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(54) **Packaging for food products**

(57) Packaging for food products. It comprises a base receptacle (2), made of a rigid material, a closing mesh (3) and joining means (4) between the mesh (3) and the base receptacle (2) in an area (5) adjacent to the latter's edges (6), the closing mesh and the base receptacle being joined without interruption, thereby determining a single space for the lodging and containment of the

food products (22) in the packaging (1), which is endowed with a laminar layer (23) made of a humidity- and shock-absorbing material, placed, at least in the interior of the base receptacle (2), adjacent thereto. The laminar layer (23) is made of a material selected from a group formed by: polymeric foam, for example polyurethane; CSC-type non-woven fabric made of PP; and plasticised cellulose.

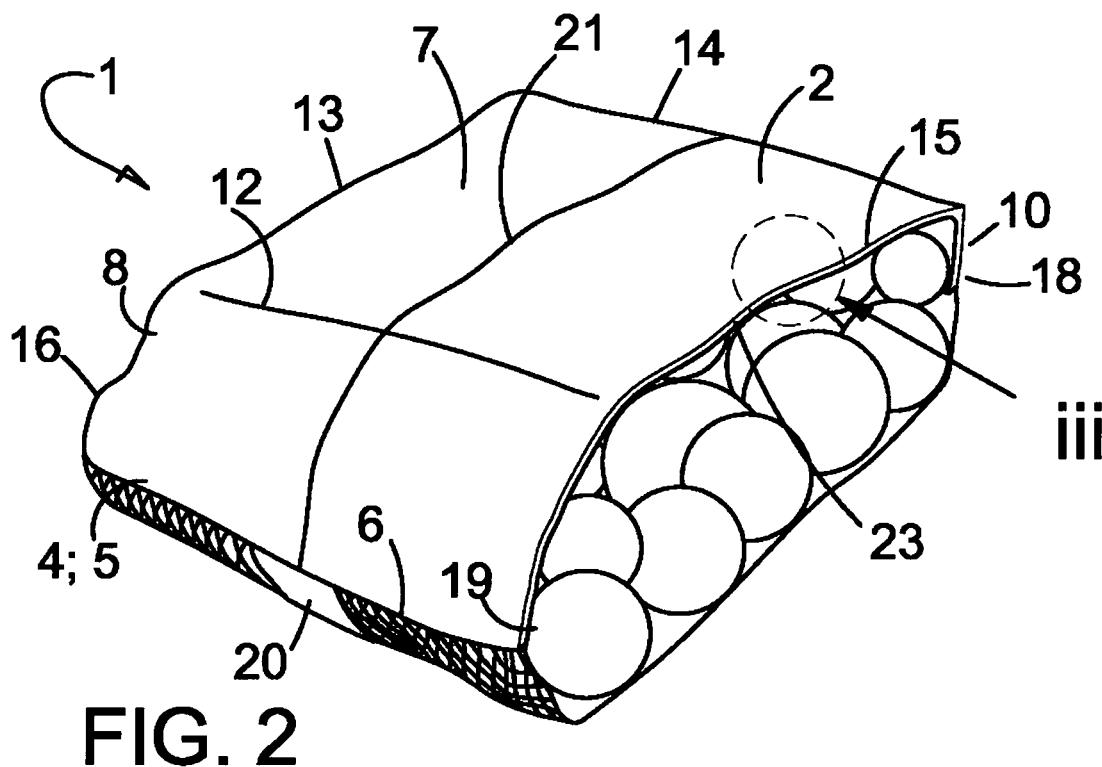


FIG. 2

Description

Technical sector of the invention

[0001] The invention relates to a packaging for food products, of the type which comprise a base receptacle, made of a rigid material, a closing mesh, joining means between the mesh and the base receptacle in an area adjacent to the latter's edges, such that the closing mesh and the base receptacle are joined without interruption, thereby determining a single space for the lodging and containment of the horticultural products in the packaging.

Background of the invention

[0002] Numerous embodiments of packagings for food products are known in the form of baskets composed of a receptacle in the shape of a base bowl, which contains and receives the fruits, vegetables or dried fruits, for example, and is wrapped with means of containment, such as, for example, a small net made of mesh fabric, which allows the food to breathe, or continuous wrapping made of translucent material, such as cellophane, paper or transparent plastic.

