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(71) Applicant: **PREZIOSI FOOD S.R.L.** [IT/IT]; Via dei Valtorta, 48, 20127 Milano (IT).

(72) Inventor: **D'ALESSANDRO, Donato**; c/o PREZIOSI FOOD S.r.l., Via dei Valtorta, 48, 20127 Milano (IT).

(74) Agent: **BRUNACCI, Marco**; Brunacci & Partners S.r.l., Via Scaglia Est, 19-31, 41126 Modena (IT).

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KW, KZ, LA, LC, LK, LR, LS, LU, LY, MA, MD, ME, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, MY, MZ, NA, NG, NI, NO, NZ, OM, PA, PE, PG, PH, PL, PT, QA, RO, RS, RU, RW, SA, SC, SD, SE, SG, SK, SL, SM, ST, SV, SY, TH, TJ, TM, TN, TR, TT, TZ, UA, UG, US, UZ, VC, VN, ZA, ZM, ZW.

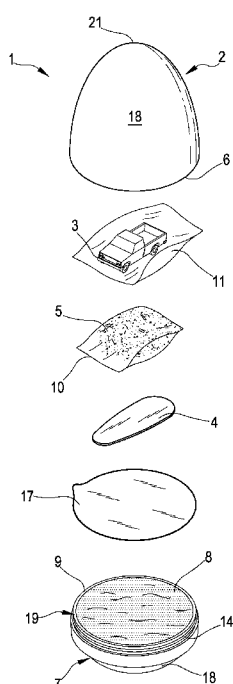
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(54) Title: CONTAINER FOR FOOD PRODUCTS

FIG.1



(57) Abstract: The container (1) for food products comprises a first half-shell (2) which is substantially hollow for containing at least an accessory (3, 4, 5) and has a first opening edge (6), and a second half-shell (7) which is substantially hollow for containing at least a food product (8) and has a second opening edge (9), the half-shells (2, 7) being associable with each other by interposition of connection means (13, 14) at the opening edges (6, 9) to form an ovoid package, in which the connection means (13, 14) comprise a plurality of tooth elements (13) formed on at least one of the first half-shell (2) and the second half-shell (7) and an annular abutment edge (14) formed on the other of the first half-shell (2) and the second half-shell (7), the tooth elements (13) being able to cooperate with the abutment edge (14) for locking the opening edges (6, 9) the one to the other.

CONTAINER FOR FOOD PRODUCTS

Technical Field

The present invention relates to a container for food products.

Background Art

- 5 Several types of container for food products are known which have the shape of an egg divided into two half-shells, one of which is intended to contain an accessory, a game and/or a surprise, while the other is adapted to contain a food product.

Each half-shell is provided with an opening edge which is intended to be
10 associated substantially mating with the opening edge of the other half-shell.

The half-shells are usually made of plastic and both the accessory and the food product can be removed from the outside when the half-shells are separated from one another, as illustrated in EP 1 533 245 A1.

In some containers, on the other hand, one or both half-shells are made of edible
15 material and represent the packaged food product.

In a particular type of container, the half-shells are associable and separable from one another along one of the egg symmetry planes, have the same shape and are provided with ogive-shaped opening edges.

In another type of container, on the other hand, the two half-shells are
20 associable and separable along the median transverse plane, by median transverse plane meaning the one that is orthogonal to the longitudinal direction of the ovoid package and which is arranged at the height where the diameter of the opening edges, with circular shape, is maximum.

These known types of container have some drawbacks, including the fact that
25 they are purely intended for the consumption of a single food product and, hence, are considerably limited in terms of variety and assortment of tastes offered to consumers.

Furthermore the opening edges have a protruding edge with respect to the outer surface of each half-shell; this negatively affects the aesthetics of the container,
30 thus reducing the appeal of the container itself for consumers.

In this regard, it is underlined that, in this specific commercial sector, the need is particularly felt to renew one's products and to constantly offer new ones in

order to distinguish these from the competition and to encourage consumers to purchase one's own articles.

