

ORIGINAL

FILED
U.S. DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS

APR 11 2019

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS
LITTLE ROCK DIVISION

JAMES W. McCORMACK, CLERK
By: [Signature]
DEP CLERK

OurPet's Company,
1300 East Street
Fairport Harbor, Ohio 44077,

Plaintiff,

v.

Leather Brothers, Inc.,
dba OmniPet; dba omnipet.com
1314 Nabholz Avenue
Conway, AR 72034,

Defendant.

Case No. 4:19-cv-244-KGB

Judge Baker

Magistrate Ray

**COMPLAINT FOR
PATENT INFRINGEMENT**

(Jury Demand Endorsed Hereon)

NOW COMES the Plaintiff, *OurPet's Company*, and for its Complaint against the Defendant
hereby alleges as follows:

THE PARTIES

1. The Plaintiff, *OurPet's Company*, is a corporation organized under the laws of Colorado, and has its principal place of business in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, which is in Lake County, Ohio.
2. The Defendant, *Leather Brothers, Inc., dba OmniPet and/or omnipet.com*, upon information and belief, is a business entity located in Arkansas, which makes, uses, sells, offers for sale, and/or imports infringing product in the United States.

JURISDICTION AND VENUE

3. This is an action for patent infringement. The patent claims arise under the patent laws of the United States, specifically 35 U.S.C. § 281. This Court has federal question subject matter

1 jurisdiction in this matter pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331, 1338, and 35 U.S.C. § 281 because
2 this action arises under the patent laws of the United States.

- 3 4. This Court has personal jurisdiction over the Defendant by virtue of their sale of products,
4 transaction of business, and solicitation of business within the State of Arkansas, within this
5 judicial district and elsewhere.
- 6 5. Venue is proper in the Eastern District of Arkansas pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b)(2) and/or
7 28 U.S.C. § 1400(b) because a substantial part of the events giving rise to the claims
8 occurred in this judicial district, the Defendant is subject to personal jurisdiction in this
9 district, and infringement occurred within this judicial district. Further, venue is proper here
10 pursuant to the U.S. Supreme Court's holding in *TC Heartland LLC v. Kraft Foods Group*
11 *Brands LLC*.

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13 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS**

- 14 6. Since its founding in 1995, the Plaintiff has designed, produced, and marketed a broad line of
15 innovative, high-quality accessory and consumable pet products in the United States and
16 overseas.
- 17 7. The Plaintiff has dedicated extensive time to the understanding of pet aging and its critical
18 link to nature.
- 19 8. Along with proper nutrition, mental stimulation, physical exercise, and veterinary care, the
20 Plaintiff's products help to maintain the health and wellness of pets.
- 21 9. The Plaintiff strives to develop truly unique and innovative products. In fact, almost all of
22 the Plaintiff's products are patented and are the only ones of their kind in the marketplace.
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- 1 10. The Plaintiff has become a leader in feeding systems to improve the health and comfort of
2 pets. It has also developed interactive toys that provide fun, rewarding mental and physical
3 challenges to pets. It has also developed healthy consumables for achieving and maintaining
4 high mental, physical, and immune levels for pets.
- 5 11. The Plaintiff sells products under various brand names, such as Smart Scoop®, Pet Zone®,
6 Durapet® stainless steel bowls, Flappy® dog toys, Cosmic Catnip™, ecoPure® naturals, and
7 Play-n-Squeak®, among others.
- 8 12. The Plaintiff is a publicly-traded company.
- 9 13. Dr. Steven Tsengas, PhD is the founder and CEO of the Plaintiff corporation.
- 10 14. On October 16, 2012, United States Utility Patent No. 8,286,589, entitled “Covered Bowls
11 Such as Pet Food and Water Bowls” (hereinafter referred to as the ‘589 patent) duly and
12 legally issued to Steven Tsengas, as inventor, for the aforementioned invention. (A true and
13 accurate copy of the ‘589 patent as issued is attached hereto as “Exhibit 1.”)
- 14 15. All rights to the ‘589 patent, including but not limited to, the right to recover for infringement
15 thereunder, have been assigned to the Plaintiff, OurPet’s Company.
- 16 16. The ‘589 patent teaches a pet bowl with a rubber or plastic cover that is permanently or
17 removeably secured to the outer surface of the bowl, to make the bowl skid resistant, among
18 other things.
- 19 17. The ‘589 patent teaches a bowl with rubber or plastic affixed to the bottom of said bowl
20 where the rubber or plastic extends up at least a portion of the sidewall of the bowl.
- 21 18. The Plaintiff has widely and continuously promoted and sold its patented products under the
22 Durapet® brand, which products embody the ‘589 patent, and are marked patented and/or
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1 patent pending at times relevant. Further, Plaintiff's website publicly lists the subject patent:
2 <http://www.ourpets.com/patents-feeding-storage>.

3 19. The Plaintiff has invested considerable time and resources in marketing and advertising their
4 patented products.

5 20. The Defendant has had actual knowledge of the Plaintiff's intellectual property rights in the
6 Plaintiff's Durapet® product line by virtue of the Plaintiff's marking of its products as
7 patented and/or patent pending.

8 21. The parties are competitors in that they both manufacture, source, market, and/or sell pet
9 bowls widely in the pet industry.

10 22. The Defendant has been and is currently making, using, offering for sale, selling, and/or
11 importing product that infringes the '589 utility patent.

12 23. On March 10, 2015, United States Utility Patent No. 8,973,529, entitled "Covered Bowls
13 Such as Pet Food and Water Bowls" (hereinafter referred to as the '529 patent) duly and
14 legally issued to Steven Tsengas, as inventor, for the aforementioned invention. (A true and
15 accurate copy of the '529 patent as issued is attached hereto as "Exhibit 2.")

16 24. On Jan. 29, 2019, a Certificate of Correction issued by the US Paten Office correcting certain
17 figures of the specimen of the '529 patent. (A true and accurate copy of the '529 Certificate
18 of Correction is attached hereto as "Exhibit 2-A.")

19 25. All rights to the '529 patent, including but not limited to, the right to recover for infringement
20 thereunder, have been assigned to the Plaintiff, OurPet's Company.
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1 26. The '529 patent teaches a pet bowl with a rubber or plastic cover that is permanently or
2 removeably secured to the outer surface of the bowl, to make the bowl skid resistant, among
3 other things.

4 27. The '529 patent teaches a bowl with a rubber or plastic cover that need not extend up the
5 sidewall, i.e., rubber on the bottom of the bowl only.

6 28. The Defendant has been and is currently making, using, offering for sale, selling, and/or
7 importing products that infringe the '529 utility patent.

8 29. The aforementioned activities of the Defendant have also injured and threaten future injury to
9 the Plaintiff. More specifically, the Defendant's activities have diminished the Plaintiff's
10 goodwill and caused the Plaintiff to lose sales that it otherwise would have made but for the
11 sales of the Defendant.

12 30. The Defendant is not authorized in any way to sell their infringing products or to use the
13 patents owned by the Plaintiff.

14 31. The Plaintiff is entitled to an award of damages against Defendant, and is entitled to
15 injunctive relief.

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18 **CLAIM NO. 1**

19 *(Patent Infringement 35 U.S.C. § 271 et seq.)*

20 32. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference each statement, whether written above or
21 below, as if each is fully re-written herein.

22 33. The Defendant has been and is currently making, using, offering for sale, selling, and/or
23 importing products that infringe the '589 utility patent. (See "Exhibit 3" – allegedly
24 infringing products – stainless steel heavyweight bowls with rubber ring adhered to the
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1 bottom; sold in six (6) sizes.) (See “Exhibit 4” – allegedly infringing products – ant resistant
2 bowls with rubber ring adhered to the bottom; sold in five (5) sizes.)

3 34. The Defendant’s stainless steel bowls with rubber affixed to the bottom are all alleged to
4 infringe the ‘589 patent. (Exs. 3&4.)

5 35. The Defendant’s products are an infringement of the ‘589 patent, and in violation of 35
6 U.S.C. § 271 within this judicial district and elsewhere.

7 36. The Defendant will continue to make, use, offer for sale, sell, and import their infringing
8 products unless enjoined by this Court.

9 37. The Defendant has been, and is, actively inducing infringement of the ‘589 patent, by
10 offering for sale and selling their infringing products to dealers at wholesale prices who have,
11 and will continue to, offer them for sale and sell them to end users.

12 38. The Defendant’s infringement is, and at all times has been, deliberate, willful, with full
13 knowledge of the Plaintiff’s rights, and wanton, and as a result, the Plaintiff is entitled to
14 treble damages pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 284.

15 39. This is an exceptional case within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 285, and the award of
16 appropriate attorney’s fees is justified.

