Sept. 8, 1942. A. C. WEIR 2,295,313

MERCHANDISE DISPENSING CONTAINER

Filed Dec. 23, 1940

Fig. 1.

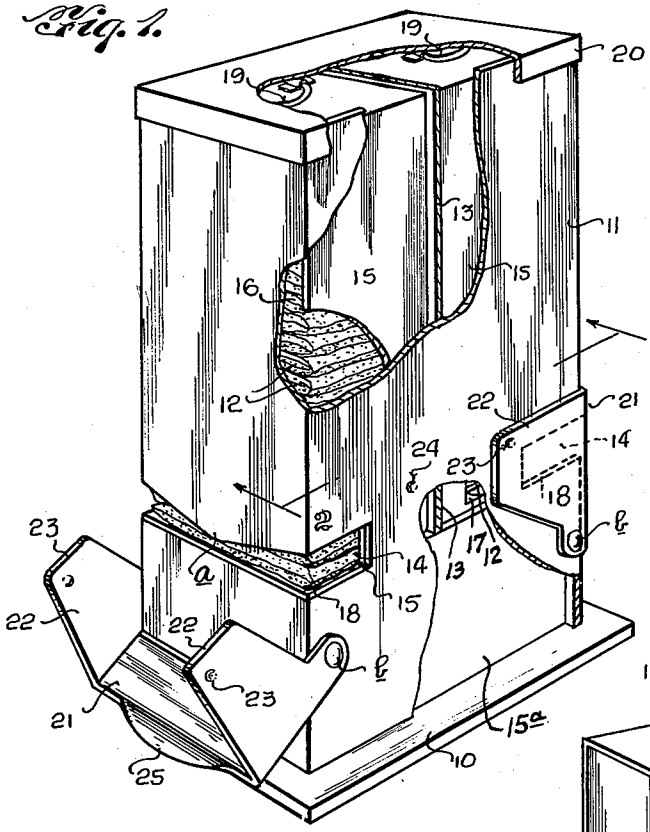


Fig. 3.

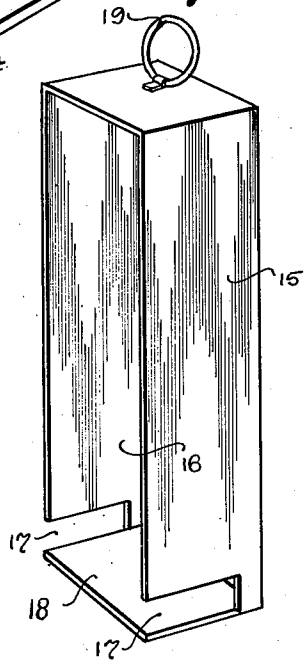
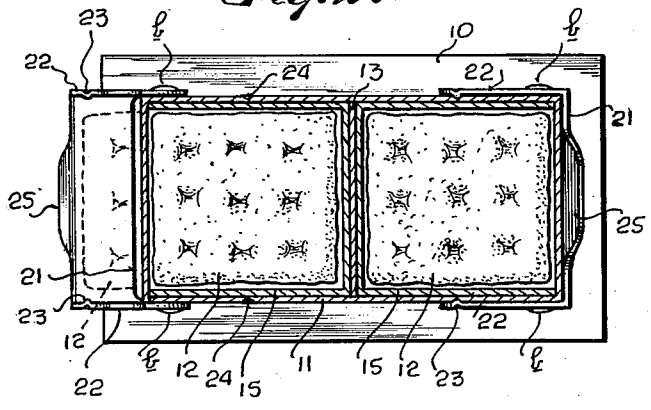


Fig. 2.



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Patented Sept. 8, 1942 2,295,313

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,295,313

MERCHANDISE DISPENSING CONTAINER

Alvah C. Weir, Longview, Tex.

Application December 23, 1940, Serial No. 371,234

1 Claim. (Cl. 312—42)

This invention relates to merchandise dispensing containers and it has particular reference to a moisture-resisting dispenser for such prepared food as soda crackers.

The principal object of the invention is to provide, first, a medium through which soda crackers may be served in a crisp condition and further, a dispensing container in which the merchandise is kept in a sanitary condition by enclosing the same and permitting only one cracker at a time to be removed therefrom.

The advent of air conditioning in eating places has brought about the requirement that soda crackers particularly be kept in a hot and dry place if they are to be served in a crisp and palatable condition to a customer, otherwise they become damp and unpalatable after having absorbed moisture out of the air, which they have a tendency to do, due to their peculiar composition. Moreover, when exposing crackers to heat to expel the absorbed moisture, they lose much of their original delectable flavor and being usually open to handling, an unsanitary condition presents itself.

