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FOOD PACKAGE, STORAGE AND DISPENING DEVICE

Filed March 2, 1959

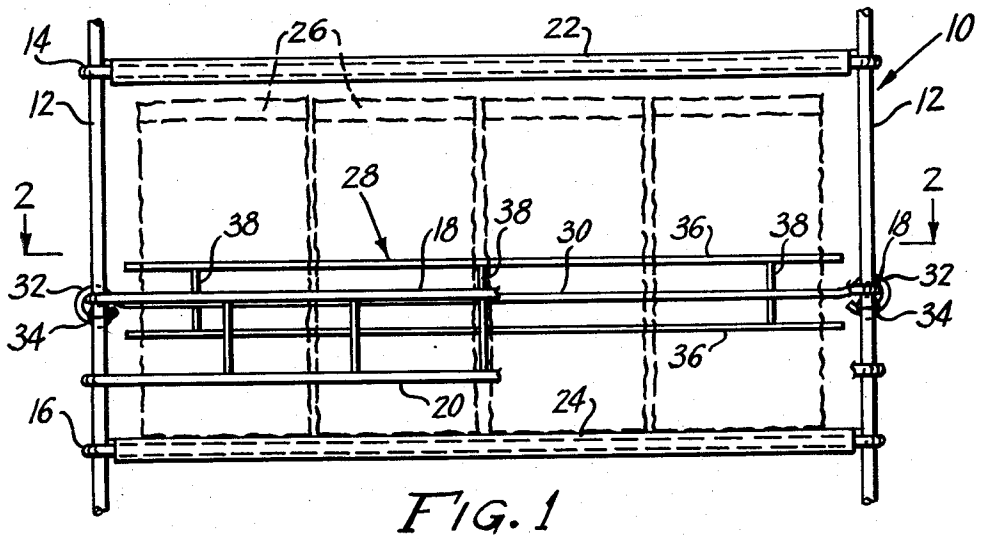


FIG. 1

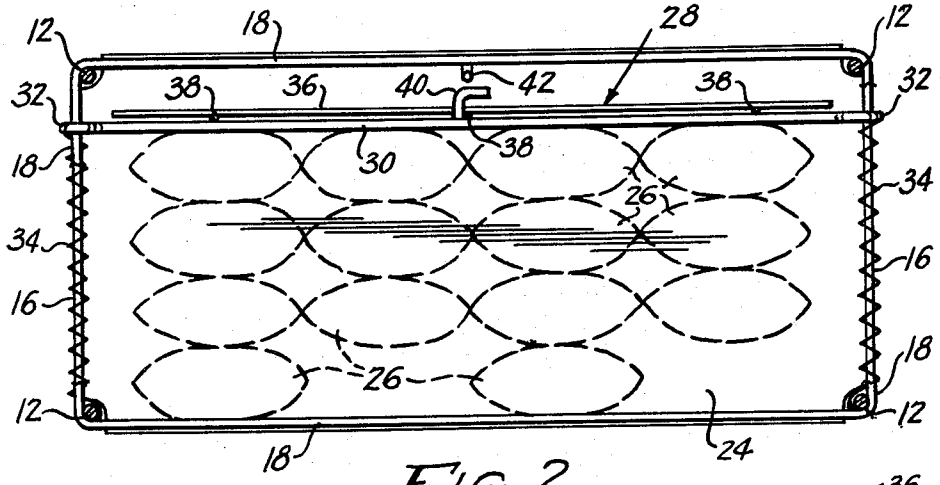


FIG. 2

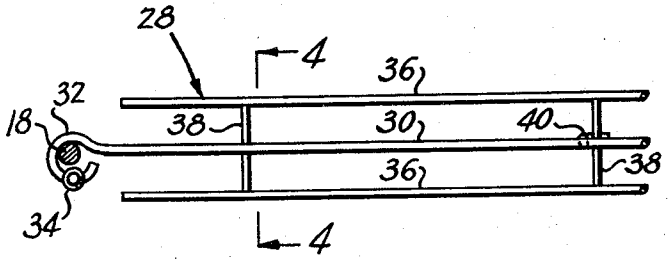


FIG. 3

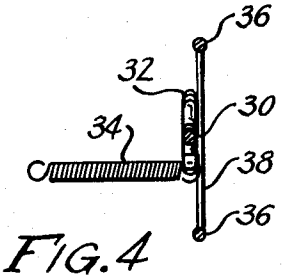


FIG. 4

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FOOD PACKAGE, STORAGE AND DISPENSING DEVICE

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1 Claim. (Cl. 211—49)

This invention relates to a dispensing device, and it particularly relates to a dispensing device for food packages, such as bags of potato chips.