It is noteworthy that the commercial success of these products is often linked to the innovation of the product itself and to the ability to make it interact with consumers, who are often young children, by providing the game/surprise and offering food products which are not only nutritious but also varied.

In order to at least partially overcome this drawback, the use of containers is known in accordance with the teachings of patent document EP 2 310 288 which, however, are likely to be further upgraded, in particular, to increase its ease of use.

Description of the Invention

The main aim of the present invention is to provide a container for food products that is practical, easy to use and functional and allows feeding and at the same time entertaining consumers.

Another object of the present invention is to meet the above-mentioned commercial requirements, by making available a container for food products which is very appealing for consumers.

Not the last object of the present invention is to provide a container for food products that can be easily handled and supported on a plane.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a container for food products that allows to overcome the aforementioned drawbacks of the prior art within a simple, rational, easy, effective to use and affordable solution.

The aforementioned objects are achieved by the present container for food products according to claim 1.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Other characteristics and advantages of the present invention will become more evident from the description of a preferred, but not exclusive, embodiment of a container for food products, illustrated by way of an indicative but non-limiting example, in the joined drawings in which:

Figure 1 is an exploded view of the container according to the invention;
Figure 2 is an axonometric view of the container according to the invention;
Figure 3 is an exploded view from another angle of the container according to

the invention;

Figure 4 is a sectional view of the container according to the invention;

Figure 5 is a sectional view on an enlarged scale of a detail of Figure 4.

Embodiments of the Invention

- 5 With particular reference to these figures, reference numeral 1 globally designates a container for food products.

The container 1 comprises a first half-shell 2, which is substantially hollow for containing one or more accessories 3, 4, 5 and which has a first opening edge 6, and a second half-shell 7, which is substantially hollow for containing at least a
10 food product 8 and which has a second opening edge 9.

Conveniently the accessories 3, 4, 5 contained in the first half-shell 2 are three in number.

One of them is a playful article 3 such as a figure, a miniature, a model car or whatever, which is placed inside a protective bag 10 or, alternatively, a
15 containment box.

The second accessory 4 consists e.g. of an object such as a spatula, a spoon or the like, adapted to allow the user to collect the food product 8 and bring it to his/her mouth.

The third accessory 5, on the other hand, consists of a food accessory such as,
20 preferably, a substance having a predetermined texture, such as pieces of cereal, breadstick, fruit, or other foods that can be dipped and/or soaked in the food product 8.

As can be seen in the figures, the food accessory 5 is contained inside a special sealed package 11.

- 25 Alternative embodiments cannot however be ruled out wherein there is only one accessory 3, 4, 5 inside the first half-shell 2.

Preferably, the food product 8 consists e.g. of a fluid substance such as a cream, a flavored mousse, a yogurt, or the like.

The half-shells 2, 7 are associable with each other at the opening edges 6, 9, i.e.
30 with the first opening edge 6 and the second opening edge 9 arranged one against the other, to form an ovoid package.

In particular, the opening edges 6, 9 are formed below a median plane

substantially transverse to the longitudinal direction of the ovoid package.

The first half-shell 2 has an ogival shape typical of the top of an egg, while the second half-shell 7 has, as a whole, the substantially spherical shape which is typical of the lower part of an egg.

- 5 With respect to the vertical arrangement of an egg, therefore, the first half-shell 2 and the second half-shell 7 are configurable as the upper half-shell and the lower half-shell respectively.

Conveniently, with reference to the normal vertical position of the container 1, it is also possible to find a substantially vertical longitudinal axis A.

- 10 In this sense, it is specified that within the scope of this discussion, expressions such as "top", "high", "low", "upper", "lower", "above", "below" and the like are to be considered with reference to the aforementioned vertical position, wherein the container 1 is placed with the bottom 12 resting on a horizontal plane.

- 15 In addition, it is worth specifying that at least one portion of the second half-shell 7 is substantially flat and adapted to allow the resting thereof on a plane. In particular, the portion is formed at the bottom 12 of the second half-shell 7. The aforementioned portion has a substantially circular conformation and coaxial to the second half-shell 7.

