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DISPENSING PACKAGE FOR MEAT SLICES AND METHOD
OF DISPENSING SAID SLICES
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Fig. 1.

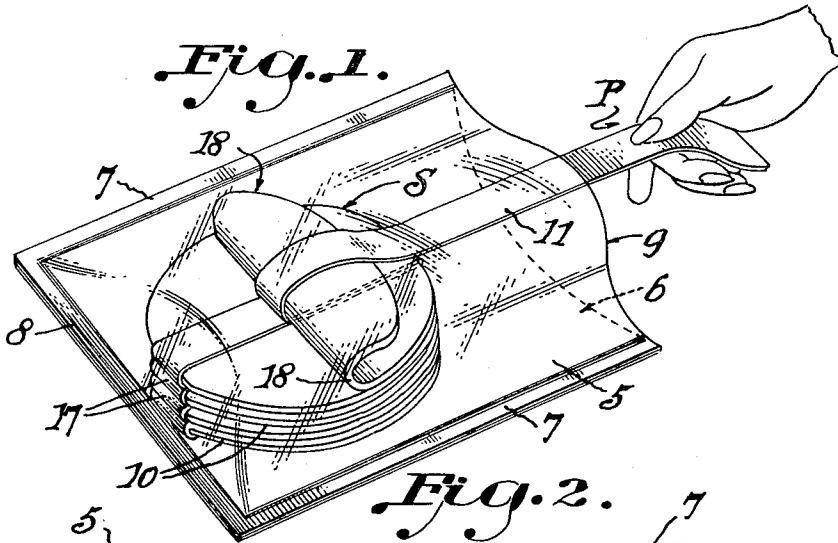


Fig. 2.

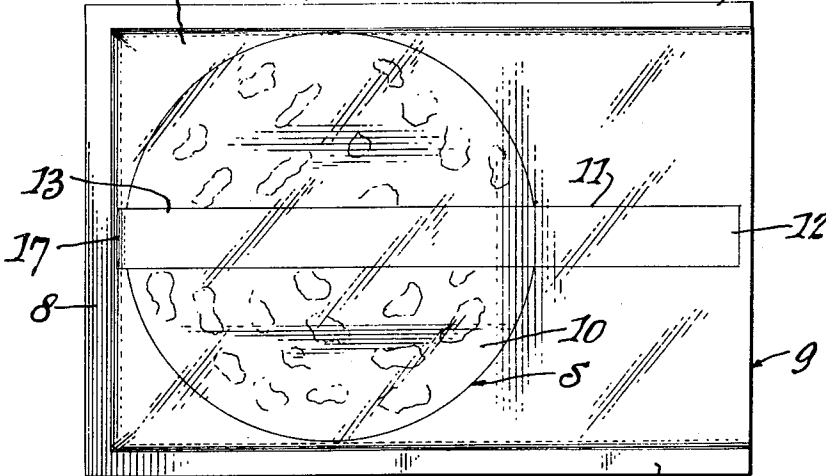
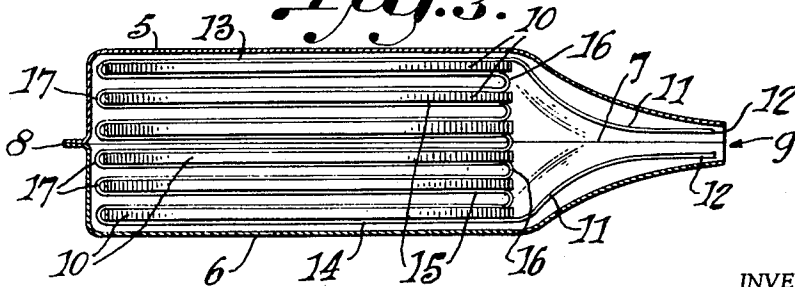


Fig. 3.



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DISPENSING PACKAGE FOR MEAT SLICES AND METHOD OF DISPENSING SAID SLICES

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5 Claims. (Cl. 99-174)

The invention relates generally to dispensing packages and seeks to provide a novel package wherein thin flaccid slices such as meat slices or the like can be stacked in superposed, separated relation, and a novel method of dispensing the slices, one by one, without disturbing the remainder of the stack, and without the necessity of grasping the slices with the fingers during the dispensing thereof.