Bags of potato chips are usually displayed in a store on a rack of open wire-work from which the customer may help himself. This method of storage is alright when the bags are sufficiently numerous to fill the rack since in such case, the bags support each other in upright position and the front bags are easily accessible to the customer. However, when a number of bags have been removed, the remaining bags are not adequately supported and tend to fall down. This not only results in some breakage of chips but spoils the appearance of the display. In addition, since it is the front bags that are usually removed first, the customer must bend and reach to obtain the bags which remain at the rear of the rack.

It is one object of the present invention to overcome the above disadvantages by providing a rack adapted to automatically force the packages in fully supported, upright position to the front of the rack.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a rack of the aforesaid type which is simple in construction and easy to use.

Other objects of the present invention are to provide an improved rack, of the character described, that is easily and economically produced, which is sturdy in construction, and which is highly efficient in operation.

With the above and related objects in view, this invention consists in the details of construction and combination of parts, as will be more fully understood from the following description, when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawing in which:

FIG. 1 is a front elevational view of a device embodying the present invention, with parts broken away.

FIG. 2 is a sectional view, with parts broken away, taken on line 2—2 of FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a fragmentary view of the follower used in the device of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 is a fragmentary, detailed view, with parts omitted, taken on line 4—4 of FIG. 3.

Referring in greater detail to the drawing wherein similar reference characters refer to similar parts, there is shown a rack, generally designated **10**, comprising four supporting rods **12**, one at each corner, upper and lower rails **14** and **16** of rectangular shape providing main body frames secured to and embracing the rods **12**, and a pair of vertically-spaced rectangular guide and strengthening rails **18** and **20** embracing the rods **12** between the rails **14** and **16** but closer to the bottom rails **16**. The upper rail **14** supports an upper shelf member **22** while the lower rail **16** supports a floor or lower shelf member **24**. The floor shelf **24** supports the packages, here illustrated as bags of potato chips **26**.

For the purpose of resiliently supporting the packages **26**, there is provided a follower **28**, common to all the rows of packages **26**, comprising a rod **30** extending transversely of the rack **10** and provided with a hook portion **32** at each end. These hook portions **32** each are releasably and slidably engaged with a corresponding

portion of the rectangular guide rail **18**. These hook portions **32** are also each connected, below guide rail **18**, to one end of a tension coil spring **34**, the opposite end of which is connected to the corresponding front supporting rod **12**.

The rod **30** is connected to a pair of parallel pusher or follower rods **36**, one of which is above and one below the rod **30**, by means of vertical tie rods **38** which are secured to the rod **30** and rods **38** by welding, soldering or the like. In addition, at its central portion, the rod **30** is provided with a hook **40** adapted to be releasably engaged with a retaining means on the rear portion of rail **18**, such retaining means being here illustrated as an eyelet **42**.

It will be noted that there are a plurality of horizontally spaced apart vertical tie rods connecting the rods **18** and **20** together at the forward portion of the frame device. These tie rods are similar to the tie rods **38** of the follower, and help provide a forward support for bags pushed thereagainst.

In operation, the follower **28** is pushed back against the tension of the springs **34** and the hook **40** is engaged with the eyelet **42**. The bags **26** are then stacked on the floor **24** until they are held firm between the front portion of rail **18** and the follower **28**. The hook **40** is then disengaged from eyelet **42**. Thereafter, as soon as the front row of bags **26** are removed by a customer, the spring-pressed follower **28** automatically moves the stack of bags further to the front. In this manner, not only are the bags always within easy reach of the customer but they are always supported in a generally upright position between the front portion of rail **18** and the follower **28**.

The use of two springs **38**, one at each end of the follower, permits smooth resilient tension of the follower **28** without any swinging action such as would be encountered with more centrally-disposed spring means. The positioning of the springs **34** below their respective portions of the rail **18** also prevents fouling of the springs.

Although this invention has been described in considerable detail, such description is intended as being illustrative rather than limiting, since the invention may be variously embodied, and the scope of the invention is to be determined as claimed.

Having thus set forth and disclosed the nature of this invention, what is claimed is:

An open wire work frame device for storing and dispensing a plurality of rows of fragile bags of crushable articles consisting of an open wire rectangular rack comprising a rectangular floor, an upright supporting rod at each corner of said floor, a plurality of rectangular rail members mounted on said upright rods, said rail members including at least an upper rail member, a lower rail member, and a pair of intermediate vertically spaced apart rail members, a plurality of horizontally spaced vertical tie rods connecting said pair of intermediate rail members to each other at the forward side portion of said frame device, a common bag follower comprising at least three vertically spaced rods, a plurality of horizontally spaced vertical tie rods securing said vertically spaced horizontal rods together, an eye formed on each end of an intermediate follower rod and looped about opposite side portions of one of said intermediate rail members, and yieldable tension means biased between each eye and said forward side portion of said frame device urging said common follower forwardly against rows of bags placed between said follower and said pair of intermediate

rail members at said forward portion of said frame device.

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