- 20 The half-shells 2, 7 are associable with each other at the opening edges 6, 9 by interposition of connection means 13, 14 to form a substantially ovoid package. Advantageously, the connection means 13, 14 are of a temporary nature; this means that the half-shells 2, 7 can be separated from each other and subsequently re-associated to restore the ovoid package.

- 25 The connection means 13, 14 comprise a plurality of tooth elements 13 formed on at least one of the first half-shell 2 and the second half-shell 7, and at least an annular abutment edge 14 formed protruding on the other of the first half-shell 2 and the second half-shell 7.

- The tooth elements 13 are adapted to cooperate with the abutment edge 14 for
30 locking the opening edges 6, 9 the one to the other.

In other words, the tooth elements 13 abut against the abutment edge 14.

With reference to the particular embodiment shown in the figures, the tooth

elements 13 are formed on the first half-shell 2 in the proximity of the first opening edge 6, and the abutment edge 14 is formed on the second half-shell 7 in the proximity of the second opening edge 9.

The plurality of tooth elements 13 is formed on the inner surface 15 of the first
5 half-shell 2.

Preferably, the tooth elements 13 are distributed with a substantially constant pitch; this allows the abutment edge 14 operating homogeneously in conjunction with the tooth elements 13.

The tooth elements 13 extend along the longitudinal direction of the ovoid
10 package.

Advantageously, the abutment edge 14 is formed on the outer surface 18 of the second half-shell 7.

With reference to the particular embodiment shown in the figures, the abutment edge 14 is formed superiorly to the second opening edge 9.

15 The abutment edge 14 is formed on a substantially cylindrical portion 19 of the second half-shell 7, the aforementioned portion 19 being delimited by a lateral wall 20 having a circular conformation.

Preferably, the second opening edge 9 is formed protruding with respect to the lateral wall 20.

20 In further details, the abutment edge 14 is formed radially protruding with respect to the outer surface 18 of the second half-shell 7; this means that the abutment edge 14 extends along a radius that connects the longitudinal axis A to the lateral wall 20.

The tooth elements 13 engage by interlocking on the abutment edge 14 by
25 joining flush the respective outer surfaces 18 of the first half-shell 2 and of the second half-shell 7 at the first opening edge 6 and the second opening edge 9, respectively.

In other words, the outer surfaces 18 of the relative half-shells 2, 7 are arranged contiguous to form a single continuous outer surface.

30 As can be seen in the figures, the opening edges 6, 9 are formed inferiorly to a median plane substantially transverse to the longitudinal direction of the ovoid package.

In this regard, the ovoid package has a predefined height H and the second half-shell 7 has a height of between $1/3$ and $1/4$ of the predefined height H, by “predefined height” being meant the distance between the bottom 12 and the top 21 of the container 1.

- 5 Preferably, the second half-shell 7 is provided with a respective access mouth 16 formed at the second opening edge 9, so that the second half-shell 7 and the food product 8 contained therein are accessible from the outside after the first half-shell 2 has been removed.

With the first opening edge 6 and/or the second opening edge 9, a closure sheet
10 17 is associable adapted to keep the cavity of the first half-shell 2 separate from the cavity of the second half-shell 7.

In the particular embodiment of the invention illustrated in the figures, for example, the closure sheet 17 consists of an aluminum foil which is provided inside with a thermo lacquer adapted to allow the hot sealing thereof on the
15 second opening edge 9, so as to hermetically close the access mouth 16 of the cavity.

Alternative embodiments cannot however be ruled out wherein the closure sheet 17 is locked together to the first opening edge 6, or wherein a closure sheet 17 is provided both on the first opening edge 6 and on the second opening edge 9.

- 20 It has in practice been found that the disclosed invention achieves the intended objects.

