MOLDED PULP PLANT CONTAINER

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This invention relates to molded pulp containers, and it particularly relates to molded pulp containers which are relatively deep and which have relatively high side walls.

Molded pulp containers having relatively high side walls present a storage and shipping problem. In order to store or ship such containers without consuming an inordinately large space, it is necessary that they be nested, one with the other. However, this presents several problems, chief of which is the fact that when many containers are nested with one container inserted within the other, the high side walls of the containers tend to frictionally engage with each other. Since the area of such engagement is relatively large, due to the height of the side walls, it has been found that it is almost completely impossible to subsequently separate the containers without bending, creasing, tearing or otherwise damaging the molded pulp walls.

It is, therefore, the primary object of the present invention to provide a relatively deep container made of molded pulp or the like, which may be nested within other similar containers and which may subsequently be withdrawn from such nested position without any damage thereto.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a container, made of molded pulp or the like, which may be nested within other similar containers without any frictional interlocking therebetween.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a container, made of molded pulp or the like, which is adapted to hold potting earth or similar material for growing plants and which, when not in use, may be nested within other similar containers and then withdrawn therefrom without consequent damage to any of the containers.

Other objects and many of the attendant advantages of this invention will be readily appreciated as the same becomes better understood by reference to the following detailed description when considered in connection with the accompanying drawings wherein:

Fig. 1 is a top plan view of a container embodying the present invention;

Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view taken on line 2—2 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view taken on line 3—3 of Fig. 1;

Fig. 4 is a fragmentary, cross-sectional view showing a pair of containers embodying the invention in nested position, this view being taken on a line corresponding to 4—4 of Fig. 1; and

Fig. 5 is a fragmentary, cross-sectional view similar to Fig. 4 but taken on a line corresponding to 5—5 of Fig. 1.

Referring now in greater detail to the drawings wherein similar reference characters refer to similar parts, there is shown a molded pulp container, generally designated 10, which is substantially rectangular in shape, as best seen in Fig. 1, and which is provided with rounded corners 12.

The container 10 is provided with four side walls 14, 16, 18 and 20, each of these side walls extending upwardly, in a slightly outwardly inclined direction, from a straight bottom wall 22. The junction between each of the side walls and the bottom wall is rounded as indicated at 24 in Figs. 4 and 5. Centrally positioned relative to each side wall, at the junction of each of the side walls and the bottom wall, is provided a slot 26. Each of these slots 26 are half positioned in the bottom wall and half in its corresponding side wall, as best seen in Figs. 2 and 3. These slots 26 are provided for the purpose of permitting drainage of excess water, accumulating at the bottom of the container as seepage, from the potting earth held therein.

Each of the walls 14, 16, 18 and 20 terminates at its upper end in a shoulder, such as shown at 28, 30, 32 and 34. Each of these shoulders extends substantially the full length of its corresponding wall, except that at the ends thereof, where they meet the adjacent shoulders at the corner portions of the container, they are laterally broadened outwardly to form corner ledges 36, 38, 40 and 42. These corner ledges are rounded to conform to the rounded corners of the container, as best shown in Fig. 1.

Between the corner ledges, an outwardly inclined upper side wall portion extends upwardly from each shoulder. These upper side wall portions are shown at 44, 46, 48 and 50. At the corners of the container, however, they are provided upper side portions, such as shown at 52 in Fig. 2, which extend nearly vertically straight upward.

The inclined side wall portions 44, 46, 48 and 50 and the nearly vertical side wall portions 52 provided at the corners of the container, meet to form a common peripheral rim 54 which defines the open top of the container.

As best shown in Figs. 4 and 5, when two or more containers embodying the present invention are nested, one within the other, the corner ledges of the topmost container rest on the peripheral rim of the lower container, as best shown in Fig. 5, while the corresponding side walls of the nested containers are slightly spaced from each other, as best shown in Fig. 4. The spacing of the side walls prevents any frictional engagement between them, whereas the contact between the corner ledges of the upper container and the rim of the lower container is merely a support contact where the only force exerted is the force of gravity. There is therefore, no locking frictional engagement whatsoever between the nested containers.

Although the container illustrated is shown as being generally rectangular in shape, the invention is not limited to such shape since the container may be square, oval, or even round. However, the container shown has been found to be preferable both from the point of view of facility of molding and from the point of view of all strength and sturdiness, especially of the edge construction.

Obviously many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in the light of the above teachings. It is, therefore, to be understood that within the scope to the appended claims the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described.

What is claimed is:

1. A substantially rectangular, integral container comprising a substantially flat bottom wall which is substantially rectangular in shape, a side wall extending in an upwardly and outwardly inclined direction from each side of said bottom wall then outwardly of said inclined direction to form a peripheral shoulder, then upwardly to form side wall portions terminating in a rim defining the open top of said container, said shoulder, at the corner portions thereof, being wider than the remaining portions of said shoulder and extending laterally outward therefrom.
whereby when two such containers are nested, one within the other, contact is provided between the rim of the exterior container and the corner portions of the interior container.

2. The container of claim 1 wherein said side wall portions are each upwardly and outwardly inclined in a plane parallel to the corresponding side wall and wherein each corner portion is connected to said rim by a wall portion which extends in a straight nearly vertical direction.

3. The container of claim 1 wherein at least one slot is formed in said container, said slot being positioned partially in said bottom wall and partially in a side wall.

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