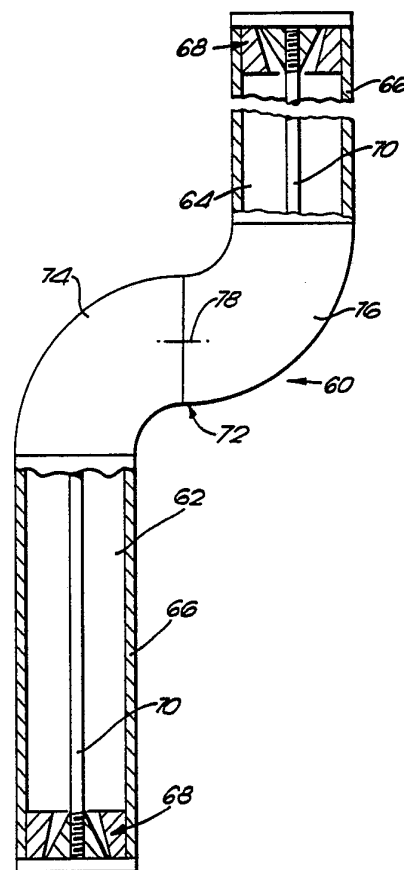




## INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

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<b>(21) International Application Number:</b> PCT/GB90/01955 <b>(22) International Filing Date:</b> 14 December 1990 (14.12.90) <b>(30) Priority data:</b> G 89 14 711.1 U 14 December 1989 (14.12.89) DE <b>(71) Applicants (for all designated States except US):</b> RACKHAM, Anthony, Charles [GB/GB]; Room 2003, West Tower, Bond Centre, 89 Queensway, Central (HK). SOCIETA INTERNAZIONALE UTILIZZAZIONE [PA/PA]; Licenze E Brevetti S.A., 50 Apartado 6307, Panama 5 (PA). <b>(72) Inventor; and</b> <b>(75) Inventor/Applicant (for US only) :</b> DIEFENBACH, Berndt [DE/DE]; Lindwurmstr. 124, D-8000 München 2 (DE).		<b>(74) Agent:</b> HITCHCOCK, Esmond, A.; Lloyd Wise Tregear & Co., Norman House, 105-109 Strand, London WC2R 0AE (GB).  <b>(81) Designated States:</b> AT, AT (European patent), AU, BB, BE (European patent), BF (OAPI patent), BG, BJ (OAPI patent), BR, CA, CF (OAPI patent), CG (OAPI patent), CH, CH (European patent), CM (OAPI patent), DE, DE (European patent), DK, DK (European patent), ES, ES (European patent), FI, FR (European patent), GA (OAPI patent), GB, GB (European patent), GR (European patent), HU, IT (European patent), JP, KP, KR, LK, LU, LU (European patent), MC, MG, ML (OAPI patent), MR (OAPI patent), MW, NL, NL (European patent), NO, RO, SD, SE, SE (European patent), SN (OAPI patent), SU, TD (OAPI patent), TG (OAPI patent), US.  <b>Published</b> <i>With international search report.</i> <i>Before the expiration of the time limit for amending the claims and to be republished in the event of the receipt of amendments.</i>
<b>(54) Title:</b> CONDIMENT OR SPICE DISPENSER  <b>(57) Abstract</b>  A condiment or spice dispenser having two containers. An intermediate joining piece joining the two containers so that they are offset laterally yet are parallel to one another and so that their second dispensing ends can be oriented in opposite directions away from one another. A user can therefore grasp a container in each hand and rotate the dispenser crank-wise to operate it.		



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CONDIMENT OR SPICE DISPENSER

This invention relates to a condiment or spice dispenser. In particular the invention relates to a  
5 dispenser for things like salt and pepper but other spices and flavourings could be dispensed from a dispenser according to the invention.

Condiment dispensers are well known and widely used. Where the condiment or spice has already been ground  
10 or is in a finely divided form such as salt or ground pepper, then the dispenser is used merely to sprinkle the condiment onto food. Alternatively where the condiment is say pepper corns, the dispenser can be in the form of a mill in which the corns are ground and the freshly ground  
15 pepper is then dispensed. Such dispensers are well known and generally an individual dispenser is required for each condiment, although they are sometimes associated on a common condiment serving tray.

It is an object of the present invention to  
20 provide a condiment dispenser which has two separate compartments associated together into a single item so that a user can at his choice dispense one or other of different condiments from the dispenser.