[0003] Conventionally, both the small net and the cellophane, paper or plastic wrapping completely surround the base bowl and must be broken in order to access the packaging contents, thereby destroying the containment. Moreover, in the case of continuous cellophane, paper or plastic wrapping, the latter must be endowed with perforations in order to provide the contents with breathing capacity.

[0004] In any event, this type of basket-style packagings have the additional disadvantage that the base bowl and the mesh or the wrapping are usually loose and the packaging content may move along the space between the base bowl and the small net or the wrapping, thereby hindering the docking and presentation of the product and annoying the consumer.

[0005] Patent EP1764312 provides a packaging composed of a base receptacle (2), made of a rigid material, and a closing mesh (3), which additionally comprises joining means (4) between the mesh (3) and the base receptacle (2) in an area (5) adjacent to the latter's edges (6), such that the closing mesh and the base receptacle are joined without interruption, thereby determining a single space for the lodging and containment of the food products (22) in the packaging. The base receptacle (2) is made of a flexible, rigid material and is endowed with a bottom (7) and walls (8 - 11) that are joined to the bottom (7) by means of folds (12 - 15) made of the same material, the edges being endowed with folds (16 - 19) designed to rigidify the base receptacle (2).

[0006] In addition to resolving the above-mentioned disadvantage, the basket-packaging of patent EP1764312 has other advantages as compared to known conventional packagings, such as a smaller

amount of raw material and the possibility of packaging the products and shaping the packaging continuously.

[0007] However, when the product contained in the packaging exudes or when, as in the case of mussels or other molluscs and crustaceans, liquid such as, for example, sea water is expelled, the exudate or the liquid may produce an undesirable visual effect, since it may appear to be unhealthy, or even spill from the packaging, with the consequent damages, which may be a disadvantage.

[0008] The purpose of this invention is to provide a solution for this disadvantage.

Explanation of the invention

[0009] To this end, the object of this invention is an innovative packaging for food products, of the type mentioned at the beginning, which in essence is characterised in that it is endowed with a laminar layer made of a humidity- and shock-absorbing material that is placed, at least in the interior of the base receptacle, adjacent thereto.

[0010] According to another characteristic of the invention, the laminar layer is made of one or several materials selected from the group formed by: polymeric foam, for example polyurethane; CSC-type non-woven fabric made of PP and plasticised cellulose.

Brief description of the drawings

[0011] The attached drawings illustrate, as a non-limiting example, a preferred, albeit not exclusive, embodiment of the packaging for horticultural products of this invention. In said drawings:

Fig. 1 is a perspective view, from above, of an embodiment of the packaging of the invention;
Fig. 2 is a perspective view, but from below and partially sectioned, of the packaging of Fig. 1; and
Fig. 3 is a detail view, according to iii in Fig. 2, which illustrates the arrangement of the absorbent, shock-absorbing laminar layer.

Detailed description of the drawings

[0012] Said drawings show that basket-style packaging 1 for food products 22 that need to breathe, such as, for example, fruits, vegetables, molluscs or crustaceans, is formed by a base receptacle 2, made of a rigid material, a closing mesh 3, a transport and manipulation handle 20, joined to the lateral walls of base receptacle 2.

[0013] Mesh 3 is joined to base receptacle 2 in an area 5 adjacent to the latter's edges 6, for example by means of thermal welding 4, bonded by "hot melt" or an equivalent technique. Closing mesh 3 and base receptacle 2 are joined without interruption, thereby determining a single space for the lodging and containment of food products 22 in packaging 1. Food products 22 are perfectly

confined, without any possibility of relative displacement of receptacle 2 with respect to mesh 3 or of becoming loose between the latter and the receptacle.

[0014] Base receptacle 2 is made of a flexible, rigid material and endowed with a bottom 7 and walls 8 - 11 that are joined to bottom 7 by means of folds 12 - 15 made of the same material, thereby determining a packaging 1 that essentially has the shape of a parallelepiped. On the edges of walls 8 - 11, receptacle 2 has corresponding rigidifying folds 16 - 19, which make it possible to keep bottom 7 essentially flat, and sufficiently rigid walls 8 - 11 that provide the ensemble with consistency and stability.

