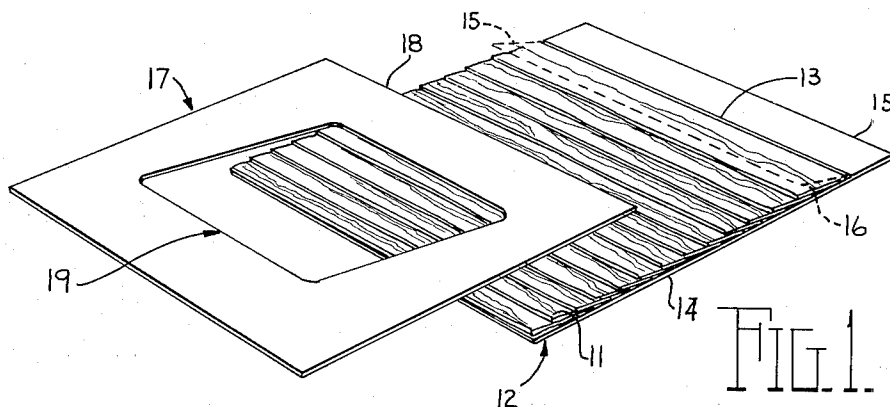
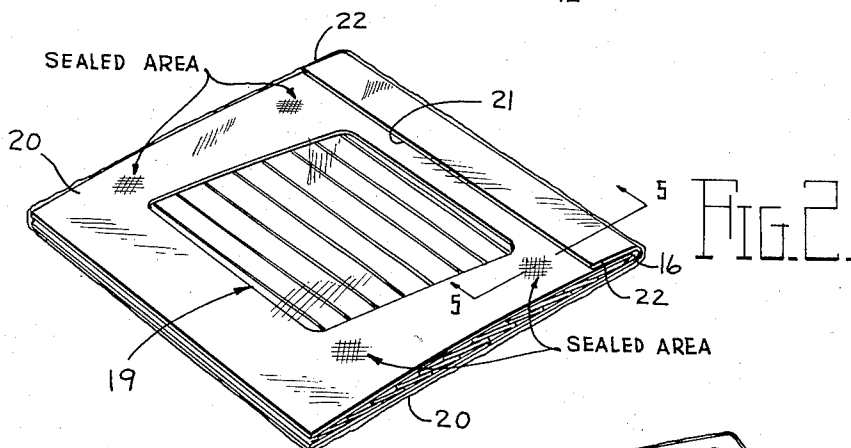
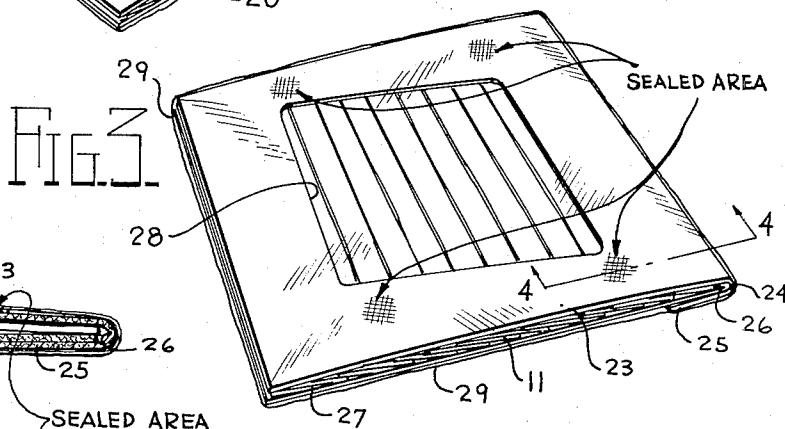
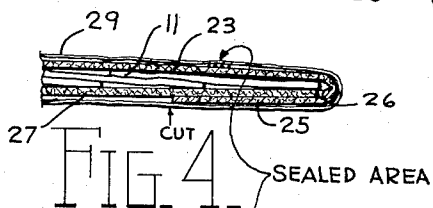
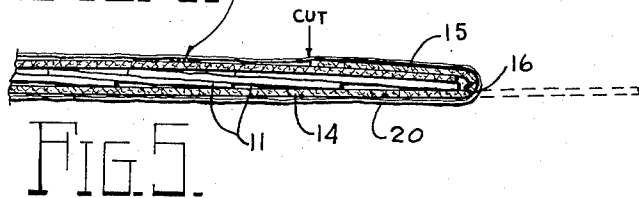


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SLICED BACON PACKAGE

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SLICED BACON PACKAGE

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This invention relates to a package or container of the type used in packaging food or the like for store display and sale, and, more particularly, relates to a container for sliced bacon or similarly thinly sliced food products.

In the packaging of sliced bacon, it is customary to provide a paperboard support or base tray on which a plurality of bacon slices, for example, in pound or half-pound units, are laid in edge overlapping or shingled relation. The tray, and bacon thereon, are thereafter wrapped with a thin, transparent material to provide a container through which the bacon is clearly visible, and which, in addition, renders the comestible more attractive and merchantable, and makes possible the sale of such comestibles on a self-service arrangement.

