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(54) **Beverage dispensing valve, in particular for a household refrigeration appliance**

(57) Beverage dispensing valve (10) having a main body (20) comprising:
- a first portion (21) for the entrance of the beverage into said valve (10);
- an intermediate portion (20I) comprising at least one opening (20A) that allows the beverage to flow out of said intermediate portion (20I);
- a second portion (22) extending parallel to a valve axis (A), a sealing member (23) associated with said second portion (22) in the proximity of a terminal part (22A) thereof,
said valve (10) having a lower body (30) in encircling relation to said second portion (22) and said at least one opening (20A) of the intermediate portion (20I), said lower body (30) being adapted to slide axially over said intermediate portion (20I) and second portion (22) to move between
- a first operating condition, wherein an inner surface (31) of the lower body (30) cooperates with said sealing member (23) to prevent the beverage from coming out of said valve (10),
- a second operating condition, wherein at least one gap (L) is formed between said inner surface (31) and said sealing member (23) to allow the flow of the beverage. The second portion (22) of the main body (20) is rod-shaped and comprises a longitudinal slit (22F) extending along said second portion (22).

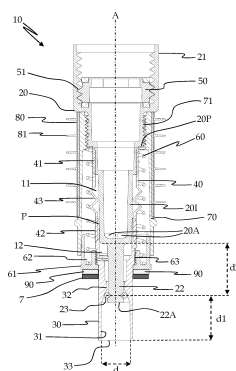


Fig. 3a

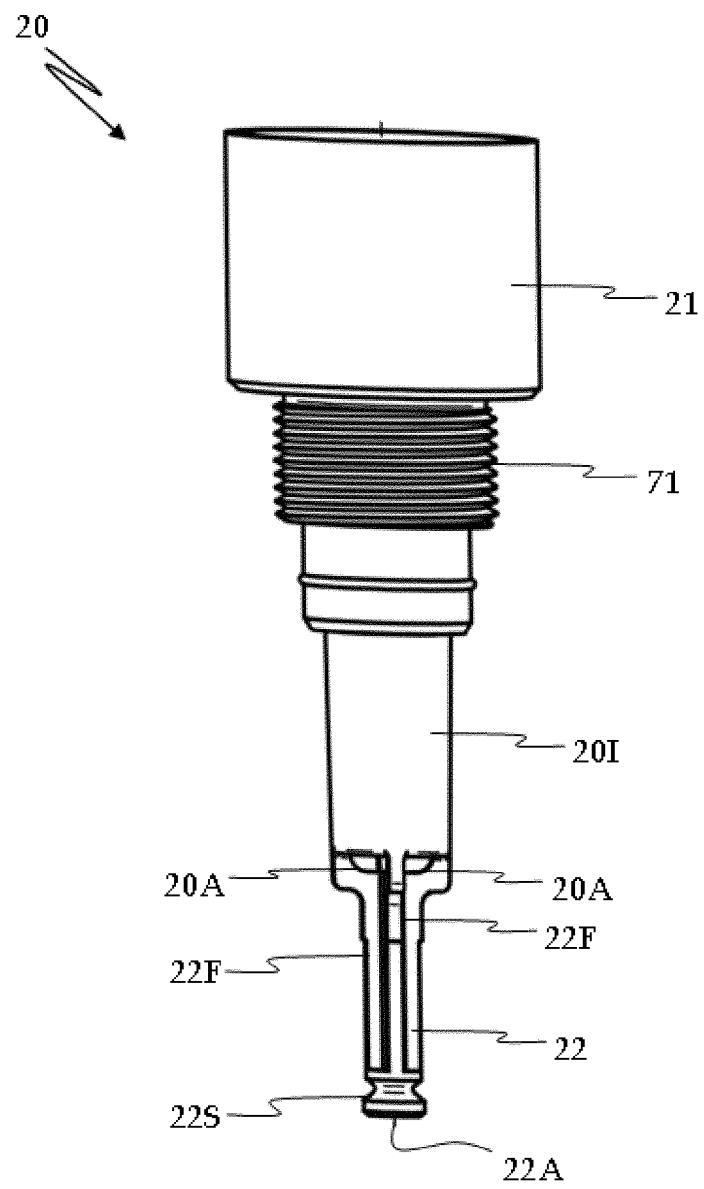


Fig. 4a



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 15 15 1761

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			B67D F25D
<p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p>			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
Munich		6 May 2015	Desittere, Michiel
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		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	
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			

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)



Application Number

EP 15 15 1761

CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing claims for which payment was due.

☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

☐ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

☐ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

☒ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

1-4

☐ The present supplementary European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims (Rule 164 (1) EPC).

**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number

EP 15 15 1761

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-4

Beverage dispensing valve wherein a second portion of the main body is rod-shaped and comprises a longitudinal slit

2. claims: 5-11

Beverage dispensing valve wherein in a first operating condition, a seal member is associated with a second portion of the main body at a distance between 10 mm and 30 mm from an outlet section of the lower body.

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 15 15 1761

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report. The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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06-05-2015

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EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82