joined inner radial portions 24 are centrally located in the bowl 5. The example of the preferred embodiment of the present invention shown in Figure 1 is but an exemplary example.
- 25 It will be known to the skilled person that the protrusion 18 can have any number of limbs 20.

For example, the protrusion 18 can have two, three, four or more limbs 20 depending on the size of the bowl 5.

- 30 The heights of the outer portions 22 may be the same or they may be different from each other. The different heights allow a single bowl 5 to accommodate animals having different muzzle

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**Document B – Singapore Patent Application Number 20070001-1 (5/8)**

5 sizes. The elongate limbs 20 may also be spaced equally apart in the bowl 5. Also, the protrusion 18 is not joined to the circumferential wall 15, i.e. there is a gap 28 that separates the protrusion 18 from the circumferential wall 15.

10 The outer portions 22 serve as an obstruction to deter an animal, such as a pet dog, from “inhaling” (sucking or gobbling) food in the bowl because they prevent the muzzle of an animal from reaching too close to the food at the base 10 of the bowl 5. The joined inner radial portions 24 on the base 10 of the bowl 5 prevent the animal from making a clean sweep of the food (i.e. “lapping” up the food). However, the inner portions 24 allow food, for example kibbles (small nuggets of dried food), to be pushed over and/or rolled over in the bowl 5, and thus achieving a prolonged feeding time. Therefore, this arrangement of having a higher and lower portion combines both advantages of preventing the animal from consuming food too fast either by “inhaling” and/or “lapping”. Further the gap 28 allows food to move across the bowl, thus prevent food from collecting at corners adjacent to the obstruction. Food that is collected at such corners may cause an animal to “inhale” the food. Therefore, the gap 28 prevents such “inhalation” of food. By moderating the rate at which an animal eats, the bowl prevents indigestion in the animal and also prevents coprophagy (the act of feeding on excretion). In the latter case, indigestion caused by fast eating may affect nutrient absorption which is to be avoided. Poor digestion of the food may result in poor nutrient absorption by the gastrointestinal tract of the animal. Since animals may detect the strong presence of nutrients in their faeces, they tend to reprocess it by eating their faeces. Slower eating habits help to alleviate this problem and thus better nutrient absorption. Eating slower also makes an animal feel full first before realising that it has over-eaten.

30 Figure 2 shows a bowl for containing drinking water for an animal. Similar to the bowl shown in Figure 1, this bowl 30 has a base 35 and an upwardly extending circumferential sidewall 40. A floating device 45 floats on the water in the bowl 30. The floating device is cone-shaped and has a depressed portion 55. A conduit 50 at the depressed portion 55 allows water in the bowl 30 to form a reservoir of water 52 on the drinking surface of the floating device 45 for the animal to consume the water.



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As shown in Figure 3, the floating device 45 has an interior cavity (not shown in the Figures) and the buoyancy of the floating device 45 is determined by an amount of water introduced into the cavity. A water inlet 46 on a side of the floating device 45 allows for the introduction of water into the interior cavity of the floating device 45. Any stopper such as a plug, valve, screw, cap or the like, (not shown in the Figures) may be used to prevent water from flowing out of the interior cavity of the floating device 45. The buoyancy of the floating device 45 may be adjusted by varying the amount of water introduced into the cavity. This, in turn, determines the size of the reservoir of water 52 formed on the drinking surface of the floating device 45 so that the size of the reservoir of water 52 will be ideal to suit an animal's optimal drinking speed. The limitation of the size of the reservoir of water 52 and the obstruction of the floating device 45 also prevents an animal's ears from getting dipped into the water in the bowl 30.

The bowls of the present invention may be formed of any material known to the skilled person that may be suitable for use in the manufacture of dog bowls.

Whilst there has been described in the foregoing description preferred embodiments of the present invention, it will be understood by those skilled in the technology concerned that many variations or modifications in details of design or construction may be made without departing from the present invention.