Meats, such as bacon, are normally graded prior to being sliced and packaged, such grading being done by a Government inspector by visual examination of the outer sides or ends of a slab of bacon. After this initial grading, the bacon is sliced and automatically packaged, usually in one operation, no further attempt being made to regrade the said bacon after the slicing thereof. It has been discovered that often times the same grade of bacon does not exist in the center area of a slab as that which is visible on the ends thereof and on the basis of which the bacon is graded. Because of this fact, bacon of a higher or lower grade than that appearing on the label of the package, or under the particular packer's or manufacturer's quality trademark, is misleadingly sold as that grade or trademark quality appearing on the said package.

In a similar respect, packaging companies often package the products of many different manufacturers. With the type of packages currently used, due to the fact that such packages are normally of a one-piece construction, an entirely new package, with the specific private brand identification thereon, must be employed for each different manufacturer as well as for different grades of the same manufacturer as above mentioned.

It is, therefore, the principal object of the invention to provide a container for bacon or the like which utilizes an interchangeable member in the construction thereof in order to enable the packer to specify the particular bacon grade after the same has been sliced and placed in edge overlapping or shingled relation upon the base or support tray member of the package, and which traditionally enables the packer merely to interchange a pre-printed member of a container when packaging products of different manufacturers thereby eliminating the necessity for a complete change of the container with the resulting resetting of the packaging apparatus.

A further object of the invention is to provide an efficient yet less expensive, package or container than those presently employed, which package or container may be easily and quickly assembled.

Another object of the invention is to provide a container of the tray and envelope type which may be re-

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sealed or closed after only a portion of the food product therein has been removed.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a container for which no special packaging machinery is required beyond that already in the possession of most packers.

Other objects and advantages will be in part obvious, and will in part appear hereinafter.

For a better understanding of the nature and objects of the invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description and accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective, disassembled view of the tray member and cover member of one type of container embodying the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a perspective view of a completed container in accordance with one embodiment of the invention;

Fig. 3 is a perspective view of a modified container embodying the present invention;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary, vertical sectional view, somewhat enlarged, taken along the line 4—4 of Fig. 3; and

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary, vertical sectional view, somewhat enlarged, taken along the line 5—5 in Fig. 2.

Referring now to the drawings, and, in particular, to Figs. 1, 2 and 5, a plurality of bacon slices 11 are arranged in edge overlapping or shingled relation upon a base or tray member indicated generally at 12. The tray member 12 may be composed of any suitable, substantially rigid material, such as paper board, pressed fiber board, plastic coated cardboard, or the like, and is scored adjacent one end thereof as indicated at 13, to provide a body portion 14 and a marginal panel portion 15. The marginal panel 15 is reversely folded back along the line 13 as shown in the dotted line position of Fig. 1 to provide a receiving groove 16 between the shingled bacon strips and the folded and superimposed marginal panel 15.

A substantially rigid, generally rectangular cover member 17, preferably composed of paperboard or the like, is provided and placed over the sliced bacon, a marginal side 18 thereof being disposed in the receiving groove 16 formed between the bacon slices and the marginal panel 15. The member 17 is cut to provide a window, indicated generally at 19, to permit customer visibility of a portion of the sliced bacon.

A transparent wrapper 20 is hermetically sealed about and completely encloses the members 12 and 17 and the bacon slices 11 disposed therebetween. The wrapper 20 may be composed of any thin, flexible, transparent material such as "Saran" (a polyvinylidene chloride copolymer resin), "Mylar" (an orientated linear polyester resin), "Pliofilm" (rubber hydrochloride film), cellophane, or the like, which material can be sealed by the application of heat and pressure, or by coating with a suitable layer of adhesive. The wrapper is sealed to the cover member 17 at any desired position at which the wrapper overlies the said member 17, as indicated in Fig. 2, enough of their adjacent surfaces being sealed to provide a sufficiently strong bond therebetween so that the cover member and wrapper become portions of an envelope in which the tray and bacon slices are received.

In opening the container shown in Fig. 2, a knife is merely drawn along the edge 21 formed between the superimposed marginal panel 15 and the cover member 17 in order to cut the wrapper 20 therealong. In addition, the wrapper 20 is cut along the edges 22 formed between the superimposed marginal panel 15 and the member 17 and the marginal panel 15 then extended and laid open as shown in the dotted line position of Fig. 5. The tray member 12 may then be easily withdrawn from the envelope formed by the wrapper 20 and reinforced by the cover 17 in order to expose the de-

sired number of bacon strips to be used, the cover member 17 remaining in its normal fixed position due to the sealing thereof to the wrapper 20. After the desired number of strips have been removed, the tray member 12 is again inserted back into the wrapper 20 and the marginal panel 15 superimposed upon cover member 17 to again close and seal the container.