17 **CLAIM NO. 2**

18 *(Patent Infringement 35 U.S.C. § 271 et seq.)*

19 40. The Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference each statement, whether written above or
20 below, as if each is fully re-written herein.

21 41. The Defendant has been and is currently making, using, offering for sale, selling, and/or
22 importing products that infringe the ‘529 utility patent. (See Ex. 4.)

23 42. The Defendant’s bowls are also alleged to infringe the ‘529 patent.
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1 43. The Defendant's conduct is an infringement of the '529 patent, and in violation of 35 U.S.C.
2 § 271 within this judicial district and elsewhere.

3 44. The Defendant will continue to make, use, offer for sale, sell, and import their infringing
4 products unless enjoined by this Court.

5 45. The Defendant has been, and is, actively inducing infringement of the '529 patent, by
6 offering for sale and selling their infringing products to dealers at wholesale prices who have,
7 and will continue to, offer them for sale and sell them to end users.

8 46. The Defendant's infringement is, and at all times has been, deliberate, willful, with full
9 knowledge of the Plaintiff's rights, and wanton, and as a result, the Plaintiff is entitled to
10 treble damages pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 284.

11 47. This is an exceptional case within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. § 285, and the award of
12 appropriate attorney's fees is justified.
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14 **PRAYER FOR RELIEF / REQUEST FOR REMEDIES**

15 WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff prays that this Court enter an Order against the Defendant as
16 follows:
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18 A) A preliminary injunction enjoining the Defendant from making, using, selling, or importing
19 any product that infringes upon the '589, or '529 patents;

20 B) A permanent injunction enjoining the Defendant from making, using, selling, or importing
21 any product that infringes upon the '589, or '529 patents;

22 C) An accounting for damages resulting from Defendant's patent infringement and the trebling
23 of such damages because of the knowing, willful, and wanton nature of the Defendant's
24 conduct;
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- D) An assessment of interest on the damages so computed;
- E) An award of attorney's fees and costs in this action under 35 U.S.C. § 285;
- F) Judgment against Defendant indemnifying the Plaintiff from any claims brought against the Plaintiff for negligence, debts, product liability, or other breaches of any duty owed by the Defendant to any person who was confused as to some association between the Plaintiff and Defendant as alleged in this Complaint;
- G) Judgment against Defendant for an accounting and monetary award in an amount to be determined at trial;
- H) Requiring Defendant to account to the Plaintiff for all sales and purchases that have occurred to date, and requiring the Defendant to disgorge any and all profits derived by Defendant for selling infringing product;
- I) Requiring Defendant to provide full disclosure of any and all information relating to its supplier or suppliers of infringing product;
- J) Requiring Defendant to provide the location of any and all manufacturing equipment, including but not limited to, molds used to manufacture infringing product;
- K) Requiring Defendant to destroy any and all manufacturing equipment used to manufacture infringing product or to deliver said equipment to the Plaintiff;
- L) Ordering a product recall of infringing product for destruction;
- M) Requiring Defendant to file with this Court and serve on the Plaintiff within thirty (30) days of this Court's order a report setting forth the manner in which they complied with the order;
- N) Requiring Defendant to provide to Plaintiff all sales records, including but not limited to, email, mail, and advertising lists;

- 1 O) Damages according to each cause of action herein;
2 P) Prejudgment interest; and
3 Q) Any such other relief in law or equity that this honorable Court deems just.
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6 **JURY DEMAND**

7 WHEREFORE, the Plaintiff requests a trial by jury on all issues so triable.
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9 Most Respectfully Submitted,

10 
11 s/ David A. Welling

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Counsel for the Plaintiff



US008286589B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Tsengas

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 8,286,589 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Oct. 16, 2012**

(54) **COVERED BOWLS SUCH AS PET FOOD AND WATER BOWLS**

(75) Inventor: **Steven Tsengas**, Fairport Harbor, OH (US)

(73) Assignee: **OurPet's Company**, Fairport Harbor, OH (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **12/688,981**

(22) Filed: **Jan. 18, 2010**

Related U.S. Application Data

(63) Continuation-in-part of application No. 12/049,962, filed on Mar. 17, 2008, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 11/067,046, filed on Feb. 28, 2005, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 10/616,282, filed on Jul. 10, 2003, now abandoned, which is a continuation-in-part of application No. 09/813,746, filed on Mar. 21, 2001, now abandoned.

(60) Provisional application No. 60/193,963, filed on Mar. 31, 2000.

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01K 5/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.** **119/61.56**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** 119/61.56,
119/61.54, 61.5
See application file for complete search history.

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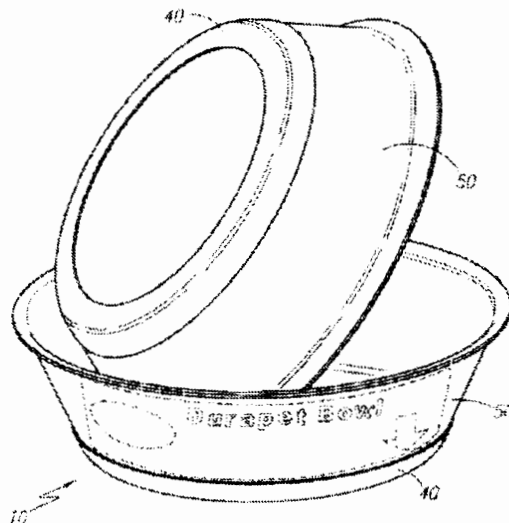
Primary Examiner — Yvonne Abbott

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — John D. Gugliotta, PE, Esq

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A cover for a bowl, such as a pet food or water bowl, that comprises a dip molded cover on the outer surface of a bowl, thereby providing aesthetically pleasing exterior features, while also providing protection to the covered bowl and insulating qualities to the contents of the covered bowl. The cover of the present invention may be fabricated from rubber or plastic material and may be permanently or removeably secured to the outer surface of the bowl.

10 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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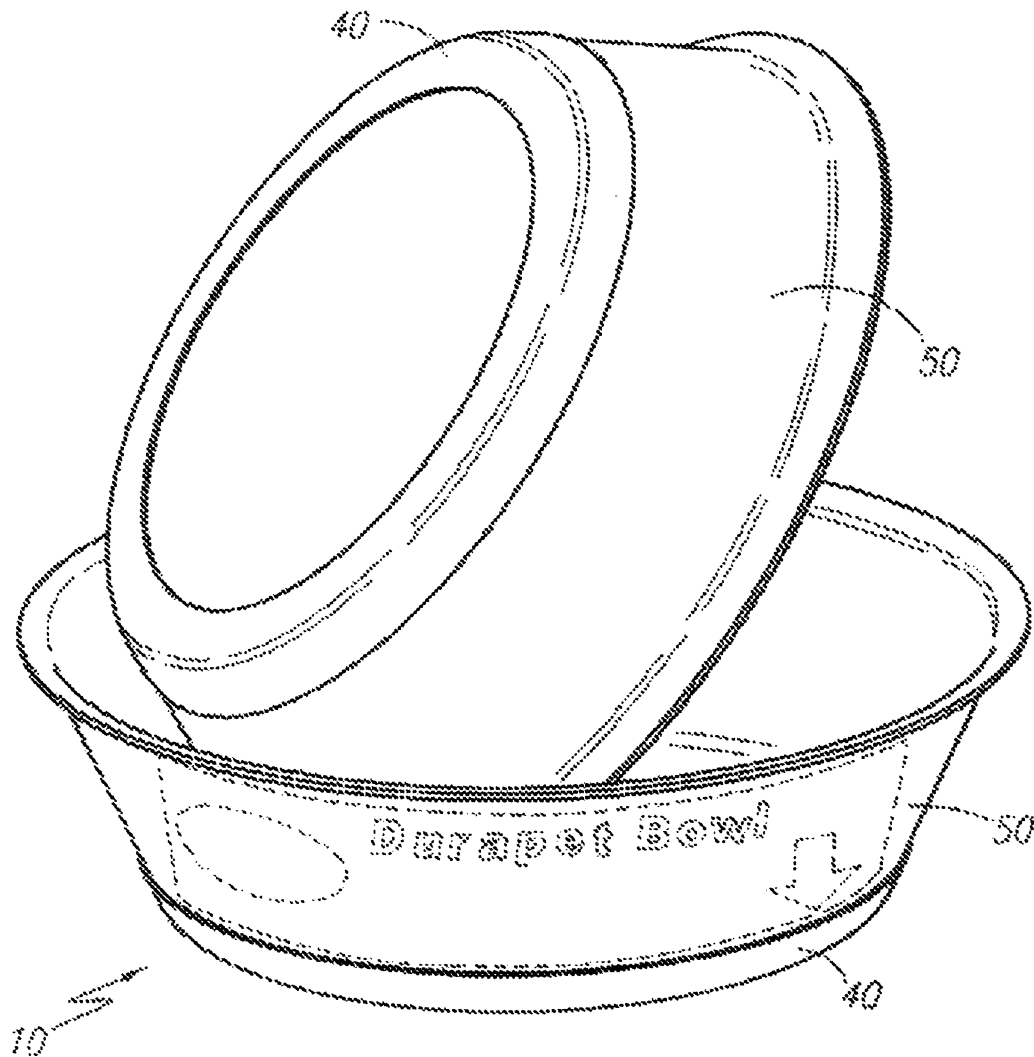