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**Document B – Singapore Patent Application Number 20070001-1 (7/8)**

**Claims**

1. A bowl for containing food for an animal, the bowl comprising:
- 5 (a) a base;
- (b) a circumferential wall defining an interior volume for accommodating the food; and
- (c) a protrusion extending upwardly from the base of the bowl into the interior volume to allow the animal to moderately consume the food.
- 10 2. The bowl according to claim 1, wherein the protrusion comprising limbs.
3. The bowl according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the protrusion has three limbs.
- 15 4. The bowl according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the three limbs are joined together.
5. The bowl according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the heights of the limbs are different from each other.
- 20 6. A bowl for containing drinking water for an animal, the bowl comprising:
- (a) an interior volume for accommodating said water, the interior volume is defined by a base and an upwardly extending circumferential sidewall; and
- (b) a floating device for floating on said water, wherein the floating device has a
- 25 conduit for allowing said water to form a reservoir of sufficient amount of water on a drinking surface of the floating device for the animal to moderately consume the water.
7. The bowl according to claim 6, wherein the floating device further comprises an interior cavity and the buoyancy of the floating device is determined by an amount of water introduced
- 30 into the cavity.
8. The bowl according to any one of claims 6 or 7, wherein the floating device has a depressed portion for allowing the reservoir of water to collect on the drinking surface of the floating device.

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**Document B – Singapore Patent Application Number 20070001-1 (8/8)**

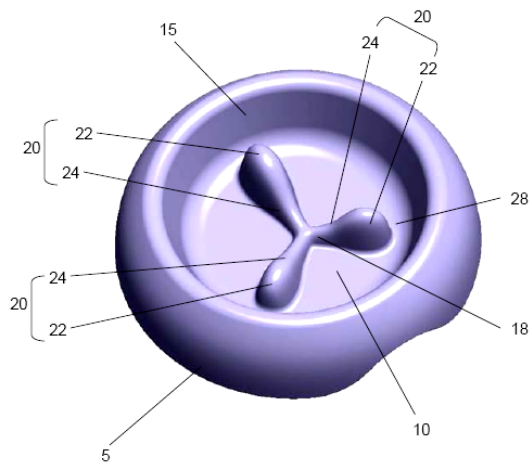


Figure 1

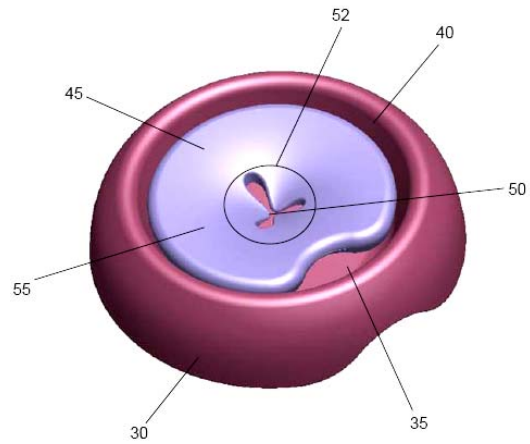


Figure 2

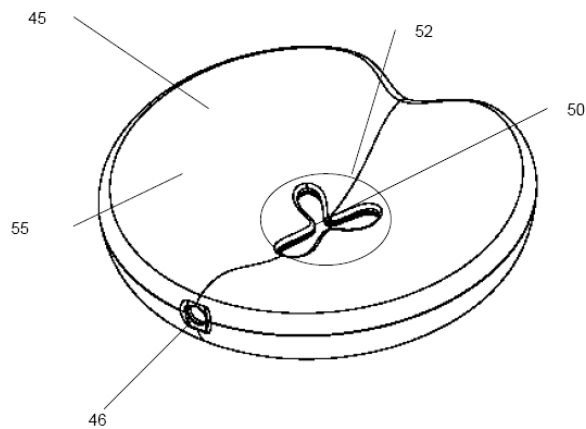


Figure 3

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**Document C – Written Opinion (1/2)**

**Lack of unity of invention**

- 5 This office has found that there are different inventions as follows:
1. Claims 1-5. A bowl having a protrusion.
  2. Claims 6-8. A bowl having a floating device.
- 10 Consequently, this opinion has been established in respect of Claims 1-5 only.

