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(54) **Co-dispensing snack food product and beverages from a vending machine**

(57) A process for co-dispensing beverages and snack food products from a single vending machine. Filled beverage containers and filled snack food containers are stored in the vending machine and a buyer, upon payment, product selection, etc. can obtain both a beverage e.g., a soft drink, and a snack food, e.g., corn chips, from a single machine. The beverage and snack food containers preferably are of substantially the same size so that a vending machine of the type which dispenses containers having a uniform size may be

used to carry out the present invention. Also, an automatic door-opening mechanism is disclosed which opens the dispensing door of a vending machine when a snack food container is dispensed which is too light to open the door under the force of a gravity. A process and apparatus for packaging snack food product in containers are also disclosed wherein accurately sized portions of the product are formed and fed into a funnel member, the funnel member having troughs which align the product in a desired direction.

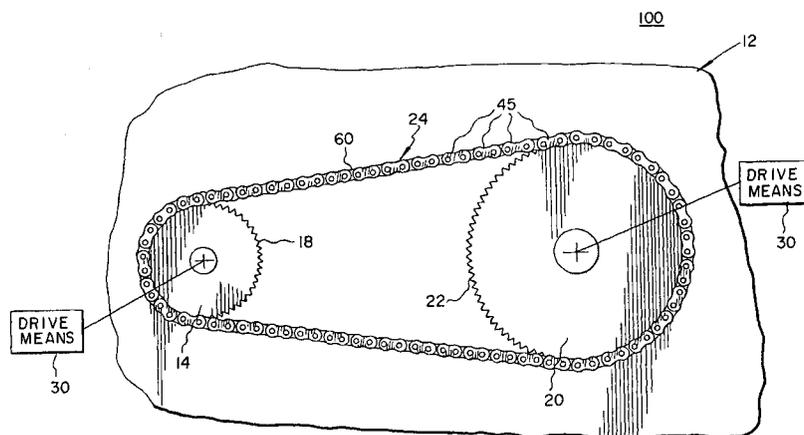


Fig. 1



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
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Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner		
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