Fig. 1

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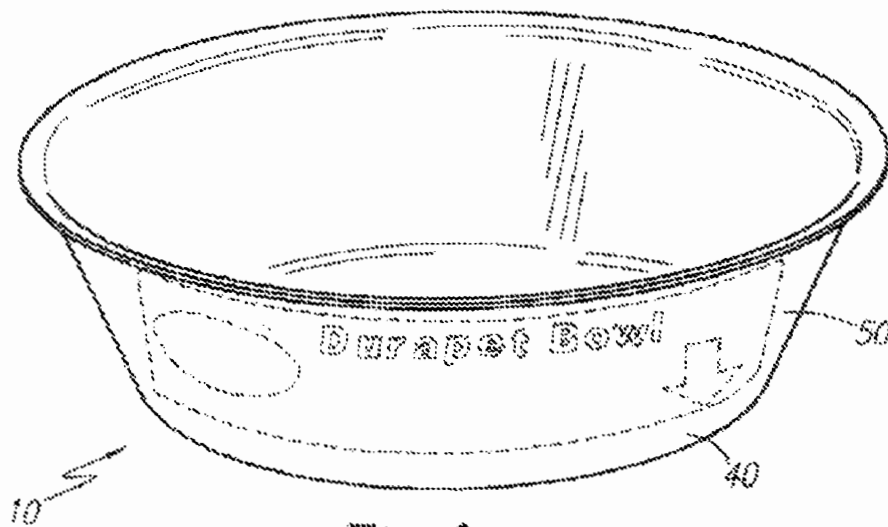


Fig. 2

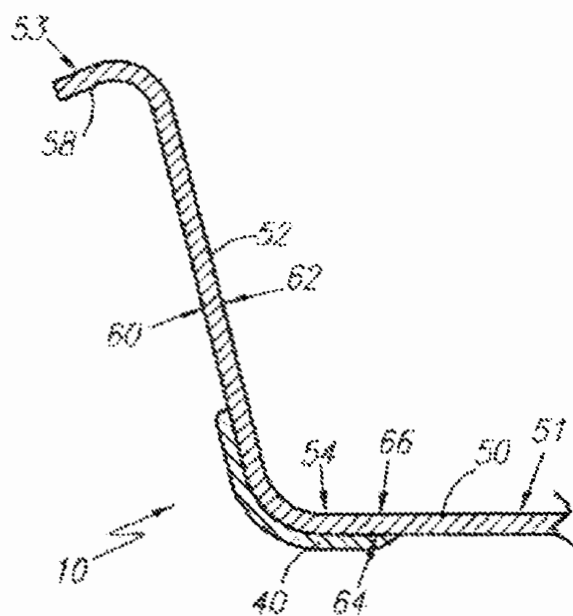


Fig. 3

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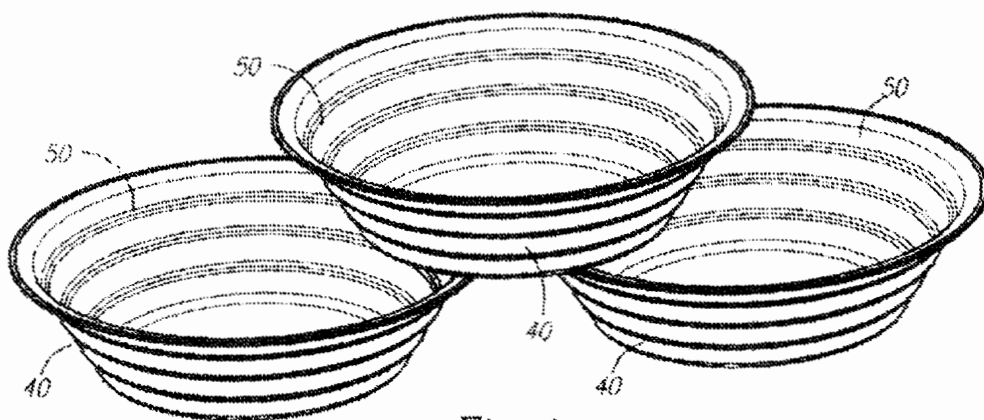


Fig. 4

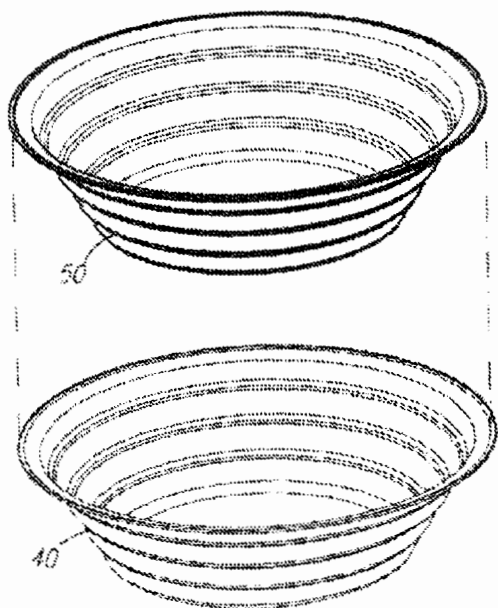


Fig. 5

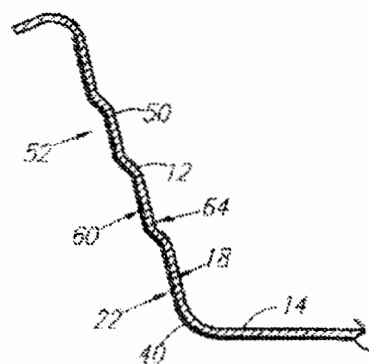


Fig. 6

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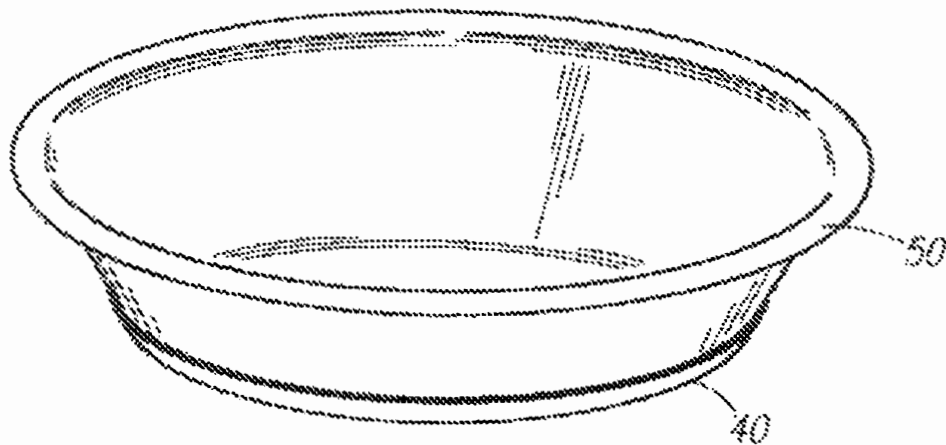