Packages wherein product slices are arranged in stacked relation are known, and such known packages also have included tapes disposed to separate the individual slices, but in the known packages it has been impossible to dispense the slices, one by one, without disturbing the remainder of the stack. On the contrary, it has been necessary to remove the whole stack from the package and manipulate the stack with the fingers in order properly to extract individual slices therefrom. Obviously this practice has been objectionable because of the unsanitary nature thereof, and also because of the necessity of handling the usually greasy products. It is a purpose of the invention to provide a packaging arrangement and slice dispensing method which will avoid the above noted objections.

In its more detailed nature, the invention resides in providing a package of the character stated comprising an envelope having a closed bottom, closed sides and an open mouth through which to dispense products, thin flaccid product slices superposed in a stack in the envelope, and a slice separating and dispensing tape having its free ends disposed in position to be grasped at said open mouth, a stretch extending under the lowermost slice in the stack, a stretch extending over the uppermost slice in the stack, and loops alternately disposed about and between the superposed slices, each loop disposed about a slice opening toward said open mouth and having its bight directed toward the closed bottom, and each loop disposed between two slices opening toward said closed bottom and having its bight directed toward said open mouth.

Another object of the invention is to provide a novel method of packaging and dispensing sliced products comprising, providing an envelope with product slices stacked therein and with interleaved tape, all as above stated, and exerting on the free end of the tape stretch over the uppermost slice a continuous pull outwardly away from the open mouth of the envelope to straighten out the tape loops successively and peel the slices one by one off the stack with each slice in turn curling over upon itself and being delivered individually in inverted position at the open mouth of the envelope.

With the above and other objects in view that will hereinafter appear, the nature of the invention will be more clearly understood by reference to the following detailed description, the appended claims and the several views illustrated in the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

FIGURE 1 is a perspective view illustrating the invention.

FIGURE 2 is a plan view illustrating the improved dispensing package.

FIGURE 3 is a vertical longitudinal section through the package illustrated in FIGURE 2.

In the example of embodiment of the invention herein

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disclosed, the package is formed of an opposed set of walls 5 and 6, preferably of a transparent heat sealable material such as pliofilm or polyethylene. The opposed walls 5 and 6 have their side edges sealed along the margins as at 7 and their end edges sealed as at 8 across the bottom margin at the end of the package or envelope opposite the open mouth or end portion indicated at 9. This envelope will normally lie flat but is readily expandable to the condition illustrated in FIGURES 1 and 3 to receive the packaged product.

Within the envelope or container formed in the manner described, the thin flaccid slices 10 of meat or other products to be packaged and dispensed are superposed in stack form as generally indicated at S. A slice separating and dispensing tape 11 is interleaved between the slices as clearly illustrated in FIGURE 3. It will be noted that the free ends 12 of the tape are extended to the open mouth 9 of the envelope where they can be readily grasped, a stretch 13 of the tape passes over the uppermost slice 10 and a similar stretch 14 of the tape passes under the lowermost slice. The interleaving of the tape between the individual slices is carried out in a manner for providing a loop 15 between each two adjacent slices with the loop bight 16 directed toward the open mouth of the envelope as indicated in FIGURE 2. This arrangement also provides a loop embracing or passing about each slice, said slice embracing loops opening toward the open mouth of the envelope and having their bights 17 directed toward the closed bottom of the envelope. The tape loops 15 disposed between each two adjacent slices 10 and terminating forward or toward the open mouth 9 of the envelope, at the bights 16, open toward the closed bottom of the envelope. In the showing in FIGURE 3, the loops 15 are illustrated with their opposing stretches separated in interest of clarity of illustration whereas in the actual package, the opposing stretches of the tape forming the loops 15 will contact one another.