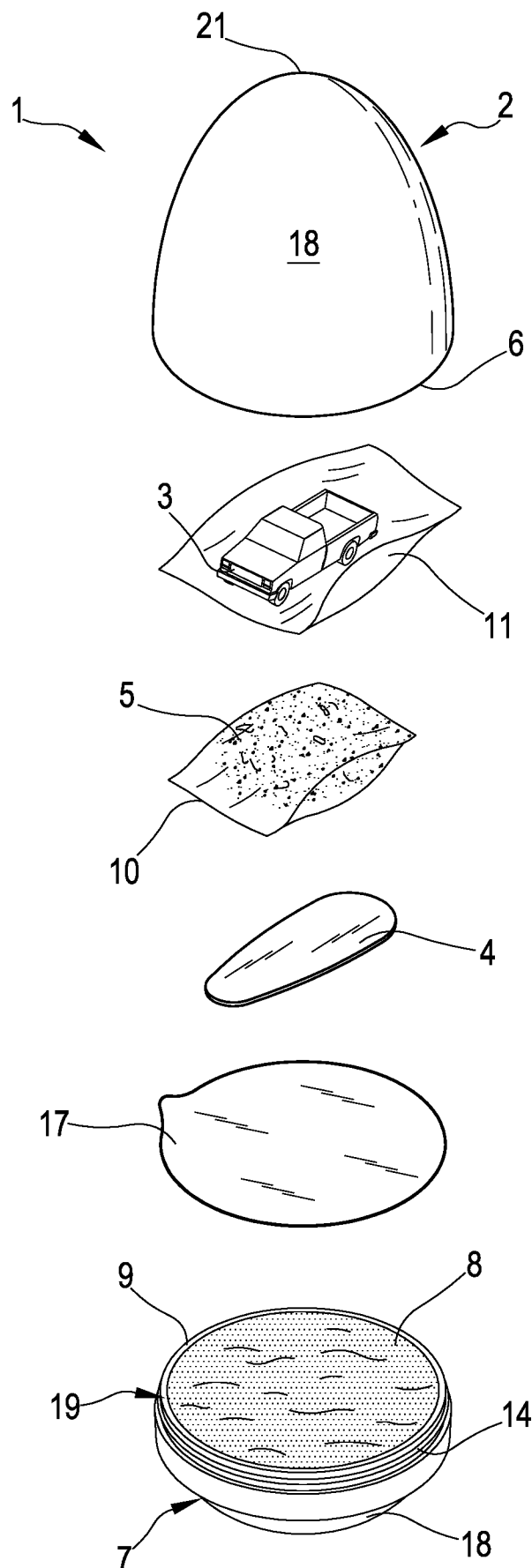
It is specified that the particular solution of providing the presence of connection means allows joining flush the outer surfaces of the respective half-shells to define a single outer surface which is very appealing for consumers,
25 and at the same time being practical, easy and functional to use and allows feeding and entertaining the consumers themselves.

