

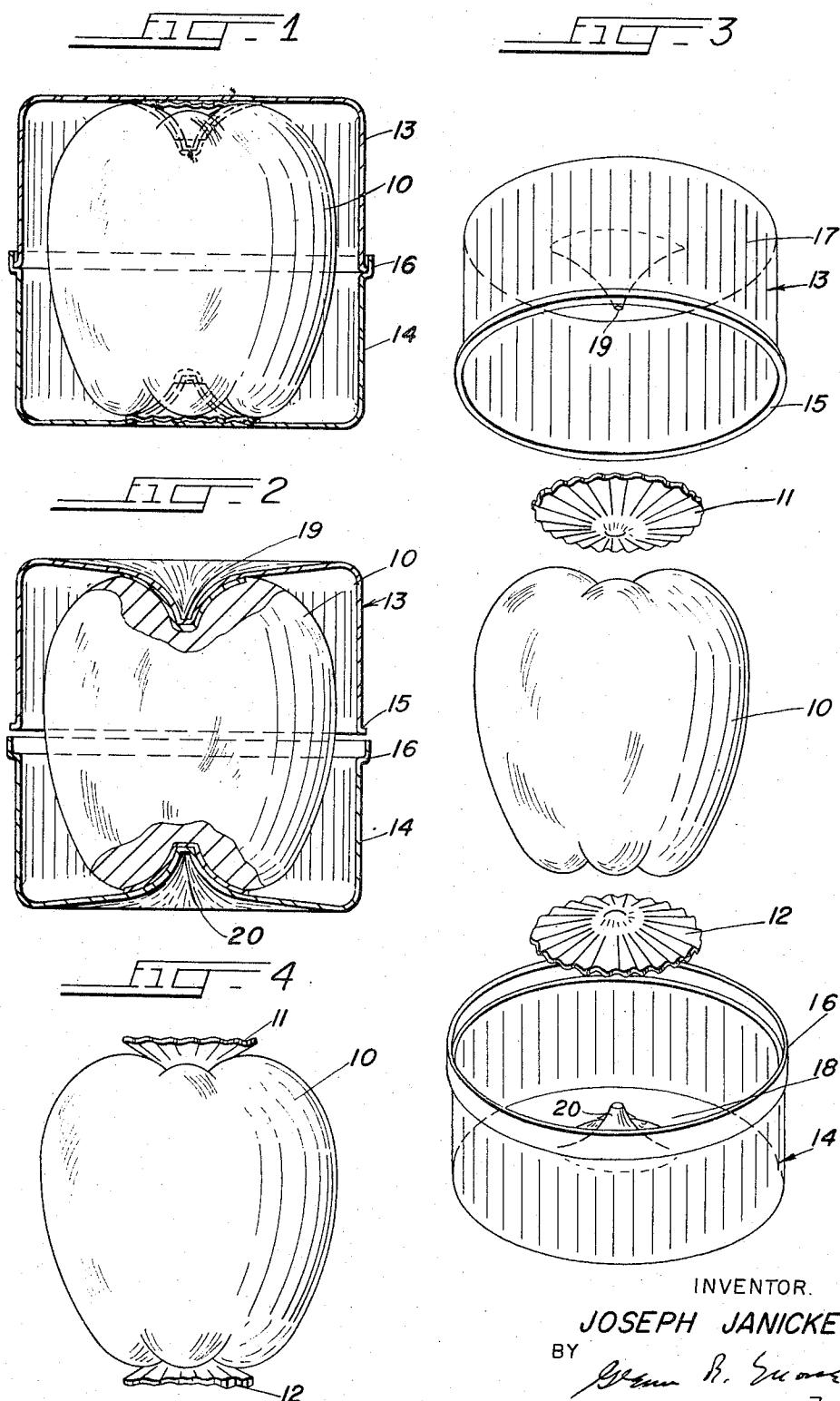
Jan. 23, 1968

J. JANICKE

3,365,308

APPLE PACKAGE

Filed July 27, 1964



INVENTOR.

JOSEPH JANICKE

BY

John R. S. [Signature]

ATTY.

1

3,365,308

APPLE PACKAGE

Joseph Janicke, 1541 Giddings, SE.,

Grand Rapids, Mich. 49507

Filed July 27, 1964, Ser. No. 385,322

4 Claims. (Cl. 99-171)

This invention relates to packaging, and has been developed primarily to provide a container for the shipment and storage of taffy apples. These confectionery items present problems that have been difficult to solve with regard to packaging because of variations in shape of the apples, the irregularity of the coatings, and the general sticky nature of the entire surface.

My United States Patent No. 2,617,675 shows an arrangement for providing solid clear surfaces at the opposite ends of a taffy apple through the use of pegs, but the insertion of these pegs into the apple produces a tendency to rapid spoilage. A package embodying the present invention will secure a taffy apple or a similar article in a protected condition without damaging the coating or piercing the apple with any auxiliary member. The use of transparent containers makes it possible to exhibit these confections very attractively in sealed sanitary condition, with a "shelf life" of several times that of any previous arrangement. The configuration of the container, being uniform, produces stacking characteristics not to be approached by the unpackaged article.

The several features of the invention will be analyzed in further detail through a discussion of the particular embodiment illustrated in the accompanying drawing.