With the package formed in the manner above described, it is a simple matter to dispense the slices, one by one, and without disturbing the remainder of the stack in the envelope, as illustrated in FIGURE 1. This is accomplished by a grasping of the free end of the uppermost stretch 13 of the tape, and exerting a pull thereon outwardly through the open mouth of the envelope as indicated at P. By thus continuously applying a pull on the free end of the tape, the loops embracing or containing the individual slices 10 and interleaved therebetween as at 15 will be successively straightened out to dispense the slices. As the first or uppermost loop is straightened out, it will peel off and turn over the uppermost slice 10 as indicated at 18 in FIGURE 1, and this procedure will be followed for each successive slice. In the open mouth of the envelope, the individually dispensed slices can be caused to fall upon a receiving device such as a saucer or a cake turner or other handling implement, or they may even be received in the hand, if desired.

It will be apparent that in this manner, the slices can be individually dispensed in a convenient and sanitary manner, all of the slices being dispensed in succession, or one or more of said slices may be so dispensed without disturbing the remainder of the stack. It will also be apparent that in the disclosed manner of handling the slices, unnecessary handling is avoided, it being unnecessary to remove the whole stack of product slices to select therefrom a slice or slices desired, followed by a hand replacement of the remainder of the stack into the envelope.

While a preferred formation of the envelope or container is disclosed herein, it is to be understood that variations in the formation of the envelope may be made without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the appended claims.

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I claim:

1. A package comprising an envelope composed of opposing walls secured together marginally to provide a closed bottom, closed sides and an open mouth through which to dispense thin flaccid slices disposed therein and superposed in a stack with face portions of the slices paralleling said opposing walls and edges thereof projecting toward said open mouth, and a slice separating and dispensing tape having its free ends disposed in position for being grasped at said open mouth, a stretch extending under the lowermost slice in the stack, a stretch extending over the uppermost slice in the stack, and loops alternately disposed about and between the superposed slices, each loop disposed about a slice opening toward said open mouth and having its bight directed toward the closed bottom, and each loop disposed between two slices opening toward said closed bottom and having its bight directed toward said open mouth, whereby upon continuous pulling on the uppermost end of the tape and through said open mouth the tape loops will be successively straightened out and the slices will be peeled off the stack one by one from top to bottom of the stack, each in turn being turned over upon itself and delivered at the open mouth of the envelope.

2. The package of claim 1 wherein said slices are slices of meat.

3. A method of dispensing individual thin flaccid slices superposed in a stack in an open envelope and having a slice separating and dispensing tape interleaved with the slices of the stack comprising the steps of exerting a pull on one end of the tape to initially curl over an edge portion of a slice, and continuing the pull on the tape to completely curl the slice over on itself and deliver the slice from the open end of the envelope in an inverted position.

4. A method of packaging and dispensing sliced products comprising, providing an envelope composed of opposing walls secured together marginally to provide a closed bottom, closed sides and an open mouth through which to dispense products, placing in the envelope a stack of superposed thin flaccid slices with face portions of the slices paralleling said opposing walls and edges thereof projecting toward said open mouth and with a slice separating and dispensing tape interleaved with the

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slices of the stack, the free ends of the tape disposed in position for being grasped at said open mouth, a stretch of the tape extending under the lowermost slice in the stack, a stretch of the tape extending over the uppermost slice of the stack, and loops of the tape alternately disposed about and between the slices, each loop disposed about a slice opening toward said open mouth and having its bight directed toward the closed bottom, and each loop disposed between two slices opening toward said closed bottom and having its bight directed toward said open mouth, and exerting on the free end of the tape stretch over the uppermost slice a continuous pull outwardly away from the open mouth to straighten out the loops successively and peel the slices one by one off the stack with each slice in turn curling over upon itself and being delivered individually in inverted position at the open mouth of the envelope.

5. A package comprising a flat envelope having a closed bottom, spaced closed sides and an open mouth, thin flaccid slices stacked within said envelope in generally parallel relation with respect to said sides with outermost ones of the slices being disposed closely adjacent said side and edges of the slices opposing said open mouth, and strip means interleaved with said slices and projecting towards said open mouth for sequentially imparting a curling over motion to and moving outermost ones of the slices generally normal to the stack of slices and through said open mouth.

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