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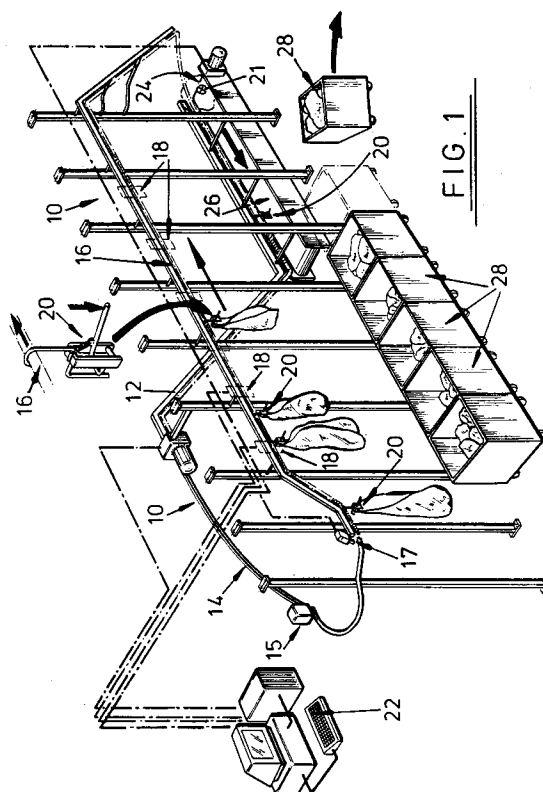
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CRUIKSHANK & FAIRWEATHER 19 Royal
Exchange Square
Glasgow, G1 3AE Scotland(GB)(54) **Article sorting apparatus.**

(57) The invention is concerned with a method and apparatus for sorting articles from a series of batched collection of articles so that a tally is kept of how many articles of a given type are received from each one of a variety of sources in a series of batched collections. The method avoids the task of attaching an identification tag to each article, and includes the steps of attaching each of said articles in a collection (24) sequentially to clip means (20) associated with a transporter device, attaching, adjacent to the sequentially suspended collection of articles, means (21) indicating, by use of coded data provided thereupon, the origin or identity of the collection, moving the clip means (20) and the articles suspended therefrom along the transporter device (10), viewing each article on the transporter device at a data keying station (22) and keying data to a computer to identify the type of article and its sequential position in the collection on the transporter device, forwarding the articles to a series of switch means (18A) and causing selected ones of said switch means to operate to open a clip means (20) in a computer-controlled sequence determined by the keyed-in identifying data so that all articles of any one type are released at a pre-determined position (28) on the transporter device appropriate to that type.

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

EP 89 31 2665

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X	GB-A-2 164 909 (DUCKER ENGINEERING LTD) * Page 1, lines 5-16,67-85,101-122 *	1,4	B 07 C 5/36 B 07 C 5/34 B 07 C 3/06
Y		3,5,6	
A		2,7	
Y	GB-A-360 240 (G.E.A. PURVIS) * Page 1, lines 9-40 *	3,6	
A	US-A-2 751 092 (S.A. CENTRE D'ETUDES MBA, PARIS) * Column 1, lines 44-61 *	6	
Y	US-A-3 881 609 (P.H. ELLIS et al. CALIFORNIA) * Column 3, lines 29-62; column 5, lines 15-50 *	5	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			B 07 C
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of search 27 January 92	Examiner VEEN G.E.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X: particularly relevant if taken alone Y: particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D: document cited in the application L: document cited for other reasons ----- &: member of the same patent family, corresponding document			