

Apparatus for inspecting a container includes an optical inspection device (10 or 40 or 50) having at least one light source (14 or 52) for directing light energy onto the container as the container is rotated around an axis, and at least one light sensor (24 or 58) for receiving light energy from the light source following interaction with the container. An information processor (26 or 48 or 60) is coupled to the sensor for detecting rotation of the container as a function of fluctuations in the output from the sensor. Rotation of the container will cause some fluctuation in the output of the sensor due to interaction of the light energy with the container. The absence of any detected fluctuations in the sensor output is interpreted as an indication that the container is not rotating, either due to malformation of the container, malfunction of the mechanism for rotating the container, or some other reason.