The present invention has for its broad object to overcome the objectionable conditions set forth by enclosing the crackers against moisture and handling by any except the consumer aside from those whose duty it is to fill the containers with fresh merchandise when the supply is depleted.

With the foregoing objects as paramount, the invention has particular reference to its salient features of construction and arrangement of parts which will become manifest as the description proceeds, taken in connection with the accompanying drawing, wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view, showing a dispensing container constructed according to the present invention.

Figure 2 is a transverse section on line 2—2 on Figure 1, and

Figure 3 is a detail view in perspective of the removable cracker retaining magazines.

Continuing with a more detailed description of the drawing, the base of the container is designated by the reference numeral 10 and is of sufficient weight as to prevent the container from being overturned readily. Obviously, the base may be of any design or shape for the purpose.

Situated vertically on base 10 is the housing 11 whose cross-sectional shape is preferably rectangular in the case of a double dispenser as shown or square to provide a single dispenser to conform to the shape of the conventional soda cracker 12, although if used for cookies or like delicacies of a round shape, the magazine may be constructed to conform thereto.

The housing 11 is divided vertically by means of a partition 13 to define a pair of separate compartments of equal dimension. Spaced upward from the base 10, slots 14 are cut out of the sides of the housing, to extend inwardly toward the partition 13 a distance less than the width of a conventional soda cracker and it is through these slots that crackers are removed singly as will be presently set forth. To insure against removal of more than one cracker at a time and yet facilitate the removal of this cracker, the wall of the housing immediately above each slot converges substantially to a point *a*.

Within each compartment of the housing 11 is a magazine 15, shown individually in Figure 3 and supported upon a raised platform 15*a* above the base 10 of the housing 11. As a convenience in filling, each magazine has an open side 16 and is so disposed in a compartment of the housing 11 that the open side will confront a slot 14. At the lower end of the magazine, slots 17 are provided to define an opening above the cracker support 18 at the extreme lower end of the magazine and which opening corresponds to the slot 14 in the housing when the magazine is in place therein. Accordingly, the crackers may be withdrawn from the magazine singly through the slots 14 as explained.

To facilitate removal and replacement of the magazines, rings 19 or other devices by which to gain a purchase on the magazines are provided on the upper ends of each. Thus when depleted of merchandise, the ring is lifted and the magazine withdrawn thereby and filled with crackers preferably by laying the magazine on a table with the open side up. When filled, the magazines are replaced in the housing so as to expose the lowermost cracker in the slot 14.

To exclude moisture from the housing 11, a cover 20 is hinged or otherwise secured to the housing so that it will cover the compartments therein. Also, for similar reasons, flaps or closures 21 are provided for the dispensing slots 14. These closures are hinged at *b* to either side of the housing 11 and are each provided with wings 22, adapted to conceal the sides of the opening 14 while the front thereof is covered by the transverse portion of the closure 21, when the latter is moved to the position shown at the right in Figure 1. In this position, the closure protects the crackers against tendency to attract moisture, which causes them to become soft and unpalatable.

In order that the closures 21 will remain in closed position, securing means in the form of corresponding protuberances 23 and depressions 24 in the wings 22 and walls of the housing 11 respectively are provided. Obviously, other and equally effective means for accomplishing this may be substituted. A lip 25 is provided on the transverse portions of the closures 21 which not only serves to facilitate opening of the closure but likewise lends to the appearance of the dispenser as a whole.

It is apparent from the foregoing that while the housing 11 extends well above the base 10, this presents no problem when employed as a counter dispenser but in cases where groups are served at tables, similar dispensers of less height may be employed, either individually or in pairs suitably joined together as a unit, providing two dispensing sides, one to each patron in the case of a two-place table.

Manifestly, the construction as shown and described is capable of some modification and such modification as may be construed to fall within the scope and meaning of the appended claim is also considered to be within the spirit and intent of the invention.

What is claimed is:

A container for dispensing and preserving the crispness of soda crackers and the like comprising a housing divided into compartments and having transverse slots cut in its sides spaced from the bottom thereof, magazines removably disposed in each compartment of said housing in back to back relationship and in which said crackers are superimposed one upon the other, said magazines each comprising a shell having an open side, the walls of said shell being cut away from said open side adjacent the lower ends thereof to correspond with the slots in said housing walls through which crackers are removed singly from the bottom of the column of crackers in said magazines, loops mounted on the upper ends of said magazines to effect their removal from said housing, closures for each of the slots of said housing, said closures each comprising a plate having ends bent at right angles to overlie the front and end portions of a slot and further having legs pivoted to the sides of said housing whereby said closure will be disposed below and on a plane inclined to said slot when inoperative and means for holding said closure operatively in closed position.

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