Pack for foods comprising a container (11) able to contain sliced foods, and at least a removable closing sheet (12) able to seal said container (11) hermetically. The pack also comprises a removable tray (14), including at least a position of use inside the pack in which it supports the sliced foods, and provided with one or more retaining ridges (17) disposed in correspondence with its surface that is upper during use.
"PACK FOR FOODS"

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention concerns a pack for foods, in particular, but not only, foods of the perishable type.

More specifically, the pack according to the present invention is used to pack sliced meats and salami, in particular for retail, such as, preferably but not exclusively, cold cuts of meat and cheeses of all types, or any other type of food that can be packed and sold in slices.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Packs are known used to pack sliced foods, such as for example salami and cold meats.

These packs comprise a container, normally made of more or less rigid plastic, on the bottom of which the slices of one or more cold meats are disposed, closed by a closing sheet, normally transparent so that the content of the container can be seen. The closing sheet is hermetically sealed on the container, keeping the content in a protected and possibly modified atmosphere, so as to extend the preservation thereof and to keep intact the organoleptic characteristics even after a certain period of time.

One disadvantage of such packs is that the slices of cold meats contained inside the container, during storage and transport, tend to slide inside the container, and become compact in correspondence with one side of the container. A similar problem occurs when the packs are displayed in a non-horizontal position on the shelves of the shops. The product thus displayed is therefore not very inviting for the purchaser, since it may transmit the image of a neglected product which has not been correctly preserved.

Another disadvantage of such packs is that, after opening, the removal of the slices of cold meat is not always easy for a user, since the slices of food tend to flatten toward the bottom of the container and to stick to each other.

One purpose of the present invention is to achieve a pack for foods which is practical and functional for a user, particularly during display and when eaten after opening.

Another purpose of the present invention is to achieve a pack for foods that
keeps the content stationary, substantially in any condition of transport and display, and which confers thereon characteristics of freshness, care and correct preservation.

The Applicant has devised, tested and embodied the present invention to overcome the shortcomings of the state of the art and to obtain these and other purposes and advantages.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is set forth and characterized in the independent claim, while the dependent claims describe other characteristics of the invention or variants to the main inventive idea.

In accordance with the above purposes, a pack for foods according to the present invention comprises a container, advantageously for sliced food products, and a removable closing sheet or film, able to seal the container hermetically.

According to a characteristic feature of the present invention, the pack also comprises a removable tray, carrying the sliced food, normally disposed inside the pack, but suitable to be removed therefrom after opening, and provided with both gripping means, to facilitate removal, and also one or more retaining ridges disposed in correspondence with its surface which, during use, is upper.

According to a variant of the present invention, at least one of the retaining ridges comprises a raised portion of the edge of the removable tray.

According to a variant of the present invention, the retaining ridges are made in a single body with said removable tray.

According to another variant of the present invention, the retaining ridges are obtained by molding.

According to another variant of the present invention, the retaining ridges are provided with an irregular surface.

According to another variant of the present invention, the retaining ridges have different sizes and/or different inclinations with respect to the plane defined by the tray.

According to a variant of the present invention, the gripping means is made in a single body with the tray

According to a variant the gripping means is disposed in correspondence with the edge of the tray.
According to another variant of the present invention, the gripping means can be inclined with respect to the plane defined by the tray.

In this way, the pack according to the present invention is functional for a user. In fact, after removing the closing sheet, the removable tray, carrying the sliced food on its surface, can be removed easily from the container by means of the gripping means. The removable tray can thus function as a serving dish, or plate for an individual user, and the latter can easily pick up the slices of food directly from the removable tray.

In this way, therefore, prolonged handling of the sliced foods in order to put them on the table are avoided, which handling derives mainly from the need to pick up the food from the pack, dispose it on a serving plate and then take it from this in order to put it on the individual user's plate.

Furthermore, the presence on the tray of one or more retaining ridges prevents the sliced foods from sliding, both during transport of the closed pack or during display in an inclined position on the shelves of the shops, and also during the removal of the tray from the container. The retaining ridges keep the slices of food disposed on the removal tray stationary, also thanks to their irregular surface, advantageously corrugated, and their different sizes and/or different inclinations with respect to the plane defined by the tray. These variable sizes allow to dispose the slices of food in such a way that their weight is equally distributed and this prevents them from sliding. Furthermore, said variable sizes of the retaining ridges allow to dispose and support the slices of food keeping them separate from each other and folded in particular forms, for example sinuous, preventing them from flattening toward the bottom of the container. This confers on the content of the pack an inviting appearance, of freshness and good preservation, and allows greater ease in picking up the slices from the tray.