Fig. 7

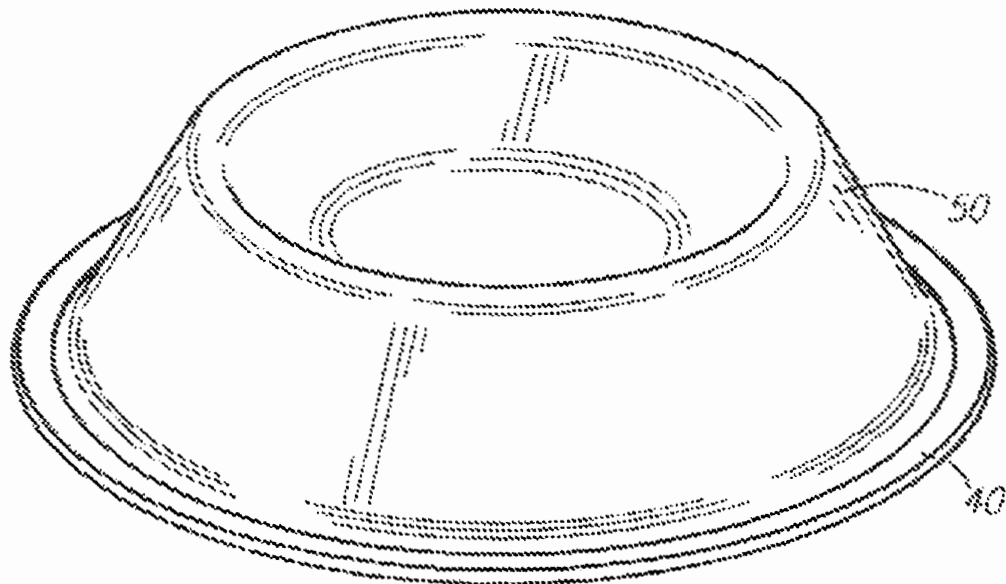


Fig. 8

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**COVERED BOWLS SUCH AS PET FOOD AND
WATER BOWLS****RELATED APPLICATIONS**

The present application is a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Non-Provisional patent application Ser. No. 12/049,962 Mar. 17, 2008, which was a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Non-Provisional patent application Ser. No. 11/067,046, filed on Feb. 28, 2005, which is a Continuation-in-part of U.S. Ser. No. 10/616,282, filed on Jul. 10, 2003 now abandoned, which was a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Ser. No. 09/813,746, filed on Mar. 21, 2001 now abandoned, which was a conversion of U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/193,963, filed on Mar. 31, 2000, wherein the present application claims a benefit of the priority filing date of Mar. 31, 2000.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**1. Field of the Invention**

The present invention relates generally to new and novel improvements in pet food and water bowls. More particularly, the present invention relates to a covered pet food and/or water bowl, such as a stainless steel pet feeder having a cover that is preferably durable and lightweight, and provides an aesthetically pleasing appearance, protection to both the bowl and the surface on which the bowl may be set upon, and possibly some insulating properties to the contents placed therein.

2. Description of the Related Art

In the related art, a few covered bowls and covered container articles are disclosed. For example, U.S. Serial No. 2,731,056, issued in the name of Anson, discloses a unitary molded body that preferably is made of an elastic rubber-like material that can be a plasticol and has an endless series of pronounced pleats extending axially of the body. The body can serve as a coaster for a glass or for other containers having various sizes and shapes, including flower pots, milk bottles, and soda bottles, and can serve as a protective sleeve for various objects. However, such a device as described in Anson cannot be utilized as a pet food and water bowl.

Further, U.S. Pat. No. 5,979,361, issued in the name of Willinger, discloses a non-skid pet bowl comprising a bowl having molded over it a non-skid thermoplastic elastomer that covers the bowl's undersurface and desirably runs midway up the bowl's sidewall. The bowl is first molded from plastic, and then the thermoplastic elastomer is molded as a coating or layer over it. However, such a device cannot be used directly for stainless steel bowls, and does not anticipate a separate cover that is affixed to the stainless steel bowl via an inference fit.

Finally, U.S. Pat. No. 1,922,127, issued in the name of Foley, discloses a pail silencer made of a single piece of resilient material, such as rubber, and including a cup designed to receive and grip the lower end of the pail. Again, however, such a device cannot be utilized as a pet food and water bowl, cannot be used directly for stainless steel bowls, and does not anticipate a separate cover that is affixed to the stainless steel bowl via an inference fit.

Given the particular advantages of providing an anti-microbial growth surface environment when used with stainless steel that are particularly well suited for use in pet food and water bowls, and given the tremendous and immediate commercial success of applicant's DURAPET™ brand pet food and water bowls, it is felt that the improved covered bowl of

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the present invention provides these advantages while avoiding the shortcoming of the prior art.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an improved covered pet bowl having an altered external appearance.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a covered for a pet bowl that minimizes and substantially precludes the bowl from slipping and sliding along or across a surface, such as a floor, upon which it is placed.

It is a further feature of the present invention to provide a covered pet bowl that can provide some level of insulation for the contents of the bowl placed therein.

Briefly described according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the aforementioned objects of the present invention are attained by a stainless steel pet bowl having a cover secured to the exterior surface of a bowl such as by molding or adhesive attachment. The cover may also be manufactured by various other known means for shaping plastic or rubber type materials. The cover may provide a pleasing aesthetic appearance, as well as providing protection to the bowl's bottom or the surface on which the bowl may be placed. In an alternate embodiment, the cover is not adhered or molded on, but rather has a slight to zero interference fit with the exterior surface of the bowl to normally remain on the exterior surface of the bowl when the bowl is lifted or otherwise moved. The cover's inner surface is then substantially formed to the shape of the bowl to fit over the outer surface of the bowl. In the preferred embodiment the covered bowl is formed as a single unit; in the alternate embodiment, the cover is removable from the bowl or can be provided separately. In either embodiment the cover may be fabricated from various materials such as rubber or plastic based material to provide resistance to substantially prevent the bowl from slipping, sliding or otherwise moving during use by the pet, and further preventing scratching, scarring and annoying noises that may result from sliding on a floor. Finally, if formed of sufficient thickness the cover can provide insulation to the contents placed within the bowl.

Other advantages and novel features of the present invention will become apparent in the following detailed description of the invention when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The advantages and features of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following more detailed description and claims taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like elements are identified with like symbols, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view of a covered bowl according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a rear, bottom perspective view thereof;

FIG. 3 is a cross sectional view thereof taken along line III-III of FIG. 1;

FIG. 4 is a front perspective view of a covered bowl according to an alternate embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is an exploded front perspective view of the embodiment of FIG. 4;

FIG. 6 is a cross sectional view taken along line VI-VI of FIG. 5;

FIG. 7 is a front perspective view of a second alternate bowl design for use with the present invention; and

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FIG. 8 is a front perspective view of a third alternate bowl design for use with the present invention.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The best mode for carrying out the invention is presented in terms of its preferred embodiment, herein depicted within FIGS. 1 through 8.

1. Detailed Description of the Figures

Referring now to FIG. 1, a covered bowl 10 is shown in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. It is envisioned that the covered bowl 10 has an aesthetic outer cover 40 placed about the lower exterior of the bowl 50 and can be affixed thereto by a variety of methods, including molding or manual manipulation or adhesive attachment of a separately provided cover 40 onto the outer lower periphery of the bowl 50. Preferably, the cover 40 is attached about the exterior of the bowl 50 via a suitable adhesive or by directly molding the cover 40 onto the bowl 50, whereby the cover 40 remains affixed to the bowl 50 during lifting, moving or repositioning. As shown best in conjunction with FIG. 3, a permanent or semi-permanent adhesive 51 can be placed within the cover 40, onto the bowl 50, or both.

The bowl 50 may be of various designs, such as the one depicted in FIGS. 1-6, comprising an annular sidewall 52 depending from a bottom surface 54, wherein the sidewall 52 terminates at an upper peripheral rim 53 opposite the bottom surface 54 that is coextensive with a bowl opening 56. The sidewall 52 and bottom surface 54 each have an exterior surface, wherein the exterior and interior surfaces of the sidewall 52 are denoted as 60 and 62, respectively, and the exterior and interior surfaces of bottom surface 54 are denoted as 64 and 66, respectively. As shown in conjunction with FIGS. 7-8, other bowl designs can be adapted to use the present invention.

Referring now specifically to FIG. 4 through FIG. 6, an alternate embodiment is shown in which the cover 40 is a separable body comprising a continuous sidewall 12 depending from a base 14, the sidewall 12 being available in various heights and widths, and the base 14 also being available in various widths or thicknesses. The height of the sidewall 12 may vary between de minimis, wherein the sidewall 12 extends upward just beyond the junction of the sidewall 12 and base 14, to a maximum, wherein the sidewall 12 extends upward to cover the height of the sidewall 52 of bowl 50. It should be noted that FIG. 4 through FIG. 6 illustrate a cover 40 that substantially traverses the entire height of sidewall 52 of bowl 50, but traversal of sidewall 52 is not required or necessary. In this embodiment, frictional force and interference fit securely hold cover 40 on bowl 50, it is the circumferential contact between the exterior surfaces 60 and 64 of bowl 50 and the interior surfaces 18 and 22 of cover 40 that provides the frictional interference fit. Thus, the cover 40 only needs to extend upward as is necessary to secure the cover 40 to the bowl 50 by frictional interference fit.