According to the invention there is provided a  
25 condiment or spice dispenser comprising a first container having a first end and a second end, that container having a dispensing outlet at the second end, the second container

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having a first end and a second end, that container having  
a dispensing outlet at its second end, and an intermediate  
joining piece joining the first ends of each of the  
containers in such a way that the containers are offset  
5 laterally yet are parallel to one another and that their  
second dispensing ends can be oriented in opposite  
directions away from one another.

Such a dispenser has a new and aesthetic  
appearance. When the two second ends are oriented in  
10 opposite directions away from one another, then the user  
can hold the dispenser in one orientation and dispense  
condiment or the like from one of the said second ends and  
then, when the item is inverted, a different condiment can  
be dispensed from the other said second end.

15 Also because the two containers are offset yet  
can be parallel to each other the dispenser has the form of  
a crank. As a result where one or more of the dispensers  
is in the form of a mill, one can connect the grinding  
elements to the intermediate joining piece. Then by  
20 grasping the two containers and rotating them in a  
crank-wise fashion, the dispenser can be operated as a  
mill. If both containers are in the form of mills when one  
inverts the dispenser, one can then dispense and grind some  
condiment present in the other container.

25 Preferably the intermediate piece is bent  
crank-wise and it may consist of two parts articulated to  
one another along a central line. This is advantageous

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since it allows one to orient the two second dispensing ends in the same direction as one another, and so allow one to rest the dispenser on the two second ends when not in use. For use however, the two containers can be articulated away from one another so that the dispensing ends are oriented away from one another and then the user can dispense from one or other end depending upon which way up the dispenser is positioned.

Preferably the intermediate piece has a shape approximating that of a half circle and, where it is articulated, it may then consist of two quarter circles articulated to one another at a central position along the intermediate piece.

Desirably the first and second containers are of substantially cylindrical form and the cross section of the intermediate piece is approximately circular. Where the containers are to be mills, then a cylindrical body of each container can be rotatably mounted relative the intermediate piece and a grinding mechanism joined by a central rigid bar to the intermediate piece, so that when the user grasps the two cylindrical containers he can rotate them in a crank-wise fashion. This will have the effect of rotating the grinding devices in the mills and, the container whose second end is held so that it is oriented downwards, will then dispense ground condiments, such as freshly ground pepper, whilst the mill in the other container will simply be ineffective because any particles

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to be ground will simply fall by gravity away from the grinding mechanism.

The invention will now be described, by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in  
5 which:

Figure 1 is a sectional elevation of a salt and pepper dispenser according to the invention;  
Figure 2 is a view similar to Figure 1 of modified form of salt and pepper dispenser; and  
10 Figure 3 is a diagrammatic side elevation of the dispenser shown in Figure 2 in a different orientation.

The salt and pepper dispenser 10 shown in Figure 1 includes a first container 12 and a second container 14  
15 which are joined together by an intermediate piece 16.

The container 12 is of substantially circular cross-section and has an axis 18. It is in the form of a salt dispenser and therefore comprises a hollow container with a cylindrical outer body 20 closed at its outer end 22  
20 by a circular end 22 having a number of small openings such as the opener 23 for the dispensing of particulate salt from within the body of the container.

At its other end, the container 12 is rotatably joined to the intermediate piece 16 by a cap 24. This cap  
25 is a tight wedge fit in the open end of the body 20 but can be removed to allow fresh salt to be added. In addition it has an enlarged circular bulge 25 which is rotatably

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received in and trapped in a corresponding recess 26 in the piece 16. In this way the container 12 is joined to the intermediate piece 16 but can rotate about its axis 18 relative the intermediate piece 16.

5           The other dispenser 14 is in the form of a grinding mill. It again comprises a hollow cylindrical body 27 in which for example pepper corns can be placed. At its outer end is provided a conventional grinding mechanism 28 which is not shown in detail since such  
10 grinding mechanisms are extremely well known. The container has an axis 30 and positioned along that axis is a rigid metal bar 32. At one end this bar is joined to the grinding mechanism 28 whilst at its other end it is connected to the intermediate piece 16 in a manner to be  
15 described. At its outer end, the container 14 has known openings from the mill to allow ground pepper corn to be dispensed.

          The intermediate piece 16 is of substantially circular cross-section but is bent in a crank formation.  
20 In this way the axes 18 and 30 of the containers 12 and 14 are parallel to one another but are offset from one another.