In the drawing:

FIGURE 1 is a sectional elevation showing a taffy apple enclosed within a fully-assembled container embodying this invention.

FIGURE 2 is a sectional elevation showing the preliminary condition in the assembly of the article and the package, prior to full closure of the components of the container.

FIGURE 3 is an exploded view showing the taffy apple, the shields, and the cup components of the container separated prior to the assembly of these to the condition shown in FIGURES 1 and 2.

FIGURE 4 illustrates the application of the finger shields to the taffy apple prior to the assembly of the container components.

Referring first to FIGURE 4, a taffy apple is generally indicated at 10. These are preferably Jonathan or Wealthy apples of carefully sorted sizes, as these particular types have pronounced end-indentations for co-operation with the locating projections of the container. These apples also have the desirable degree of tartness which is preferably associated with the caramel coating normally applied to these apples. Quite often, the completed taffy apple will include either a number of nut meats engaged in the caramel, or a sprinkling of grated nuts.

After the coating process has been completed by conventional equipment (not shown), a pair of preferably paper finger shields as shown at 11 and 12 are applied to the end-indentations of the coated apple 10. These may, if desired, be applied during the coating process so that the coating machinery is somewhat less inclined to become fouled with the coating material. The shields 11 and 12 are preferably substantially conical in shape, and are made from flat sheets, with radial crimps generating the conical configuration.

The package container is formed by the two opposite cups 13 and 14, which are preferably of thin transparent plastic material such as polystyrene of a thickness on the order of ten to fifteen thousandths of an inch. The diameter of these cups is selected to give substantial clearance

2

between the walls of the cups and the contained coated apple, as is best shown in FIGURE 1. The exact amount of clearance is subject to choice, but should be established with reference to the rigidity of the particular material used for the cups. These cups have interengageable rims as shown at 15 and 16, and these are preferably heat-sealed after full assembly to the condition shown in FIGURE 1. The transverse portions 17 and 18 of the cups, respectively, are provided with inwardly-extending projections as shown at 19 and 20, and the resilience of the thin plastic material of the transverse portions 17 and 18 produces a diaphragm-like resilience such that application of force between the projections 19 and 20 (in a direction away from each other) will produce considerable yielding deflection between these points. This resilience is utilized as a means of securing the taffy apple 10 in position with respect to the walls of the container. The components shown in FIGURE 3 are assembled in the relationship illustrated in FIGURE 2, and the size of the apple 10 and the dimensions of the cups 13 and 14 are selected such that the opposite end-indentations of the taffy apple are engaged (together with the shields 11 and 12) with the projections 19 and 20 prior to the full interengagement of the rim sections 15 and 16. As this engagement takes place under the application of force shoving the cup sections 13 and 14 axially together, the paper shields 11 and 12 are deformed between the apple 10 and the portions of the container adjacent the projections, and the transverse portions 17 and 18 will deflect from an initially generally conical configuration extending inwardly from the edge, as shown in FIGURE 2, into the configuration shown in FIGURE 1 as the container is moved to the fully assembled condition. At this time, it is preferable that the interengaged rim portions 15 and 16 be heat sealed to maintain the condition shown in FIGURE 1.

When the packaged item is sold to a customer, the relatively light material of the container is easily broken open. Packaging according to the system described herein has consistently produced a shelf life of three to four weeks, while that of a conventional apple-on-a-stick has a shelf life of approximately ten days. A skewered and packaged taffy apple has also a shelf life of not much over ten days. The sealing operation which unites the rim area 15 and 16 can very effectively produce a seal which will maintain the sanitary condition of the item under all normal circumstances. It is obvious that the shape of the package lends itself readily to stacking and efficient handling techniques that are completely out of the question for the un-packaged fruit. It is preferable that the initial configuration of the transverse portions 17 and 18 be such as to extend inwardly from a flat plane so that the deflection characteristics can be developed without producing a convexity at the ends of the container after the fully-assembled condition has been completed.

The particular embodiments of the present invention which have been illustrated and discussed herein are for illustrative purposes only and are not to be considered as a limitation upon the scope of the appended claims. In these claims, it is my intent to claim the entire invention disclosed herein, except as I am limited by the prior art.

I claim:

1. In combination with an apple having opposite end-indentations, a package for said apple comprising: first and second plastic resilient cups having interengageable rim portions to define a container for said apple, said cups each having a base provided with a projection extending inwardly with respect to said cup to engage said end-indentations, said base also being initially inclined inwardly from the edge thereof, and a shield of deform-

3

able material interposed between said apple and each of said bases at said projections.

2. A package as defined in claim 1, wherein said apple and said cups are of a selected relative size such that engagement of said rim portions causes outward diaphragm deflection of said bases. 5

3. A package as defined in claim 1, wherein said shields are substantially conical in the free state.

4. A package as defined in claim 1, wherein substantial clearance exists between the sides of said cups and said apple. 10

4

References Cited

UNITED STATES PATENTS

827,124	7/1906	Speer.	
1,951,543	3/1934	Bruns et al. -----	206—52
2,106,726	2/1938	Draeger -----	206—52
2,452,174	10/1948	Arnold -----	99—171
2,708,028	5/1955	Murphy et al. -----	99—171 X
2,928,537	3/1960	Stagner -----	99—171 X

HYMAN LORD, *Primary Examiner*.