**Statement**

15	Novelty (N)	Claims	YES
		Claims 1-5	NO
	Inventive step (IS)	Claims	YES
		Claims 1-5	NO
20	Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims	YES
		Claims	NO

**Citations and explanations**

Reference is made to the following citations:

D1 ('774) and D2 ('456)

D1 discloses an animal feeding dish having a base, sidewalls and a plurality of protrusions mounted on the dish's base and protruding upwards into the dish's volume. In particular, Figure 1 of D1 shows three equally spaced apart protrusions. These protrusions are to provide a means to slow an animal's speed of eating (see paragraph [0012] of D1).

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**Document C – Written Opinion (2/2)**

D2 is a design patent and relates to an animal feeding tub having different compartments for providing different types of foods. While D2 does not provide a description of the animal feeding tub, Figure 1 shows a central protrusion joined by protrusions that extend the radius of the tub.

Hence, D1 and D2 disclose all the features of claims 1-5.

**Other observations**

1. The term “*moderately consume*” in claim 1 is unclear.
2. There is no antecedent for more than one protrusion in claims 3 to 5 when dependent on claim 1.

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**Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (1/6)**

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

- 5 [0001] This invention relates generally to devices for feeding animals, and more particularly relates to a device and method for feeding an animal. In use, the feeding device of the present invention may alter eating traits of the animal being fed, which may include inhibiting the rapid consumption of food.

10 **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

- [0002] Rapid consumption of food by dogs has been observed and associated with dogs that are socially competitive and/or exhibit a high prey drive. Dogs having these traits may typically consume 2 cups of hard dog food in less than 30 seconds. This rapid consumption of dog food  
15 may result in discomfort shown by roaching its back or walking stiff legged. After a rapid consumption of food dogs have also been observed belching or releasing air from the stomach, partial vomiting and regurgitation, or vomiting. Some have theorized that rapid consumption of food may also contribute to an adverse medical condition in dogs known as bloat (torsion). Increasing the time a dog takes to rapidly consume food decreases the rate a given volume  
20 enters a dog's throat and reduces the amount of discomfort exhibited. Aggressive or dominant behavioural traits in an animal may be exhibited in many situations including during its consumption of food. It has also been observed that dogs exhibiting possessive aggression related to their food may also consume their food rapidly.

- 25 [0003] In the past, dishes or bowls of various sizes and shapes have typically been used for feeding an animal. Generally, the dish has a bottom and a rim extending upward from the bottom to form a center cavity adapted for receiving and retaining food therein. The animal is able to easily scoop up excessive quantities of food. Additionally, gluttonous eaters typically attempt to swallow too much volume at too fast a rate. Thus, there is a need for a feeding dish  
30 that inhibits gluttonous eating traits of the animal. The present invention meets these and other needs that will become apparent from a review of the description of the present invention.

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**Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (2/6)**

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**DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

5

[0007] FIG. 1 is front perspective view of the feeding dish of the present invention;

[0008] FIG. 2 is a partial sectional side elevation view of the feeding dish of the type shown in FIG. 1;

10

[0009] FIG. 3 is a top plan view of the feeding dish of the type shown in FIG. 1; and

[0010] FIG. 4 is a bottom plan view of the feeding dish of the type shown in FIG. 1.

15

**DETAILED DESCRIPTION**

[0011] With reference to the Figures the device of the present invention will be described in greater detail. Referring first to FIGS. 1 and 2, the feeding dish 10 is shown. The feeding dish 10 generally includes a cylindrical base member 12 having a bottom 14 and sidewalls 16 forming a perimeter of the base member 12. A cavity 18 defines an interior portion of the base member 12. Protrusions 20 extend upward from the bottom 14 of the base member 12 within the cavity 18.