2. Operation of the Preferred Embodiment

To use the present invention, in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a cover 40 is placed upon a bowl 50 to provide protection to the bowl 50, reduce slipping and sliding of the bowl 50 during use by a pet, and provide insulating properties to the contents of the bowl 50. The cover 40 may be fabricated onto the bowl 50 during

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manufacture, or may be manually placed thereon. When a pet eats or drinks from the bowl 50, the cover 40 resists movement by the glutinous properties of the cover 40 adhering and frictionally impinging the cover 40 to a surface.

The foregoing descriptions of specific embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration and description and are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Obviously many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical application, and enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the invention and various embodiments. It is intended that the scope of the invention be defined by the Claims appended hereto and their equivalents. Therefore, the scope of the invention is to be limited only by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A single member animal feeder substantially comprising:
 - a bowl formed of stainless steel or other metal;
 - a cover placed about at least a portion of an exterior of said bowl in a continuous direct contact arrangement, said cover remaining affixed to said bowl during lifting, moving or repositioning; said cover resisting movements relative to a floor surface through adhering and frictionally impinging said cover to said floor surface; said cover having an annular sidewall extending up from a bottom exterior surface of said bowl, said sidewall surface terminating at an upper portion opposite said bottom outer surface that is coextensive with and circumscribes an outer surface of said bowl; said cover permanently attached to said bowl through frictional force and interference fit securely holding said cover on said bowl such that circumferential contact between the exterior surfaces of said bowl and the interior surfaces of said cover provides said frictional interference fit.
2. The animal feeder of claim 1, further comprising an adhesive placed between the exterior of the bowl and the interior of said cover.
3. The animal feeder of claim 2, wherein said cover is formed having a decorative color.
4. The animal feeder of claim 3, wherein said decorative cover is further formed of a material having insulating properties to provide insulation to the contents of the bowl and reduces the conduction of heat or cold from the bowl to the environment.
5. The animal feeder of claim 3, wherein said decorative cover is formed of a material capable of providing frictional resistance to the bowl so as to substantially reduce slipping and/or sliding along a floor or other surface upon which the bowl is placed.
6. The animal feeder of claim 1, wherein said cover forms an exterior surface with a plurality of ribs for providing:
 - an exterior surface that is easily gripped by a user; and
 - as an aesthetic feature to the exterior surface of said cover.
7. An animal feeder substantially comprising:
 - a bowl formed of stainless steel or other metal, said bowl having an annular sidewall upwardly directed from a bowl bottom to form a holding volume;
 - said bowl bottom having an upper surface bounding a lower portion of the holding volume and a lower surface opposite the upper surface; and
 - a lower surface cover affixed to said lower surface, said lower surface cover is molded to said lower surface; said lower surface cover extends up from a bottom surface and up said at least a portion of said annular sidewall;

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said lower surface cover circumscribes an outer edge of said lower surface of said bowl; said lower surface cover is formed of a material capable of providing said lower surface with an increased resistance to slipping and/or sliding along a floor or other surface upon which the animal feeder is placed; said lower surface cover is further formed of a material having insulating properties to provide insulation to the contents of the bowl and reduces the conduction of heat or cold from the bowl to the environment.

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8. The animal feeder of claim 7 wherein said lower surface cover is formed having a decorative color.

9. The animal feeder of claim 7, wherein said lower surface cover further forms a textured exterior surface.

10. The animal feeder of claim 7, wherein said lower surface cover further forms a patterned exterior surface.

* * * * *



US008973529B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Tsengas

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 8,973,529 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Mar. 10, 2015**

(54) **COVERED BOWLS SUCH AS PET FOOD AND WATER BOWLS**

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(72) Inventor: **Steven Tsengas**, Fairport Harbor, OH (US)

(73) Assignee: **Our Pet's Company**, Fairport Harbor, OH (US)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

(21) Appl. No.: **13/651,612**

(22) Filed: **Oct. 15, 2012**

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01K 5/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **119/61.56**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC 119/61.56, 61.54, 61.5
See application file for complete search history.

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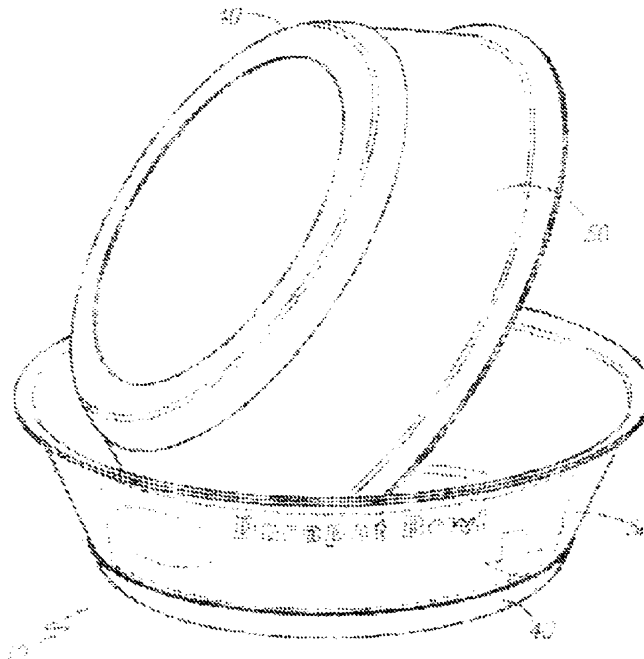
Primary Examiner — Yvonne Abbott

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — John D. Gugliotta

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A cover for a bowl, such as a pet food or water bowl, that comprises a cover molded on or affixed to the outer surface of a bowl, thereby providing aesthetically pleasing exterior features, while also providing protection to the covered bowl and insulating qualities to the contents of the covered bowl. The cover of the present invention may be fabricated from rubber or plastic secured to the outer surface of the metallic bowl.

16 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets



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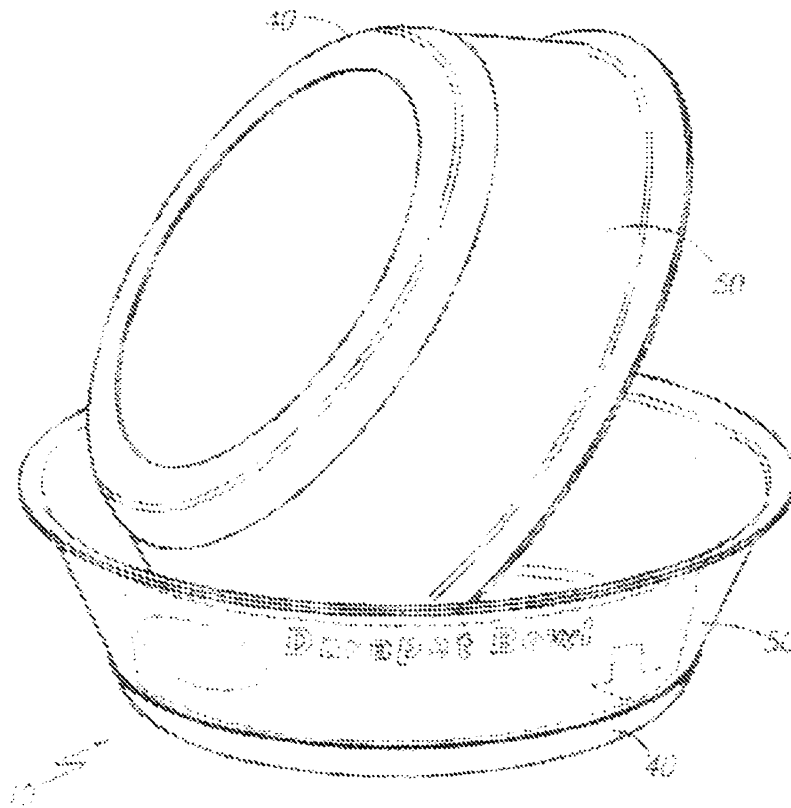


Fig. 1

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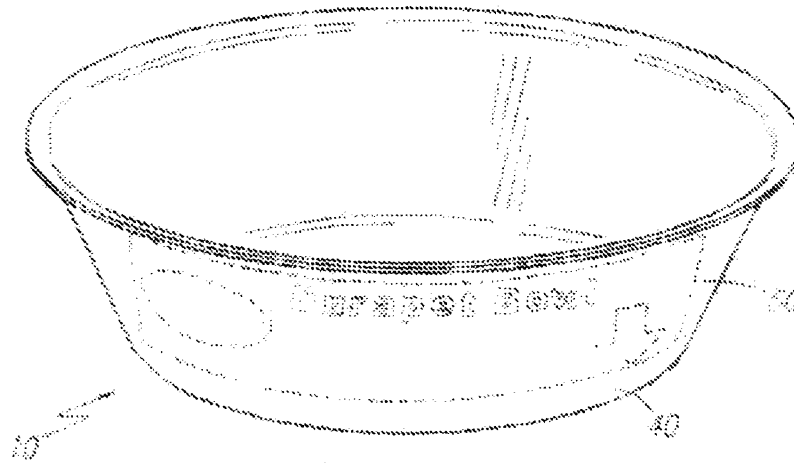