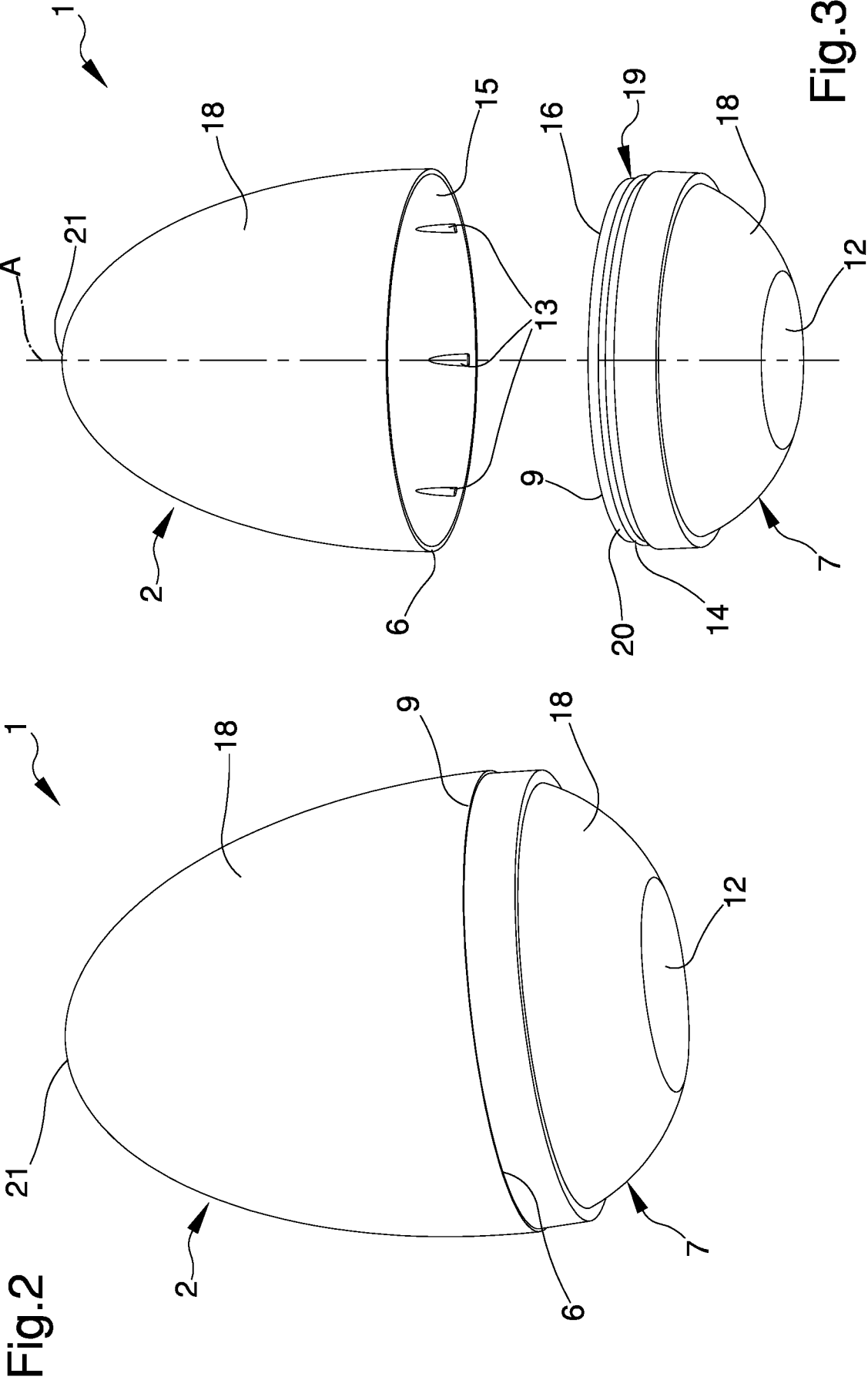
CLAIMS

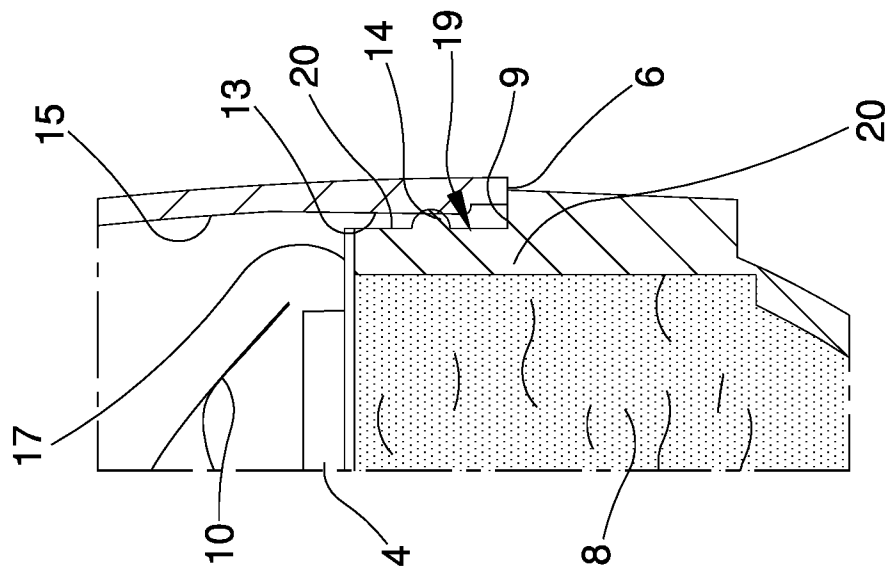
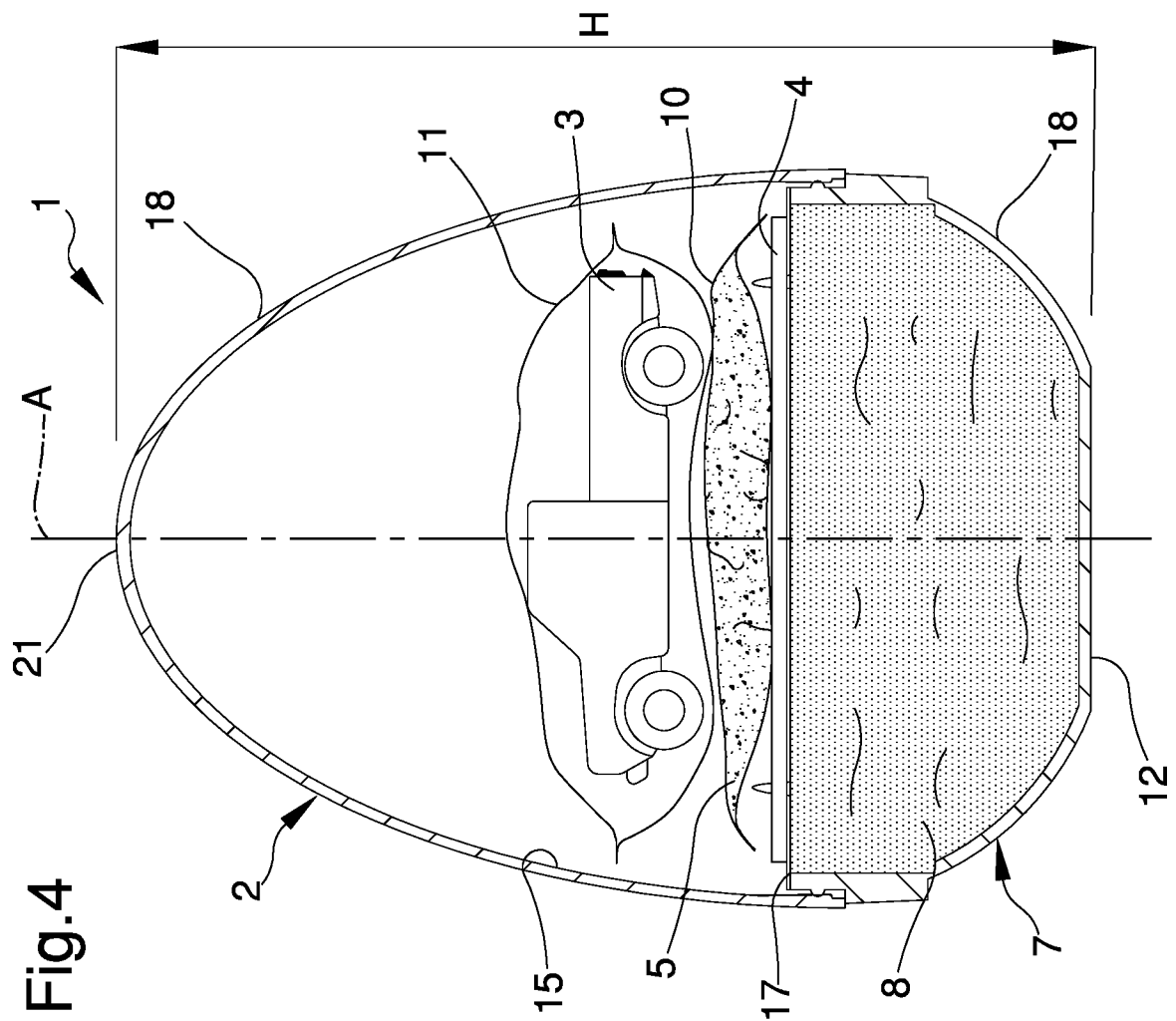
- 1) Container (1) for food products, comprising at least a first half-shell (2) which is substantially hollow for containing at least an accessory (3, 4, 5) and has a first opening edge (6), and at least a second half-shell (7) which is substantially hollow for containing at least a food product (8) and has a second opening edge (9), said half-shells (2, 7) being associable with each other by interposition of connection means (13, 14) at said opening edges (6, 9) to form an ovoid package, characterized by the fact that said connection means (13, 14) comprise a plurality of tooth elements (13) formed on at least one of said first half-shell (2) and said second half-shell (7) and at least an annular abutment edge (14) formed on the other of said first half-shell (2) and said second half-shell (7), said tooth elements (13) being able to cooperate with said abutment edge (14) for locking said opening edges (6, 9) the one to the other.
- 2) Container (1) according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that said tooth elements (13) are formed on said first half-shell (2) in the proximity of said first opening edge (6) and said abutment edge (14) is formed on said second half-shell (7) in the proximity of said second opening edge (9).
- 3) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said plurality of tooth elements (13) is formed on the inner surface (15) of said first half-shell (2), and by the fact that the latter extend along the longitudinal direction of said ovoid package.
- 4) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said abutment edge (14) is formed on the outer surface (18) of said second half-shell (7).
- 5) Container (1) according to claim 4, characterized by the fact that said abutment edge (14) is formed radially protruding with respect to the outer surface (18) of said second half-shell (7).
- 6) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said tooth elements (13) engage by interlocking on said annular element (14) joining flush the respective outer surfaces (18) of said first half-shell (2) and of said second half-shell (7) at said first opening edge (6) and said second opening edge (9), respectively.

