United States Patent

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[54] **DISPLAY PACKAGE**
5 Claims, 5 Drawing Figs.

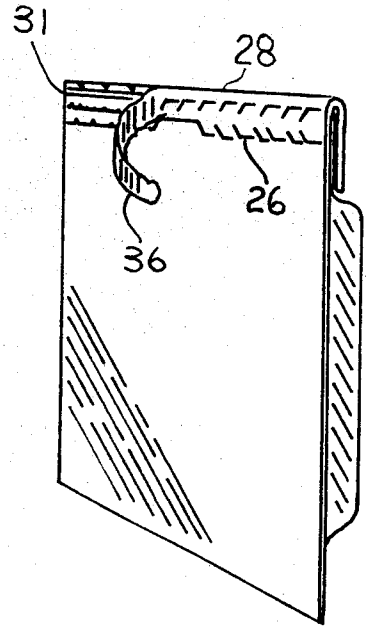
[52] **U.S. Cl.** **206/45.34,**
229/51; 99/174; 206/46
[51] **Int. Cl.** **B65d 73/00,**
B65d 75/00
[50] **Field of Search** 229/51is,
87F; 206/(Vac Dig.), 46F, 45.34; 99/174

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Attorney—Joseph A. Barbosa

ABSTRACT: An improved package is provided comprising a semirigid container, a film closure for the container adapted to be vacuum sealed to the container opening, and a relatively stiff paperboard backing member adhesively secured to the film. The backing member includes a tear strip, the removal of which also served to permit removal of the film from the container and thereby provide access to the container's contents. Once the strip is removed the container may be reclosed by the relatively stiff backing member.



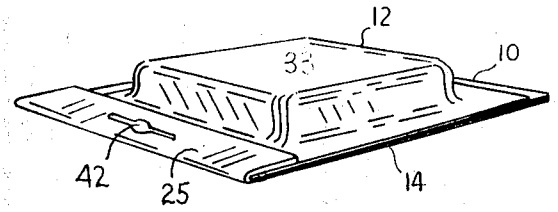


FIG. 1

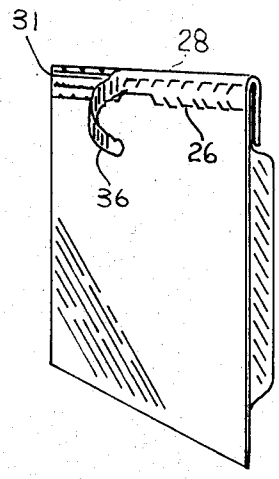


FIG. 2

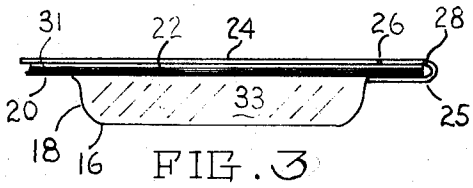


FIG. 3

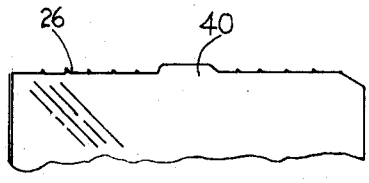


FIG. 4

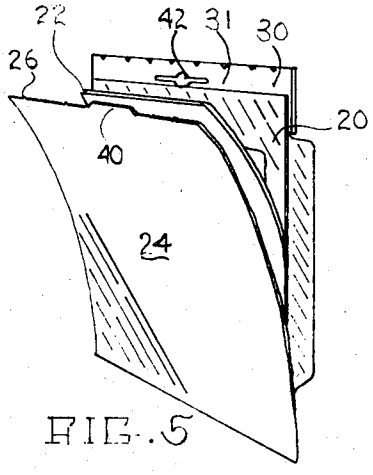


FIG. 5

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DISPLAY PACKAGE

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Heretofore it has been known to package perishable items, such as luncheon meats, by vacuum sealing the meat within a semirigid plastic tray. Although such packages effectively serve to protect their contents, they have several inherent drawbacks which severely limit their commercial appeal. Thus, such packages are difficult to print upon, generally difficult to open, frequently leak, and, once opened cannot be reclosed. Further, since any puncture of the package would cause the contents to eventually spoil, the packages cannot readily be displayed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore a principal object of the present invention to provide an improved vacuum sealable package which includes a reclosable feature and which may readily be displayed.