Fig. 2

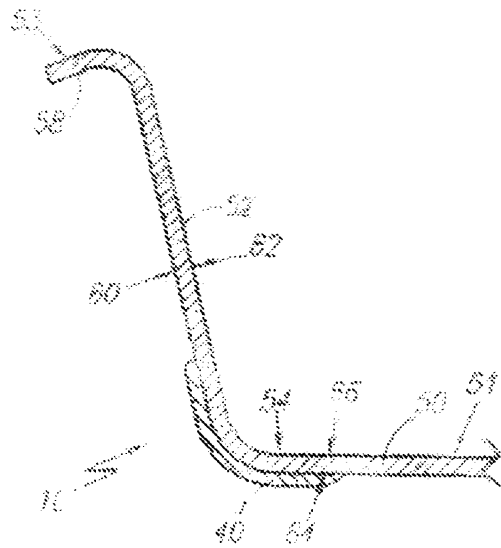


Fig. 3

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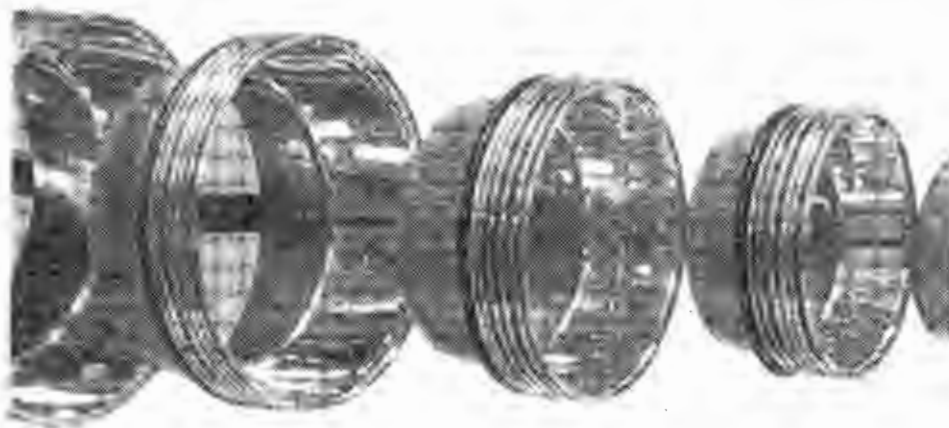
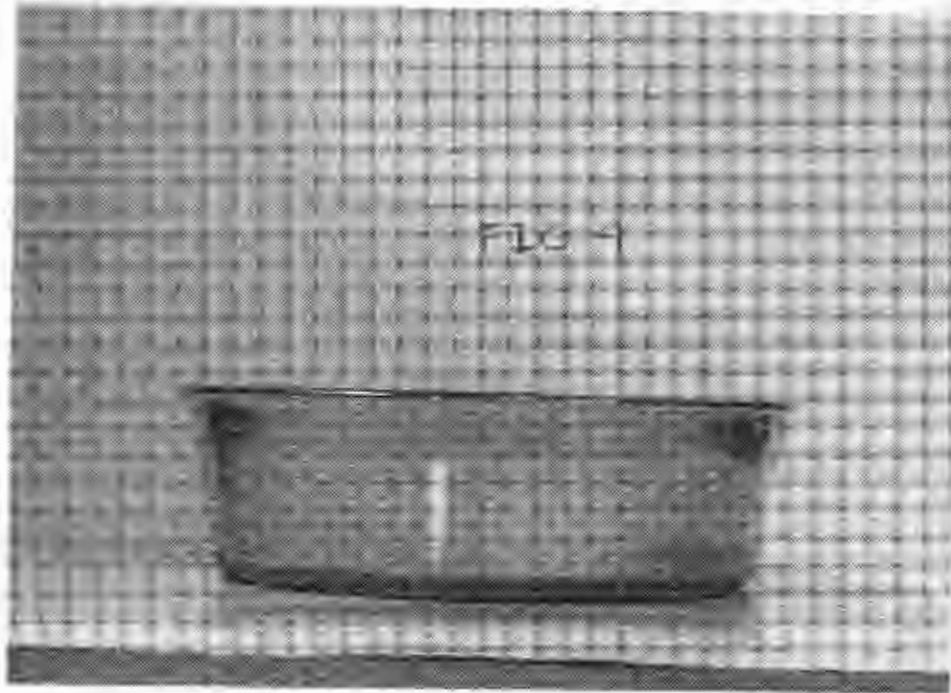


FIG. 5

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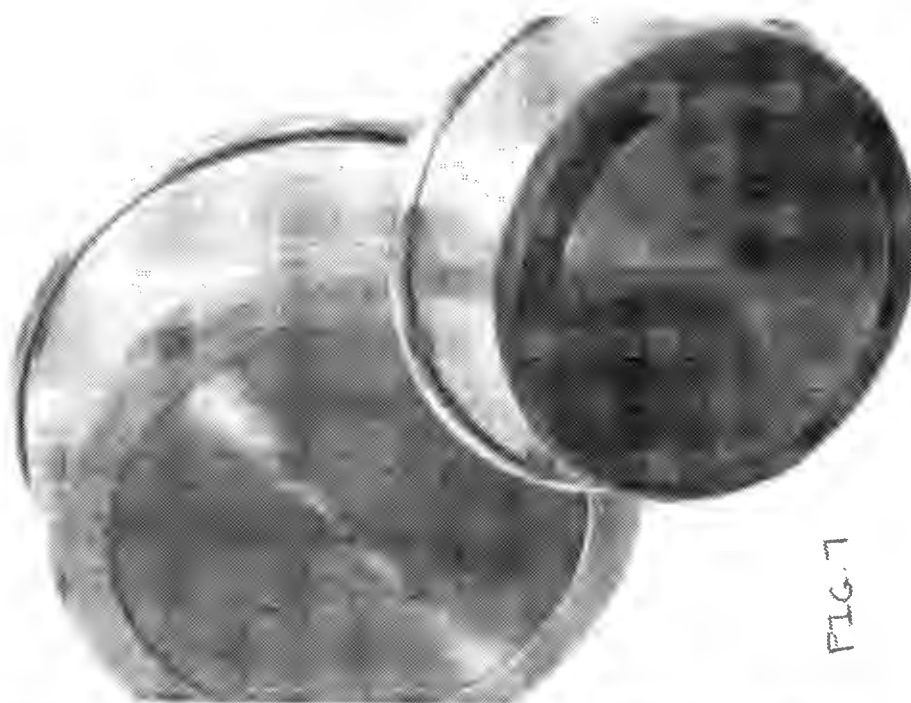