20

25

[0012] In the preferred embodiment three protrusions 20 are spaced an approximately equal distance from each other and centered within the interior portion of the base 12. The protrusions 20 are conically shaped to allow for access of the animals head and/or snout between the protrusions 20. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that the number, shapes, sizes or positioning of the protrusions 20 may be modified to inhibit the eating traits of the animal. For example, for narrow muzzled animals a greater number of protrusions may be desirable to decrease the distance between protrusions to slow the consumption of food. Likewise, for a wider muzzled animal the protrusions may need to be spaced further apart to allow access to the bottom of the cavity 18. Also, the height of the protrusions may be varied depending upon the length of the muzzle of the animal being fed. Although the heights of the protrusions may be varied, the height of all the protrusions are the same as one another. However, three conically shaped protrusions 20 symmetrically spaced within the cavity 18 are preferred.

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**Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (3/6)**

[0013] In an alternative embodiment, the protrusions 20 may include adhering properties that allow for removal and/or replacement within the cavity 18 of the base 12. By providing protrusions that may be removed, the user may clean the protrusions 20 and the base 12 separately. Further, the user may selectively position the protrusions 20 within the cavity 18 as desired. Without any limitation intended, the adhering properties of the protrusion 20 to the base 12 may be mechanical, chemical or physical. For example, the base 12 may be metallic and a portion of the protrusion may have magnetic properties. When the protrusions 20 are placed within the cavity 18 of the base 12, the magnetic property of the protrusion cause the protrusions 20 to adhere to the metallic base 12. Additionally, the magnetic properties of the protrusions 20 keep the protrusions stationary within the cavity 12 while the animal eats around the protrusions 20. Those skilled in the art will further appreciate that the feeding dish 10 may be pliable and the protrusions moveable within the cavity 18 formed in the dish 10 to provide for a partially collapsible dish.

[0014] Referring now to FIGS. 3 and 4, the base member 12 is shown further including a lip 22 extending outwardly from an outer bottom portion 24 of the base member 12. The lip 22 includes support members or tabs 26 extending from the lip. The tabs 26 provide for stability of the lip 22 when placed on uneven surfaces and also provides a gripping function for the lip 22.

[0015] Having described the construction of an embodiment of the present invention, the mode of use will next be presented. The user desiring to feed an animal places a layer of food in the feeding dish 10. When the animal is allowed to feed from the dish 10, the animal has to work around the protrusions 20 requiring more licking than gulping or scooping to remove the food from the dish 10. In this manner the rate the animal is able to remove food from the feeding device is reduced and likewise the volume or amount of food removed from the feeding device at any given attempt is reduced. The reduction in rate and volume has an overall slowing affect and reduces the ability of the animal to feed rapidly.

[0016] This invention has been described herein in considerable detail in order to comply with the patent statutes and to provide those skilled in the art with the information needed to apply the novel principles and to construct and use such specialized components as are required.



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**Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (4/6)**

However, it is to be understood that the invention can be carried out by specifically different equipment and devices, and that various modifications, both as to the equipment and operating  
5 procedures, can be accomplished without departing from the scope of the invention itself.

**CLAIMS**

- 10 1. A device for modifying the behavior of an animal, the device comprising: a base member having a cavity defining an interior portion of said base member; and at least two protrusions positioned within the interior portion of said base and extending upward from a bottom portion of the base within the cavity, wherein said protrusions are spaced an approximately equal distance from each other and centered within the interior portion of said base.
- 15 2. The device of claim 1, including at least three protrusions extending upward from the bottom portion of the cavity.
- 20 3. The device of claim 1, wherein said base member further includes a lip extending outwardly from an outer bottom portion of said base member.
4. The device of claim 3, wherein said lip includes support members extending therefrom.
5. The device of claim 1, wherein said base member is generally cylindrical.
- 25 6. The device of claim 1, wherein said protrusions are conically shaped.