These and other beneficial objects and advantages are attained in accordance with the present invention by providing a package including a shallow tray having a base portion and upwardly extending wall portions forming an enclosure about the base. The upper peripheral edge of the wall portion is provided with a transverse margin extending substantially parallel to the base. A thin film cover sheet is originally heat sealed to the margin and a vacuum drawn into the tray interior. A backing member is adhesively affixed to the film paperboard cover and overhangs one edge of the tray. A tear strip extends from side to side across the backing member. The tear strip is defined between two substantially parallel cut-score lines. The top line also serves as a folding score line along which the overhanging portion of the backing folds, and the bottom score line is positioned above the heat seal of the film and tray. The bottom score line may include upwardly extending portions which, when the tear strip is removed, define a tab. The tab is adapted to be fitted into a slot in the tray margin and thereby provides the reclosable feature of the present package.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the accompanying drawings:

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of a package in accordance with the present invention, depicting the full tray;

FIG. 2 is a rear perspective of the present package;

FIG. 3 is a side view of the present package;

FIG. 4 is a fractional plan view of the closing feature of the backing member of the present package; and

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of the proposed package partially opened.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Reference is now made to the drawings and in particular to FIG. 1 wherein the proposed package **10** of the present invention is depicted as including a tray **12** and a backing member **14**. As shown in FIG. 3, the tray comprises a base **16** having continuous walls **18** extending upwardly and defining an enclosure about the base. A transverse margin **20** is disposed about the free peripheral edge of the wall. The tray may be formed of any suitable material although a semirigid clear plastic material.

The item to be packed **33**, is first placed within the tray confines. A thin, flexible, moisture-impervious film cover **22** preferably made of heat-sealable material such as polyethylene, is then placed over the tray opening and heat sealed along a strip **31** (shown in FIG. 5) placed about the tray periphery upon the margin **20**. The meat or other contents **33** is then vacuum packed in a standard fashion. The vacuum

packed package is then applied by adhesive to a paperboard backing or backboard **24** which overlays and adheres to the film cover **22**. The backboard **24** is of greater length than the vacuum sealed package and is cut scored horizontally at the top along lines **26** and **28** so that the extra length may be folded along upper score line **28** over the top margin **30** of the combined tray and film cover. In this manner, a paperboard display area **25** on the front of the package over the transparent tray is provided while still permitting the contents **33** of the package to be viewed, as shown in FIG. 1.

The area between the two horizontal cut-score lines **26** and **28** defines a tear strip **36**. The bottom cut-score line **26** will overlay top margin **30** and be parallel to and slightly below heat seal strip **31**, as shown in FIGS. **2** and **5**. Thus, tear strip **36** encompasses the heat seal strip **31** on top margin **30**. Accordingly, when the tear strip is removed, the film cover **22** may be separated from the tray along heat seal strip **31** before continuing to remove the film cover **22** and the remainder of backboard **24** from the tray **12**. Removal of the film cover along the heat seal strip **31** before removal of the remainder of backing **24** prevents excessive tearing and destruction of film cover **22**. Thus, as shown in FIGS. **2** and **5**, to open the present package, the tear strip **36** is removed. A corner of the film cover **22** is then grasped and may be peeled to first begin to separate from the tray along seal strip **31**, and thereafter to separate the board **24** to which it is adhered from the tray. The film is peeled off until the tray's contents may be removed. In those instances when the contents are not to be entirely used, the film and backboard are not entirely removed, but are removed only as much as required to give access to the contents, and to permit reclosure.

The reclosable feature of the present invention includes a tab **40** defined by the bottom cut-score line **26** as shown in FIG. 4. A slot **42** provided in the top margin **30** in the area directly underlying the tab **40** as shown in FIG. 5. Thus, when the package is to be reclosed, the tuck tab **42** defined by the lower cut-score line **26** of the tear strip which extends from the remaining portion of the paperboard back is inserted into the slot **42** in the plastic tray. The film cover **22** is of material so flexible as not to require perforation or interfere with the reclosure.

Thus, in accordance with the above the several aforementioned objects may be obtained.

We claim:

1. An improved package comprising: a tray having a base and opposed upwardly extending sidewalls defining an enclosure about said base, margins extending from the free peripheral edges of said walls transverse to the walls and parallel to the base, a film cover sealingly affixed to the tray margins along a continuous seal strip whereby to enable the vacuum packing of commodities within said tray and film cover, and a paperboard backing adhesively affixed to said film cover, said backing having a tear strip defined by first and second-cut score lines overlying one of said wall margins.

2. The invention in accordance with claim 1 in which the portion of said seal strip along the aforesaid one of said wall margins lies between said first and second-cut score lines.

3. The invention in accordance with claim 1 in which a portion of said backing folds along said first-cut score line over the edge of the aforesaid one of said wall margins, providing a printable display area on the underside of said wall margins.

4. The invention in accordance with claim 1 wherein said package further includes means for reclosing said package after said tear strip has been removed and the package opened.

5. The invention in accordance with claim 4 wherein said reclosing means includes a tab defined by said second-cut score line and a slot disposed in said wall margin directly underlying said tab.