FIG. 7

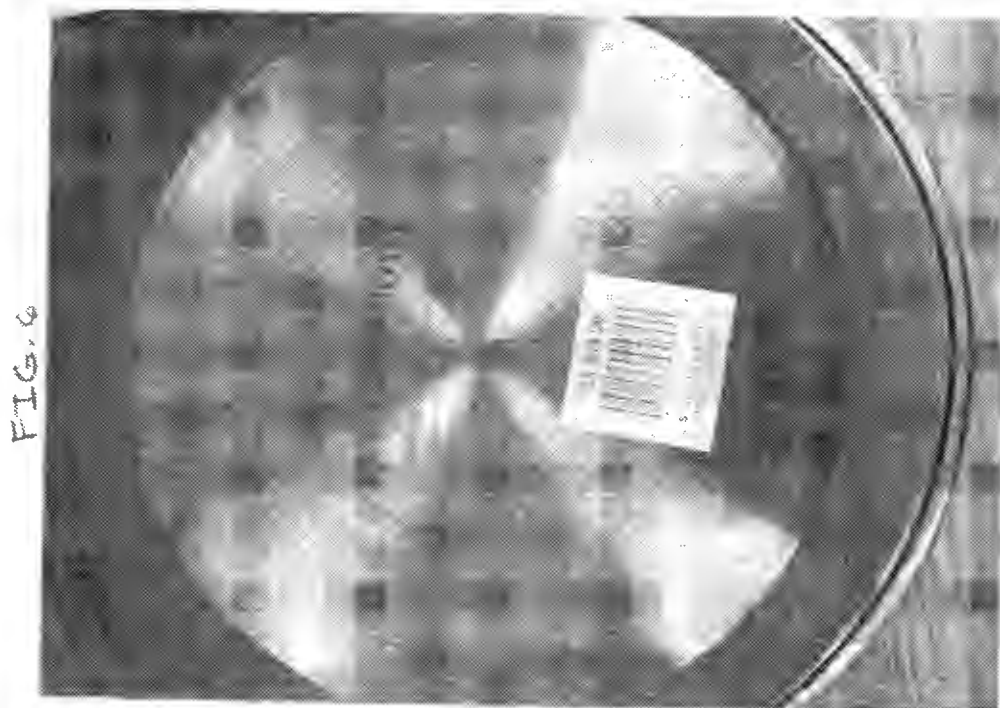


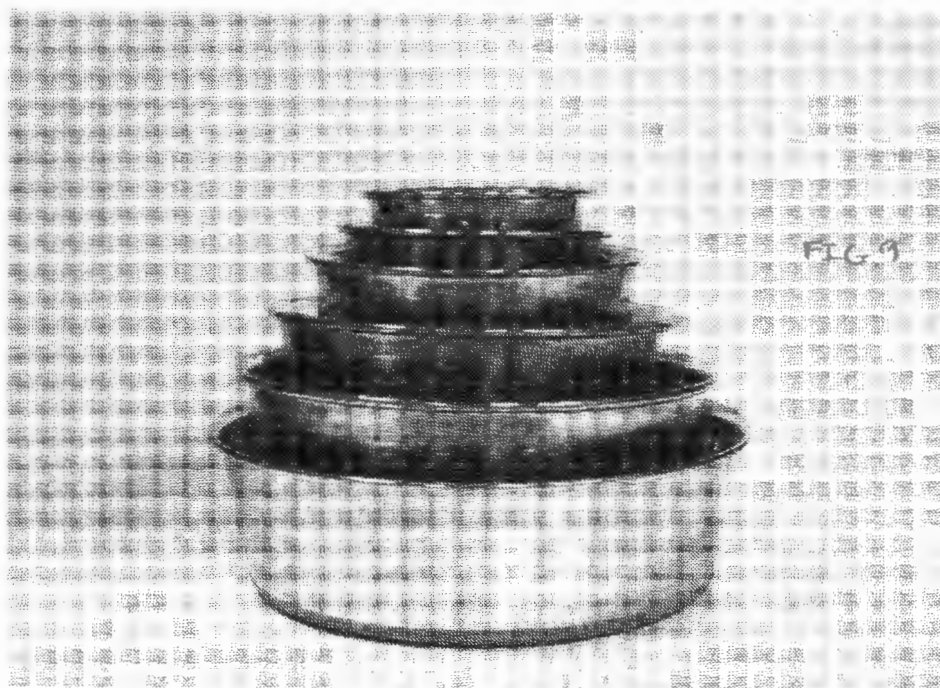
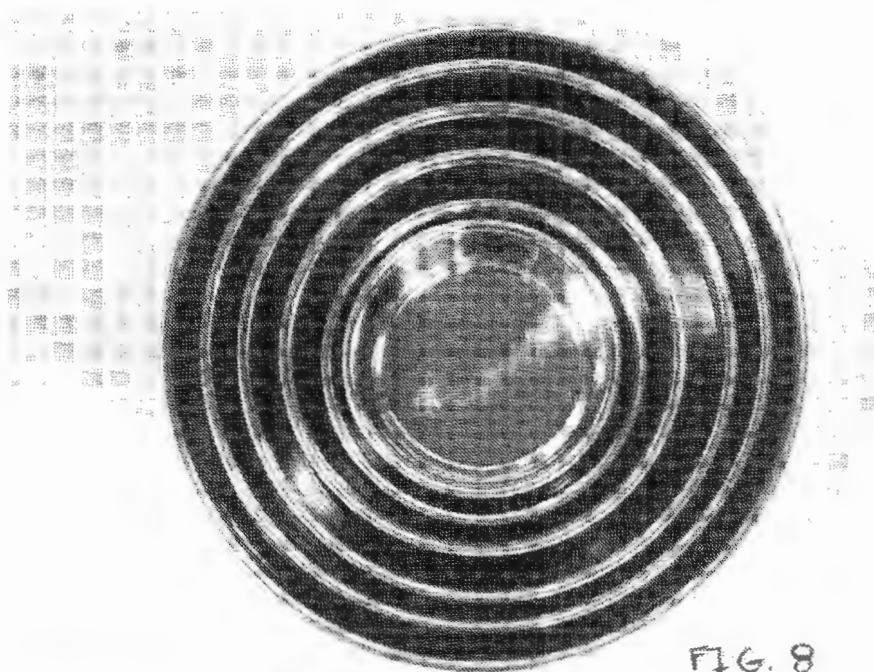
FIG. 6

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**COVERED BOWLS SUCH AS PET FOOD AND
WATER BOWLS****RELATED APPLICATIONS**

The present application is a Continuation-in-Part U.S. Pat. No. 8,286,589 filed on Oct. 18, 2010, which was a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Non-Provisional patent application Ser. No. 12/049,962, which was a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Non-Provisional patent application Ser. No. 11/067,046, filed on Feb. 28, 2005, which is a Continuation-in-part of U.S. Ser. No. 10/616,282, filed on Jul. 10, 2003; which was a Continuation-in-Part of U.S. Ser. No. 09/813,746, filed on Mar. 21, 2001, which was a conversion of U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 60/193,963, filed on Mar. 31, 2000, wherein the present application claims a benefit of the priority filing date of Mar. 31, 2000.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**1. Field of the Invention**

The present invention relates generally to new and novel improvements in pet food and water bowls. More particularly, the present invention relates to a covered pet food and/or water bowl, such as a stainless steel pet feeder having a cover for the lower surface that is preferably durable and lightweight, and provides an aesthetically pleasing appearance, protection to both the bowl and the surface on which the bowl may be set upon, and possibly partially insulate the contents placed therein.

2. Description of the Related Art

Pet food and water bowls of many types have existed commercially for quite some time. The use of stainless steel in the manufacturing of such bowls as become popular due to their durability, ease of cleaning and relative value, with the price of such bowls having been reduced greatly over the years with increasing supply. However, given the relative hardness of stainless steel pet feeders made from this material have a tendency to move or slide about on smooth flooring surfaces. Such movement can cause distraction or frustration to the pet while feeding, and can additionally cause noise on or scratching of smooth surface floors.

While rubber or elastomeric covers have been made that removably affix to the lower surface of some bowl designs, while providing an aesthetically pleasing appearance, such removable covers create an impediment when it comes to cleaning of such bowls, with consumers rejecting such designs due to their inability to be machine washable as well as becoming a weak nondurable element of such a combination.

Consequently, a need has been felt for a stainless steel feeders with nonskid rubber bottoms permanently affixed thereto in order to prevent slipping, skidding and noise, while at the same time allowing for the entire assembly to be durable and machine washable

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide an improved pet bowl having a covered lower surface.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a pet bowl incorporating a covered lower surface that minimizes and substantially precludes the bowl from slipping and sliding along or across a surface, such as a floor, upon which it is placed.

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It is a further feature of the present invention to provide a pet food or drinking bowl that includes a covered lower surface that can provide some level of insulation for the contents of the bowl placed therein.

Briefly described according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention, the aforementioned objects of the present invention are attained by a metallic pet feeding bowl having a nonmetallic cover secured on the lower exterior surface of a pet food or drink bowl. The pet bowl may be formed of stainless steel, and the nonmetallic cover may be formed of an elastomeric or rubber material that is secured to the lower outer surface by bonding, vulcanizing, dip molding, adhesive attachment or the like. The cover may also be manufactured by various other known means for shaping plastic or rubber type materials. The cover may provide a pleasing aesthetic appearance, as well as providing protection to the bowl's bottom or the surface on which the bowl may be placed. The cover can be formed directly in contact with the bowl's lower surface, or can be pre-fabricated to a shape substantially formed to the shape of the bowl to fit over the outer lower surface of the bowl prior to it being affixed or adhered thereto. In the preferred embodiment the cover has an annular shape such as to adhere to and cover only the lower peripheral outer circumference of the bowl's bottom surface; however in an alternate embodiment the cover has a disc-like shape to cover the entire lower outer surface of the bowl. The material selection, position, shape and overall fabrication and attachment of the lower cover is intended to provide frictional resistance to substantially prevent the bowl from slipping, sliding or otherwise moving during use by the pet, and further preventing scratching, scarring and annoying noises that may result from sliding on a floor. Finally, if formed of sufficient thickness the cover may provide a certain degree of insulation to the contents placed within the bowl.