Moreover, when the tray is inside the container, it confers on the pack according to the present invention greater structural rigidity compared with state of the art packs, which facilitates storage, transport and display of the pack.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

These and other characteristics of the present invention will become apparent from the following description of a preferential form of embodiment, given as a non-restrictive example with reference to the attached drawings wherein:
fig. 1 is a three-dimensional view of a pack according to the present invention;
fig. 2 is a variant of a detail of the pack in fig. 1.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERENTIAL FORM OF EMBODIMENT

With reference to the attached drawings, a pack 10 according to the present invention is able to be used to pack sliced foods, advantageously but not exclusively cold meats of any type, cheeses, or any other type of food that can be packed and sold in slices. The pack 10 comprises a container 11, in this case having an oval shape. However, it cannot be excluded that the container 11 can have any other geometric shape, for example rectangular, circular or square.

The container 11 also comprises a removable closing sheet 12, able to close the container hermetically, so as to keep the content in a protected and possibly modified atmosphere, in order to preserve it better. In this case the closing sheet 12 is a sheet of plastic material, or in general a laminated sheet. Advantageously, the closing sheet 12 is transparent, so as to leave the content of the pack 10 visible. In this case the closing sheet 12 is of the tear-off type.

However, it cannot be excluded that the closing sheet 12, and the way in which it is removed from the container 11, can be of any other known type. Furthermore, it is understood that the closing sheet 12 can also be associated with the pack 10 in such a manner as to be re-used, after having been removed from the pack 10, in order to re-close it.

The pack 10 also comprises a removable tray 14, on which the slices of food are able to be disposed; it has a shape coordinated with the shape of the container 11, in this case oval, and has sizes such as to be contained inside the container 11. The tray 14 is able to be disposed between the bottom of the container 11 and the closing sheet 12.

The tray 14 is provided at the longitudinal ends of its edge with two tongues 15, advantageously made in a single body with the tray 14. The tongues 15 can be inclined with respect to the plane defined by the tray 14 so as to be disposed in a vertical position when the tray 14 is disposed inside the container 11. Each tongue 15 is also provided with a gripping rib 16, disposed substantially parallel to the plane defined by the tray 14, able to allow the user to grip the tray 14 easily, in order to remove it from inside the container 11 when the latter has been
opened by removing the closing sheet 12.

The tray 14 is also shaped so as to define, in correspondence with its upper surface, retaining ridges 17 able to hold the slices of food stationary inside the pack 10, preventing them from sliding on the tray 14. As shown in fig. 2, first retaining ridges 17a have an arched shape and are disposed substantially symmetrical with respect to a longitudinal axis X of the tray 14, while second retaining ridges 17b have a rectilinear shape and are disposed both transversely and parallel to the axis X.

According to a variant of the present invention, not shown in the drawings, the retaining means 17 can also comprise one or more raised portions of the edge of the tray 14.

According to a variant of the present invention the retaining ridges 17 have a rectilinear shape and are disposed in parallel pairs with respect to the axis X.

According to another variant of the present invention, the retaining ridges 17 have a rectilinear shape and are disposed diagonally with respect to the axis X.

According to another variant, the retaining ridges 17 have different geometric shapes, for example rectangular, and are disposed on the upper surface of the tray 14 so as to achieve different geometric configurations.

Therefore it is understood that the retaining ridges 17 can have any geometric shape and any disposition whatsoever on the upper surface of the tray 14.

The retaining ridges 17 are advantageously made by molding and are made in a single body with the tray 14.

In a preferential form of embodiment, the retaining ridges 17 are provided with an irregular surface, typically corrugated or knurled, able to improve the gripping properties of the retaining ridges 17.

In another preferential form of embodiment the retaining ridges 17 have different sizes and/or inclinations with respect to the plane defined by the tray 14. This allows to dispose and support the slices of food keeping them separate from each other and also folded in sinuous shapes, and to dispose them in such a manner that their weight is equally distributed on the surface of the tray, preventing them from sliding on the tray.