In the embodiment illustrated in Fig. 3, a top or cover member 23 is scored as indicated at 24 to provide a marginal panel 25 which is reversely folded back to form a receiving groove 26. A tray or base member 27, upon which is placed a predetermined quantity of bacon slices in edge overlapping or shingled relation, is disposed between the cover member 23 and the marginal panel 25 thereof in the groove 26. The cover member 23 is cut to provide a window 28 therein and both the members 23 and 27 are enclosed in a transparent wrapper 29 which in turn is sealed in any desired manner to the cover member 23 to form the bacon-receiving envelope. It will be appreciated that the container illustrated in Fig. 3 is essentially the same as that shown in Fig. 1 except that the marginal panel is integral with the cover member 17 instead of with the tray member 12 as in Fig. 1.

The container of Fig. 3 is opened and utilized in substantially the same manner as the container shown in Fig. 2, that is, a knife is drawn along the edge formed between the marginal panel 25 and the member 27 as well as along the longitudinal extending edges adjacent the marginal panel 25. In both forms of the invention the bacon-laden tray may be withdrawn from the envelope formed by the cover member and the transparent wrapper without destroying or even fully opening the transparent wrapper. Thus the integrity of this element of the package is preserved and the package can be resealed by the user after a few slices of the meat have been removed and the tray slid back to its original position. With all but the most expensive and elaborate box type packages now used, this cannot be done.

As will be readily appreciated by those skilled in the art, the packages embodying the present invention provide an inexpensive yet strong container which can be constructed from a minimum amount of materials, and is ideally suited and adaptable for modern self-service merchandising of sliced food products such as, bacon and the like. Further, the novel two-piece construction of containers embodying the present invention, provides for an interchangeability of the cover member thereof, thus enabling packers to package various brands of bacon without necessitating a change in the complete package. For example, a packer may have various cover members in stock printed with the different brand names and grades of his customers and merely employ the cover with the appropriate brand name and grade for the specific bacon being packaged, and thereby eliminate the necessity for completely resetting a packaging machine and supplying completely new materials thereto or producing a package having varying grades of bacon therein.

While what has been described is considered to be the more advantageous embodiments of the invention, it is obvious that many modifications and variations of the invention can be made without departing from the spirit and scope thereof as those skilled in the art will readily understand. Such modifications and variations are considered to be within the purview and scope of the invention as defined by the appended claims.

I claim:

1. A package of thin food slices comprising a first generally rectangular substantially rigid member, said first member being scored adjacent one edge thereof and reversely folded back along the scoring to define a body portion and a superimposed marginal panel portion, a second substantially rigid generally rectangular member of approximately the same dimensions as the body portion of said first member and having one marginal side

portion thereof disposed between the body portion and the superimposed marginal panel portion of said first member, a plurality of thin food slices enclosed between said body portion of said first member and said second member, and a thin, flexible transparent wrapper completely enclosing the said first and second members and sealed to one of the said members, to provide an envelope, whereby the other of said members may be withdrawn from the envelope with food slices thereon to present said food slices for removal.

2. A package of thin food slices comprising a generally rectangular, substantially rigid tray member supporting said thin food slices in edge overlapping relation, said tray member being scored adjacent one edge thereof and reversely folded back along the scoring to define a body portion and a superimposed marginal panel portion, a generally rectangular cover member of approximately the same dimensions as the body portion of said tray member and having one marginal side portion thereof disposed between said body portion and said superimposed marginal panel portion, said cover member being cut to provide a window therein, and a thin, flexible, transparent wrapper completely enclosing the tray member and cover member and sealed to the said cover member to provide a cover-reinforced envelope, whereby said tray member may be withdrawn from the envelope with food slices thereon to present said food slices for removal.

3. A package of thin food slices comprising a generally rectangular substantially rigid tray member supporting said thin food slices in edge overlapping relation, a substantially rigid generally rectangular cover member, said cover member being scored adjacent one edge thereof and reversely folded back to define a body portion and a superimposed marginal portion, the dimensions of said body portion being approximately the same as those of said tray member, said body portion being cut to provide a window therein, said tray member having one marginal side portion thereof disposed between the body portion and the superimposed marginal panel portion of said cover member, and a thin, flexible transparent wrapper completely enclosing both said tray member and cover member and sealed to said cover member to provide a cover-reinforced envelope, whereby said tray member may be withdrawn from the envelope with food slices thereon to present said food slices for removal.

4. A package of bacon slices comprising a generally rectangular, substantially rigid tray member, a plurality of bacon slices arranged in edge overlapping relation on one face of said tray member, said tray member being scored adjacent and parallel to one edge thereof and reversely folded back along the scoring to define a body portion and a superimposed marginal panel portion extending over a portion of said bacon slices, a generally rectangular, substantially rigid cover member of approximately the same dimensions as the body portion of said tray member and having one marginal side portion thereof disposed between said bacon slices and said superimposed marginal panel portion, said cover member being cut to provide a window therein, and a thin, flexible, transparent wrapper completely enclosing the tray member and cover member and sealed to the said cover member to provide a cover-reinforced envelope, whereby said tray member may be withdrawn from the envelope with the bacon slices thereon to present said bacon slices for removal.

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