Other advantages and novel features of the present invention will become apparent in the following detailed description of the invention when considered in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The advantages and features of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the following more detailed description and claims taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, in which like elements are identified with like symbols, and in which:

FIG. 1 is a front perspective view and a bottom perspective view in combination of a pair of animal feeders or drinking containers having a cover for the lower surface according to the preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a front, top perspective view thereof;

FIG. 3 is a partial cross sectional view thereof taken along a sidewall;

FIG. 4 is a photograph of a side elevation view of an animal feeder or drinking container having a cover for the lower surface that embodies the preferred embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 5 is a photograph showing a top perspective views of the animal feeders or drinking containers of FIG. 4 shown in a variety of sizes;

FIG. 6 is a detail photograph of a bottom plan view of the feeder or container of FIG. 4;

FIG. 7 is a photograph showing bottom perspective views of feeders or containers of FIG. 4;

FIG. 8 is a photograph showing a top plan views of the animal feeders or drinking containers of FIG. 4 shown in a variety of sizes shown nested; and

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FIG. 9 is a photograph showing a side elevational view of the animal feeders or drinking containers of FIG. 8 shown in a variety of sizes shown nested.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The best mode for carrying out the invention is presented in terms of its preferred embodiment, herein depicted within FIGS. 1 through 9.

1. Detailed Description of the Figures

Referring now to FIG. 1 through FIG. 9, a pet food or drinking bowl 10 is shown in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. It is envisioned that the bowl 10 may be formed in a manner similar to otherwise conventional metallic (i.e. stainless steel) pet food or water bowl with the additional innovative feature of having an outer cover 40 affixed to the exterior lower surface 50 of the bowl 10. It is anticipated that, and it is a key feature of the present invention to utilize a metallic pet feeding bowl 10 in conjunction with a nonmetallic cover 40 secured on the lower exterior surface 50 of a pet food or drink bowl. The pet bowl 10 may be formed of stainless steel, and the nonmetallic cover 40 may be formed of an elastomeric or rubber material that is secured to the lower outer surface 50.

The cover 40 may be affixed to the exterior lower surface 50 by a variety of methods, including, but not limited to, dip molding or manual manipulation or adhesive attachment of a separately provided cover 40 onto the outer lower periphery of the bowl 50. The cover may also be manufactured by various other known means for shaping plastic or rubber type materials.

The cover 40 may provide a pleasing aesthetic appearance, as well as providing protection to the bowl's bottom 50 or the surface on which the bowl may be placed (not shown). The cover 40 can be formed directly in contact with the bowl's lower surface 50, or can be pre-fabricated to a shape substantially formed to the shape of the bowl to fit over the outer lower surface of the bowl prior to it being affixed or adhered thereto.

The bowl 50 may be of various designs, such as the one depicted in FIGS. 3-9, comprising an annular ring 52 such as to adhere to and cover only the lower peripheral outer circumference of the bowl's bottom surface depending from a bottom surface 54, wherein the sidewall 52 terminates at an upper peripheral rim 53 opposite the bottom surface 54 that is coextensive with a bowl opening 56. The sidewall 52 and bottom surface 54 each have an exterior surface, wherein the exterior and interior surfaces of the sidewall 52 are denoted as 60 and 62, respectively, and the exterior and interior surfaces of bottom surface 54 are denoted as 64 and 66, respectively. In this preferred embodiment the cover has an annular shape such as to adhere to a cover only the lower peripheral outer circumference of the bowl's bottom surface; however, in an alternate embodiment it is anticipated as an obvious extension for the cover to have a disc-like shape to cover the entire lower outer surface of the bowl.

The material selection, position, shape and overall fabrication and attachment of the lower cover is intended to provide fractional resistance to substantially prevent the bowl from slipping, sliding or otherwise moving during use by the pet, and further preventing scratching, scarring and annoying noises that may result from sliding on a floor. Finally, if formed of sufficient thickness the cover may provide a certain degree of insulation to the contents placed within the bowl.

As should be obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the relevant art, in light of the present teachings, various

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alternate embodiments and/or design choices may be made for both the bowl 10 and the cover 40, as well as the attachment there between. The lower cover 40 can be shaped such as to adhere only to the lower peripheral outer circumference of the bowl's bottom surface, but may be provided having various heights, widths and thicknesses, as well as being available with various functional or aesthetic contours. It should be noted that FIG. X through FIG. xx illustrate a cover 40 that traverses only a minimal amount of the height of sidewall 52 of bowl 50, but traversal of entire height of the sidewall 52 may also be provided. While such a configuration would not provide any additional functionality in preventing slipping between the lower outer surface 50 of the bowl and the supporting surface (such as, for example, a floor) such configurations are anticipated as providing additional insulative or aesthetic functionality.

2. Operation of the Preferred Embodiment

To use the present invention, in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention, a cover 40 is placed upon a bowl 50 to provide protection to the bowl 50, reduce slipping and sliding of the bowl 50 during use by a pet, and to possibly provide insulating properties to the contents of the bowl 50. The cover 40 may be fabricated onto the bowl 50 during manufacture of the cover, or may be affixed thereto as a secondary operation after being prefabricated.

When a pet eats or drinks from the bowl 50, the cover 40 resists movement by the glutinous properties of the cover 40 adhering and fractionally impinging the cover 40 to a lower supporting surface.

The foregoing descriptions of specific embodiments of the present invention have been presented for purposes of illustration and description and are not intended to be exhaustive or to limit the invention to the precise forms disclosed. Obviously many modifications and variations are possible in light of the above teaching. The embodiments were chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention and its practical application, and enable others skilled in the art to best utilize the invention and various embodiments. It is intended that the scope of the invention be defined by the Claims appended hereto and their equivalents. Therefore, the scope of the invention is to be limited only by the following claims.

What is claimed is:

1. An animal feeder or drinking container substantially comprising:

a bowl formed of metal, said bowl having an exterior lower outer surface circumscribed by an outwardly angular upwardly directed first sidewall forming a generally concave containment volume for animal food or drink;

a cover secured to at least a portion of the exterior lower outer surface of said bowl in a manner such that said cover remains affixed to said bowl during lifting, moving or repositioning, wherein said cover further comprises an annular second sidewall extending from said exterior lower outer surface;

wherein the second sidewall terminates at an upper portion opposite the bottom surface that is coextensive with and circumscribes an outer surface of said bowl.

2. The animal feeder of claim 1, wherein said cover is formed having a decorative color.

3. A process for making an animal feeder of claim 1 comprising:

a. Forming a pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to the shape of at least part of an outer surface of said animal feeder bowl;

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b. Adapting a selective portion of said animal feeder bowl to facilitate securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material to said bowl; and

c. Securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl.

4. The process of claim 3, wherein said animal feed bowl is formed of stainless steel or other metal.

5. The process of claim 3, wherein said process of securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material to said animal feeder bowl comprises placing an adhesive between said pliable polymeric or rubber material and said animal feeder bowl.

6. The process of claim 3, wherein said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl cover comprises an annular sidewall extending from a bottom surface, wherein the sidewall terminates at an upper portion opposite the bottom surface that is coextensive with and a circumscribes said bottom surface of said bowl.

7. The process of claim 3, wherein said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl cover comprises the entire bottom bowl surface and the annular sidewall extending up from said bottom surface.

8. The process of claim 3, wherein said pliable polymeric or rubber material is formed having a decorative color.

9. The process of claim 3, wherein securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl is accomplished through fictional forces between the outer circumference of said bowl and the inner surface of said pliable polymeric or rubber material.

10. The process of claim 3, wherein securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl is accomplish through adhering the inner surface of said pliable polymeric or rubber to the outer circumference of said bowl.

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11. The process of claim 3, wherein securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl is accomplished through vulcanizing the inner surface of said pliable polymeric or rubber directly to the outer circumference of said bowl.

12. A process for making an animal feeder of claim 1 comprising:

a. Forming a metal bowl having an exterior lower outer surface circumscribed by an upwardly directed sidewall and forming a generally concave container volume adapted for functioning as a small animal feeder or drinking container;

b. Adapting a selective portion of said exterior lower outer surface to facilitate securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material to said bowl;

c. Forming a pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to the shape of at least pan of said exterior lower outer surface;

d. Securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to a selective portion of said exterior lower.

13. The process of claim 12, wherein said animal feed bowl is formed of stainless steel or other metal.

14. The process of claim 12, wherein said process or securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to a selective portion of said exterior lower comprises placing an adhesive between said pliable polymeric or rubber material and said animal feeder bowl.

15. The process of claim 12, wherein securing said pliable polymeric or rubber material selectively to said selective portion of said animal feeder bowl is accomplished through vulcanizing the inner surface of said pliable polymeric or rubber directly to the outer circumference of said bowl.

16. The animal feeder of claim 1, wherein said cover is formed of a pliable polymeric or rubber material.

* * * * *

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