

[54] **BREADER FOR COATING EDIBLE FOOD PRODUCTS WITH FRESH BREAD CRUMBS**

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99/450.1; 118/24; 118/312

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**ABSTRACT**

The invention describes a coating machine which includes an endless pervious conveyor belt supported in an elongated frame which provides a food product conveyance path within the machine. A hopper is disposed above the food product conveyance path in which an amount of a coating material is provided to generate a falling curtain of bread crumbs or the like to cover the top and sides of food product pieces passing along the food product conveyance path. The machine also preferably includes a circular drum type conveyor which is rotatably supported along the elongated frame adjacent the hopper and includes a plurality of pockets formed therein which open into the interior of the machine and the hopper. Conveyors are provided in both the elongated frame and hopper to distribute coating material from the frame enclosure to the circular conveyor which will in turn distribute coating material to the hopper to generate the upper layer of breading material. The machine also includes structure to distribute breading material within the frame enclosure so as to continuously and effectively generate a bottom layer of coating material on the food product conveyance path while avoiding congestion of the coating material. The distribution system of the machine is readily adaptable for different kinds of breading materials and allows utilization of the machine for fresh bread crumbs with handling thereof performed in a gentle manner while avoiding congestion or packing of such breading material.

13 Claims, 6 Drawing Sheets