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**Document D1 US 2006/0005774 (5/6)**

FIG. 1

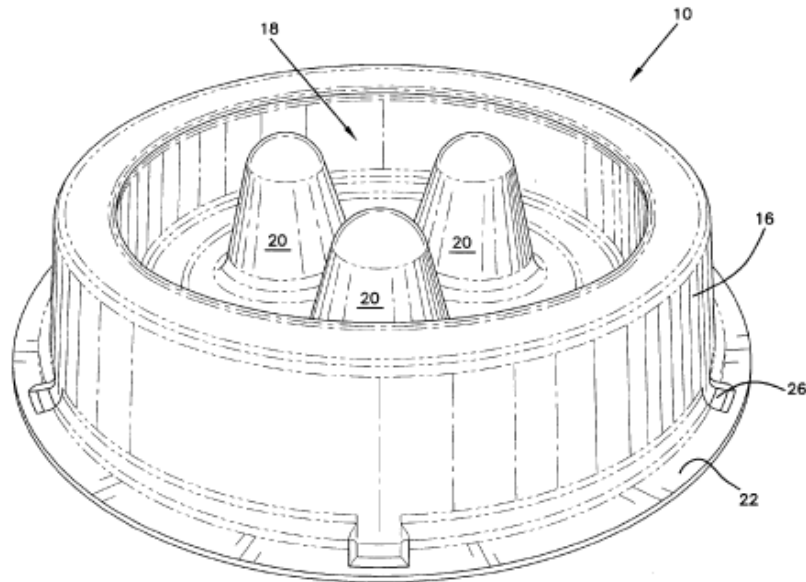
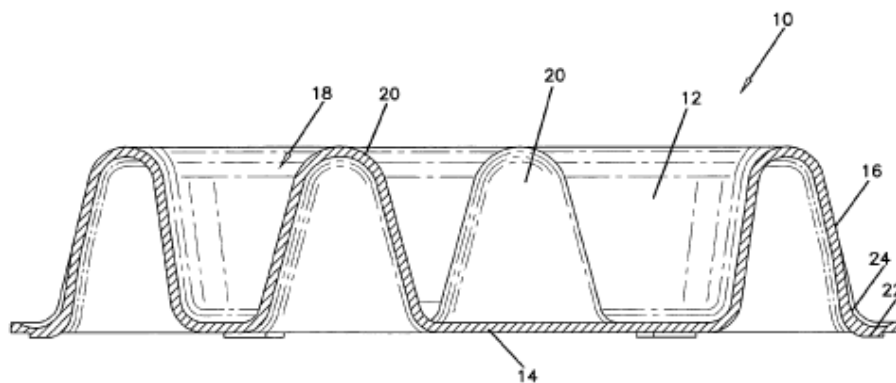