The pack according to the present invention as described heretofore functions as follows.
The user who intends to pick up the slices of food from the pack 10 removes the closing sheet 12, tearing it from the pack 11. Subsequently, by means of the tongues 15 and the relative gripping ribs 16, he takes from the container 11 the tray 14 carrying the slices of food on its upper surface. The retaining ridges 17 prevent the slices from sliding on the tray 14 not only when the pack is closed but also when the tray 14 is taken out and when it is transported. The tray 14 removed from the container 11 therefore acts as a serving dish or an individual dish for the user and also allows the slices of food to be picked up easily.

It is clear that modifications and/or additions of parts may be made to the pack 10 as described heretofore, without departing from the field and scope of the present invention.

It is also clear that, although the present invention has been described with reference to some specific examples, a person of skill in the art shall certainly be able to achieve many other equivalent forms of pack 10, having the characteristics as set forth in the claims and hence all coming within the field of protection defined thereby.
CLAIMS

1. Pack for foods comprising a container (11) able to contain sliced foods, and at least a removable closing sheet (12) able to seal said container (11) hermetically, characterized in that it also comprises a removable tray (14), including at least a position of use inside the pack in which it supports said sliced foods, and provided with one or more retaining ridges (17) disposed in correspondence with its surface that is upper during use.

2. Pack as in claim 1, characterized in that at least one of said retaining ridges (17) comprises a raised portion of the edge of the tray (14).

3. Pack as in claim 1, characterized in that said one or more retaining ridges (17) are made in a single body with said tray (14).

4. Pack as in claim 3, characterized in that said one or more retaining ridges (17) are made by molding.

5. Pack as in any claim hereinbefore, characterized in that said one or more retaining ridges (17) are provided with an irregular surface.

6. Pack as in any claim hereinbefore, characterized in that said retaining ridges (17) have different sizes and/or different inclinations with respect to the plane defined by the tray (14).

7. Pack as in claim 1, characterized in that it comprises gripping means (15) to facilitate the removal of the tray (14) from the pack.

8. Pack as in claim 7, characterized in that said gripping means (15) is made in a single body with said tray (14).

9. Pack as in claim 7, characterized in that said gripping means (15) is disposed in correspondence with the edge of said tray (14).

10. Pack as in claim 8, characterized in that said gripping means (15) can be inclined with respect to the plane defined by the tray (14).

11. Pack as in claim 10, characterized in that said gripping means comprises at least a tongue (15).

12. Pack as in claim 1, characterized in that said closing sheet (12) is made of transparent material.

13. Pack as in claim 12, characterized in that said closing sheet (12) is removable by tearing.
# INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

**A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER**

**INV. B65D77/26**

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

**B. FIELDS SEARCHED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages</th>
<th>Relevant to claim No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>DE 83 23 741 U1 (HASSIA VERPACKUNG AG [DE]) 13 October 1983 (1983-10-13) page 7, line 6 - page 8, line 2; claim 1; figures 1-3</td>
<td>1-13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**D. Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C**

**X** See patent family annex

- **A** document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- **E** earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- **I** document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another document or other special reason (as specified)
- **O** document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- **P** document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed
- **T** later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- **X** document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- **Y** document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
- **S** document member of the same patent family

**Date of the actual completion of the international search**

20 January 2009

**Date of mailing of the international search report**

13/02/2009

**Name and mailing address of the ISA/**

European Patent Office, P B 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax (+31-70) 340-3016

**Authorized officer**

Segerer, Heiko
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Patent document cited in search report</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
<th>Patent family member(s)</th>
<th>Publication date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DE 60204087 D1</td>
<td>16-06-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>DE 60204087 T2</td>
<td>24-11-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ES 2238551 T3</td>
<td>01-09-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FR 2828481 A1</td>
<td>14-02-2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PL 355406 A1</td>
<td>10-02-2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>PT 1283178 T</td>
<td>30-09-2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US 4373636 A</td>
<td>15-02-1983</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE 8323741 U1</td>
<td>13-10-1983</td>
<td>NONE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Form PCT/ISA/210 (patent family annex) (April 2005)