          The container 14 is joined to the intermediate piece by means of a tightly fitting cap 40 which is wedged  
25 into the end of the piece 16. The cap has an enlarged circular rim 42 which is received in a corresponding shaped recess 44 in the body 27. In this way, the body 27 can

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rotate relative the intermediate piece.

The bar 32 has at its upper end a threading 46 which extends through a central threaded hole 48 in the cap 40 and is screwed into and firmly fixed to the cap 40.

5 Therefore if the body 27 is rotated relative the intermediate piece 16, then the bar 30 will rotate relative the body 27 and so drive the grinding mechanism 28.

In use, the salt and pepper dispenser 10 can be picked up by the user in the orientation shown in Figure 1.  
10 By grasping the bodies 20 and 26 in his two hands, the user can rotate them in a crank-wise fashion and this will have the effect of rotating the body 27 relative the bar 32, so driving the grinding mechanism. If the dispenser 14 is therefore filled say with pepper corns, these will be  
15 ground and dispensed from the lower end of the container 16. If however the user wishes to dispense salt he merely inverts the whole item 10 and then can shake finely ground salt or pepper placed within the container 12 from the container 12.

20 The salt and pepper mill 60 shown in Figures 2 and 3 includes two substantially identical containers 62 and 64. Each is substantially the same as the container 14 described in connection with Figure 1. Thus each includes an outer cylindrical cover 66 and at the outer end a  
25 conventional grinding mechanism 68 substantially identical with the grinding mechanism 28. Further a central bar 70 in each container, drives the associated grinding mechanism



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in a manner as will be described.

Joining the two containers 62 and 64 is an intermediate piece 72 made up of two identical quarter circular shaped portions 74 and 76. These are joined to one another at their centres about an axis 78 by a suitable pivoting mechanism which allows the portions 74 and 76 to be rotated relative one another for a full 360°. There are many suitable arrangements for achieving this and these could include for example a simple pivot pin or the like.

The other ends of the portions 74 and 76 are respectively joined to the containers 62 and 64 and the join is again by means of arrangement which enables the containers to be twisted a full 360° relative the portions 74 and 76. The bars 70 are joined to their respective portion 74 or 76 and the joining can for example be in similar manner to the use of the end cap 40 shown in Figure 1.

Conveniently the portions 74 and 76 have a substantially circular cross-section and they can be either hollow or solid.

In operation the user grasps the dispenser 60, holding one container 62 in one hand and the other container 64 in the other hand. Then, the container 62 can be rotated relative the bar 70 by twisting the central piece 72 about the axis in a crank fashion. This will have the effect of driving the grinding mechanism 68 in the container 62 and if for example that container is filled

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with say white pepper corns then freshly ground white pepper will be dispensed from the lower end of the container 68. If, on the other hand, the user wishes to have a different condiment dispensed, he simply inverts the dispenser 60, and again grasping the two containers, with the container 64 now in the downward position, and again rotates the item in a crank-wise fashion with the result that the grinding mechanism 68 in the container 64 will now grind whatever item is in that container and this could for example be salt or black pepper. The item therefore operates in essentially the same way as the dispenser 10 described in connection with Figure 1.

The dispenser 60 has the additional feature, however, that the intermediate piece 72 can be twisted about the axis 78 to the orientation shown in Figure 3. In this orientation both containers 62 and 64 are oriented in the same direction and are joined by the now U-shaped intermediate piece 72. It is therefore possible to rest the now lower ends of the two containers 62 and 64 on a flat surface 80 such as a table top or the like. Also in this orientation it is possible to dispense from both containers 62 and 64 simultaneously by simply twisting both of them.

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CLAIMS:

1. A condiment or spice dispenser, comprising a first container having a first end and a second end, the first container having a dispensing outlet at the second end, a second container having a first end and a second end, the second container having a dispensing outlet at the second end, and an intermediate joining piece which joins the first ends of each of the containers in such a way that the containers are offset laterally yet are parallel to one another and that their second dispensing ends can be oriented in opposite directions away from one another.
2. A dispenser as claimed in Claim 1 in which the intermediate joining piece is a crank-wise shape.
3. A dispenser as claimed in Claim 1 or Claim 2 in which the first and second containers are salt and/or pepper sprinklers and/or salt or pepper mills.
4. A dispenser as claimed in any preceding claim in which at least one of the two containers is a grinding mill having a grinding mechanism joined by a central bar rigidly connected to the intermediate joining piece, the container being rotatably attached to the intermediate joining piece whereby rotation of the container relative the joining piece will cause the bar to operate the grinding mechanism.
5. A dispenser as claimed in any preceding claim in which at least one of the containers is rotatably joined to the intermediate joining piece.