- 7) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said opening edges (6, 9) are formed inferiorly to a median plane substantially transverse to the longitudinal direction of said ovoid package.
- 5 8) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said ovoid package has a predefined height (H), said second half-shell (7) having a height of between $1/3$ and $1/4$ of said predefined height.
- 9) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims, characterized by the fact that said abutment edge (14) is formed superiorly to said second
- 10 opening edge (9), on a substantially cylindrical portion (19) of said second half-shell (7), said portion (19) being delimited by a lateral wall (20) having a circular configuration, said second opening edge (9) being formed protruding with respect to said lateral wall (20).
- 10) Container (1) according to one or more of the preceding claims,
- 15 characterized by the fact that at least a portion of said second half-shell (7) is substantially flat and able to allow the support thereof on a plane, said portion being formed at the bottom (12) of said second half-shell (7).

FIG.1







INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No
PCT/IB2017/052497

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

INV. B65D8/00 B65D43/02 B65D85/60 B65D51/28
ADD.

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
B65D

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

EP0-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 1 533 245 A1 (SOREMARTEC SA [BE]; FERRERO SPA [IT]; FERRERO OHG [DE]) 25 May 2005 (2005-05-25) cited in the application	1-5,7-10
Y	paragraphs [0013] - [0017]; figures -----	6
Y	DE 79 21 019 U1 (FERRERO OHG [DE]) 18 October 1979 (1979-10-18) claims; figures -----	6
A	EP 2 310 288 A2 (PREZIOSI FOOD S R L [IT]) 20 April 2011 (2011-04-20) claims; figures -----	1-10
A	US 5 792 496 A (FEKETE FERENC [HK] ET AL) 11 August 1998 (1998-08-11) abstract; figures -----	1-10



Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.



See patent family annex.

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Name and mailing address of the ISA/

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Serrano Galarraga, J

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No

PCT/IB2017/052497

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
EP 1533245	A1	25-05-2005	NONE
DE 7921019	U1	18-10-1979	NONE
EP 2310288	A2	20-04-2011	AT 546381 T 15-03-2012 EP 2310288 A2 20-04-2011 ES 2386502 T3 22-08-2012 WO 2009136246 A2 12-11-2009
US 5792496	A	11-08-1998	NONE