[0015] Preferably, packaging 1 takes on the shape of a basket and is obtained from a portion of tubular fabric, made up of a central, longitudinal portion of the fabric of mesh 3 and two end portions of the material of receptacle 3, joined to the central portion by means of thermal welding 4 in area 5. The opposite ends of the end portions are joined in a welding line 21.

[0016] From this portion of tubular fabric, "English pleats" are made on the ends which consist of introducing opposite ends of said closed contour into the cylinder defined by said tubular fabric.

[0017] Thus, folds 16 - 19 of packaging 1 are the English-pleated folds, wherein an end-to-end longitudinal part of the material, from the portion of tubular fabric, is introduced into the cylinder defined by said tubular fabric, the folds being arranged in a substantially diametral opposition following the closed contour of the tubular fabric.

[0018] Figs. 2 and 3 show that packaging 1 is endowed with a laminar layer 23, made of a humidity-absorbing material with shock-absorbing functions, which is particularly convenient in the case of fruits and vegetables, since they are considerably damaged by blows.

[0019] The preferred materials are foam, for example polyurethane, or a CSC-type non-woven fabric made of PP, or a plasticised cellulose, placed adjacent to the interior of base receptacle 2. This absorbent, protective layer 23 is soaked by the liquids which may exude or spill from the food products contained in packaging 1, thereby preventing them from coming out of packaging 1 in an undesirable manner. A typical example is the case of mussels, which produce excess sea water after being packed.