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6. A dispenser as claimed in any preceding claim in which the intermediate joining piece consists of two parts rotatably joined to one another.

7. A dispenser as claimed in Claim 6 in which the  
5 two parts of the intermediate joining piece are approximately of the shape of a quarter circle, whereby the intermediate joining piece be changed from a crank-wise configuration to a U-shaped configuration.

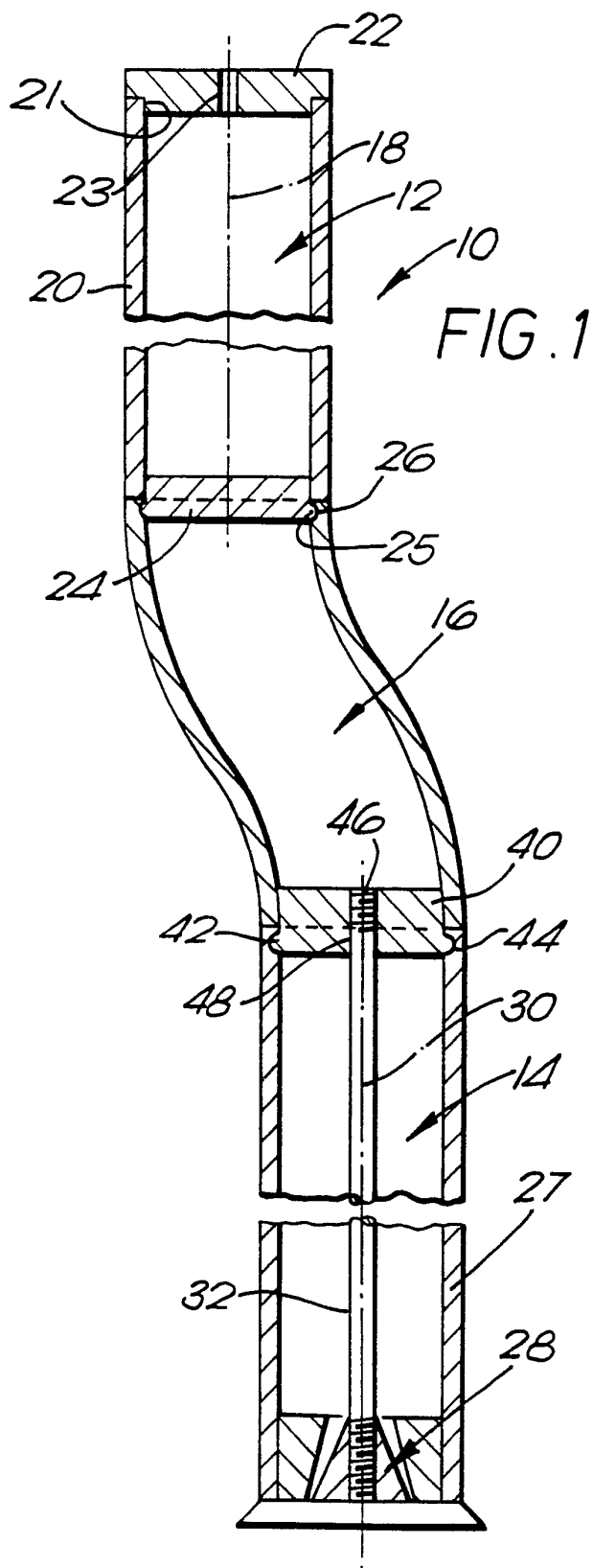
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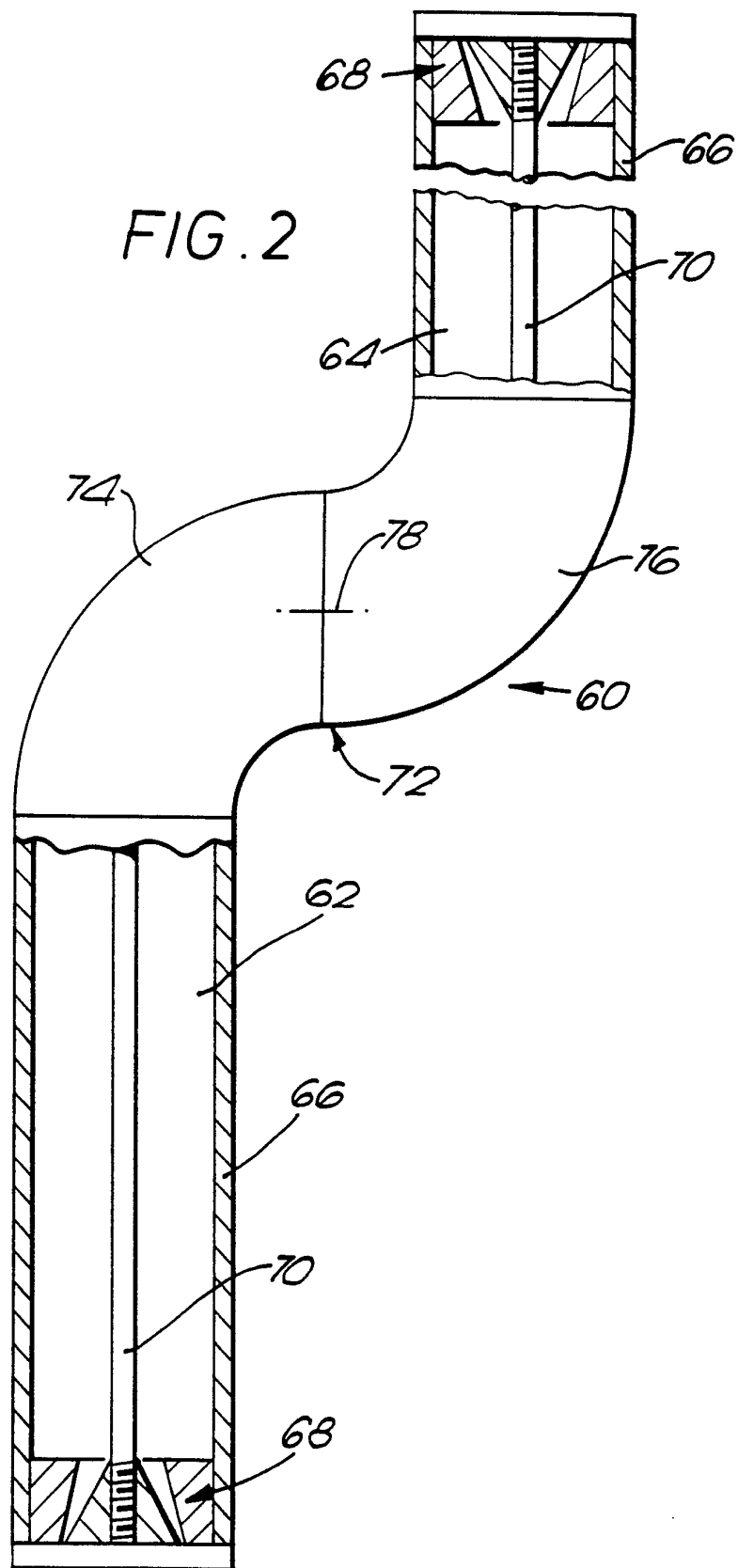
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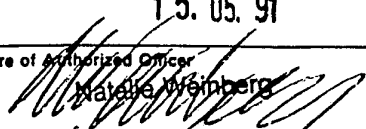


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# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No PCT/GB 90/01955

<b>I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER</b> (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all) <sup>6</sup>		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC		
IPC <sup>5</sup> : A 47 G 19/24, A 47 J 42/00		
<b>II. FIELDS SEARCHED</b>		
Minimum Documentation Searched <sup>7</sup>		
Classification System	Classification Symbols	
IPC <sup>5</sup>	A 47 G, A 47 J	
Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are Included in the Fields Searched <sup>8</sup>		
<b>III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT <sup>9</sup></b>		
Category <sup>9</sup>	Citation of Document, <sup>11</sup> with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages <sup>12</sup>	Relevant to Claim No. <sup>13</sup>
X	DE, U, 8809406 (M. NAMUR) 3 November 1988 see figure 1; claims  -----	1-5
<p>* Special categories of cited documents: <sup>10</sup></p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance</p> <p>"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.</p> <p>"&amp;" document member of the same patent family</p>		
<b>IV. CERTIFICATION</b>		
Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search	Date of Mailing of this International Search Report	
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