FIG. 2



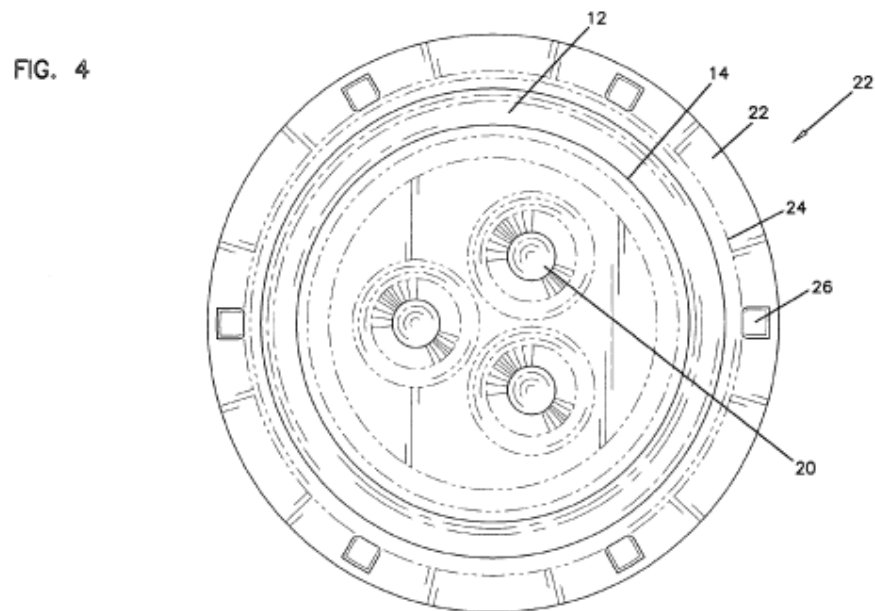
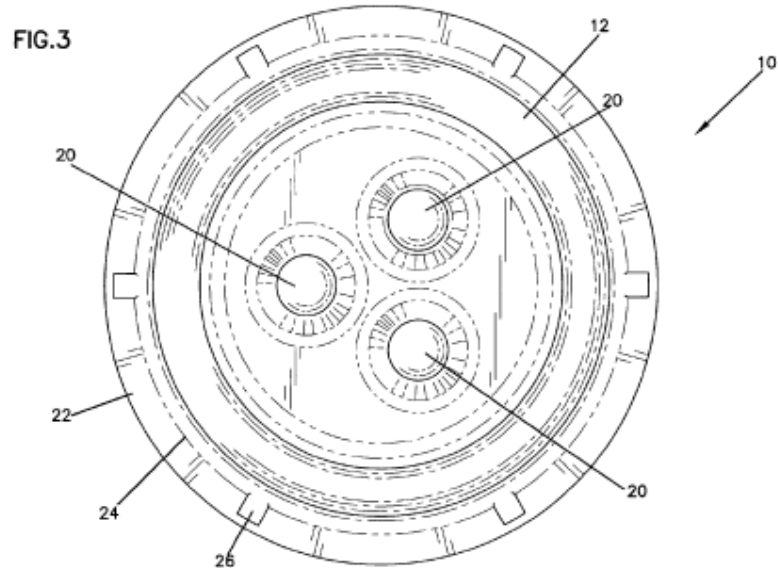
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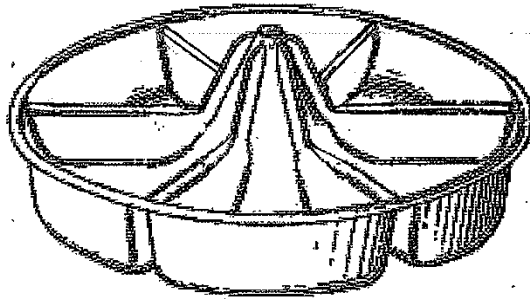
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Maximum Marks: 100

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**Fig. 1.**



**FIG. 2.**



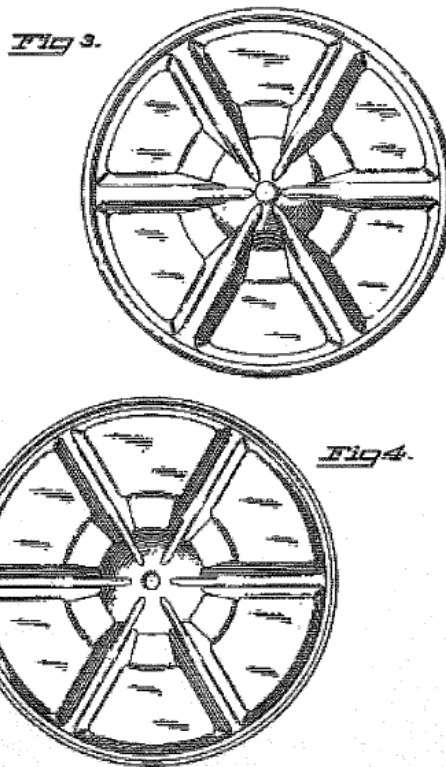
**PAPER B: AMENDMENT OF A PATENT SPECIFICATION**  
**6 October 2009, Tuesday**  
**1330 – 1730 hrs**

Maximum Time: 4 Hours (includes reading time)

Maximum Marks: 100

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- 5 Fig. 1 is a view in perspective of a feeding tub for animals.  
Fig. 2 is a view in elevation of the same.  
Fig. 3 is a top plan view of the same.  
Fig. 4 is a bottom plan view of the same.  
I claim:
- 10 The ornamental design for a feeding tub for animals, substantially as shown.