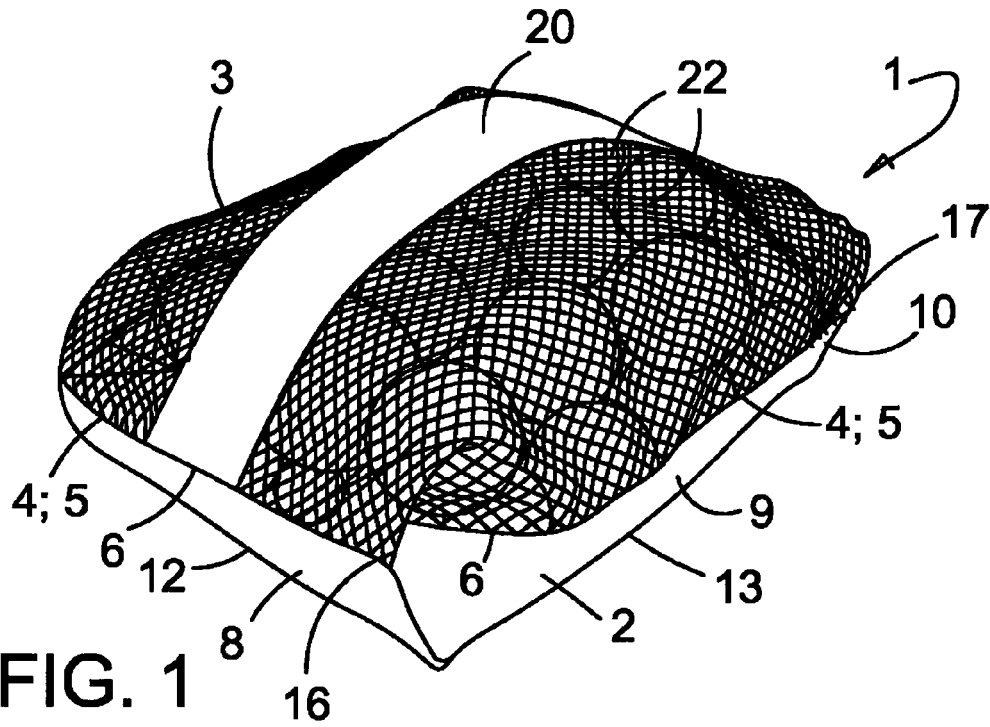
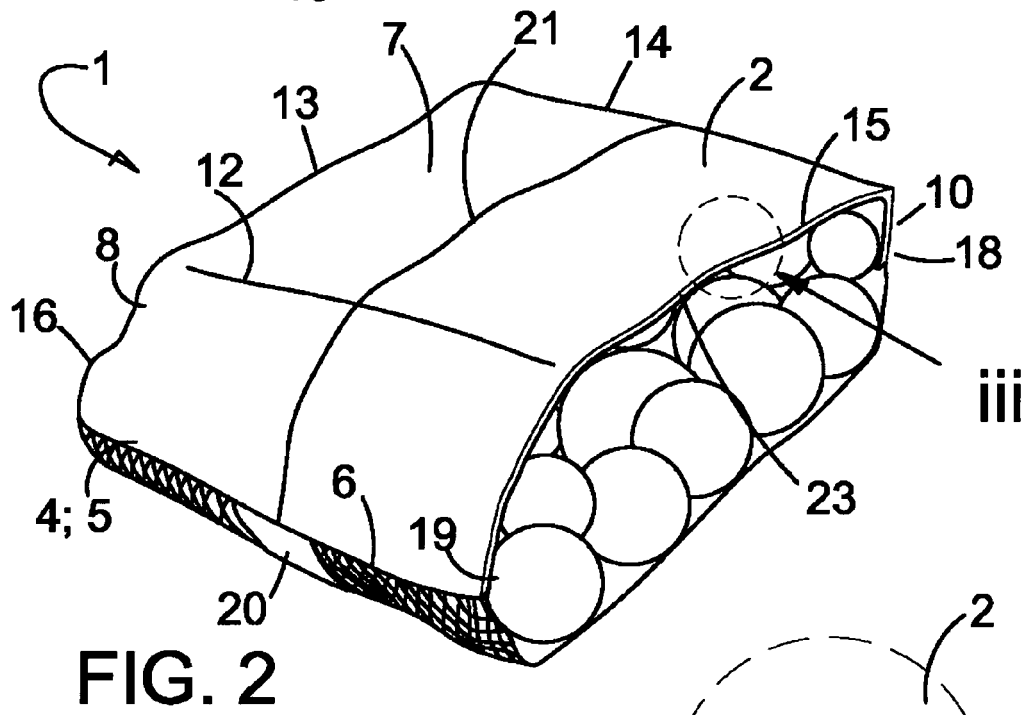
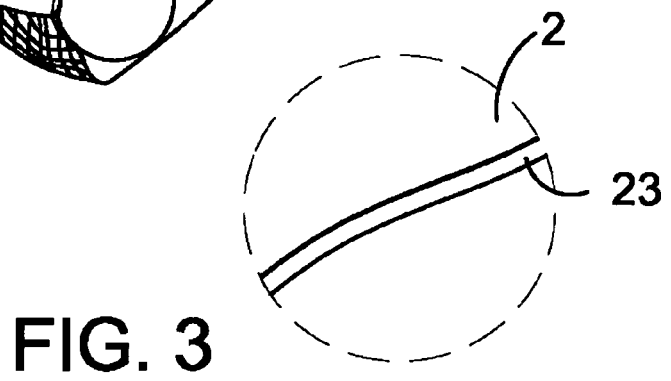
[0020] Having sufficiently described the nature of this invention, as well as how to implement it, we specify that anything which does not alter, change or modify the main principle thereof is subject to detail variations.

Claims

1. Packaging for food products, of the type which comprise a base receptacle (2), made of a rigid material, a closing mesh (3) and joining means (4) between the mesh (3) and the base receptacle (2) in an area (5) adjacent to the latter's edges (6), the closing

mesh and the base receptacle being joined without interruption, thereby determining a single space for the lodging and containment of the food products (22) in the packaging (1), **characterised in that** it is endowed with a laminar layer (23) made of a humidity- and shock-absorbing material, placed, at least in the interior of the base receptacle (2), adjacent thereto.

2. Packaging for food products, as claimed in claim 1, **characterised in that** said laminar layer (23) is made of a material selected from a group formed by: polymeric foam, for example polyurethane; CSC-type non-woven fabric made of PP; and plasticised cellulose.





European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 08 38 0127

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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search The Hague		Date of completion of the search 15 August 2008	Examiner Leijten, René
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS 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 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			

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EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

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

EP 08 38 0127

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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15-08-2008

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