United States Patent [19]

Chang

[11] **3,722,779**

[45] **Mar. 27, 1973**

[54] **COMBINATION FOOD CONTAINER AND IMPLEMENT FOR EXTRACTING THE CONTENTS**

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[73] Assignee: **First Dynamics, Inc.**, New York, N.Y.

[22] Filed: **Oct. 14, 1970**

[21] Appl. No.: **80,713**

Related U.S. Application Data

[63] Continuation-in-part of Ser. No. 815,935, April 14, 1969, Pat. No. 3,623,632.

[52] **U.S. Cl.** .....**229/1.5 C**, 206/47, 220/85 D, 220/85 D

[51] **Int. Cl.** **B65d 77/30**

[58] **Field of Search** ...220/23, 85 D, 90.2; 229/1.5 C, 229/7 S, 43; 215/1 S; 206/56 A, 47 R

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Primary Examiner—Leonard Summer

Attorney—Frank Ledermann

[57] **ABSTRACT**

The food container includes a container body having its upper circumferential edge provided with a continuous flange. An implement, for example, a spoon, is removably secured against the underside of the container cover and is preferably positioned along a maximum dimension of the cover. The cover is sealed to the body flange except for a graspable tip or tab which is so positioned that, when it is torn back it tears toward the center of the cover in a direction at right angles to the said maximum dimension and thus maintains the implement parallel with the container bottom and prevents it from being tilted into the container contents.

9 Claims, 7 Drawing Figures

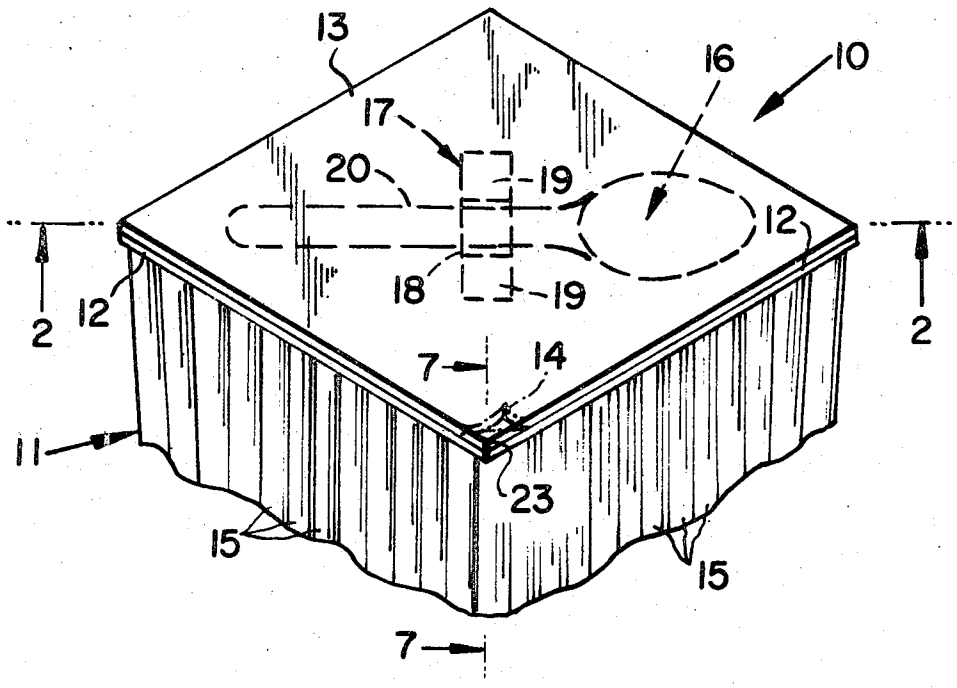


FIG.1

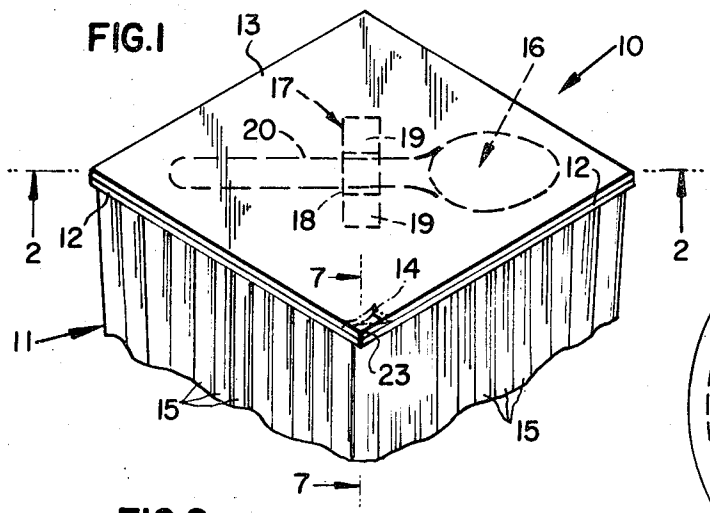


FIG.2

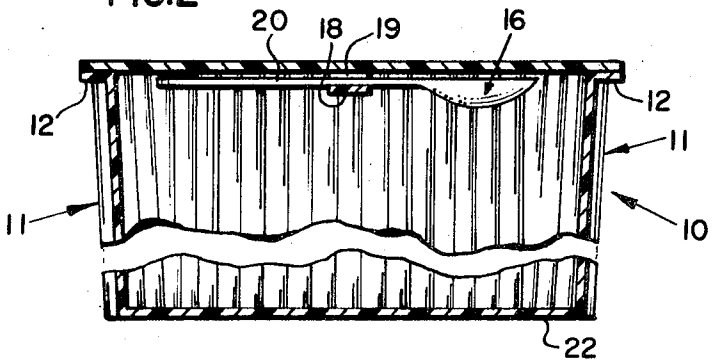


FIG.3

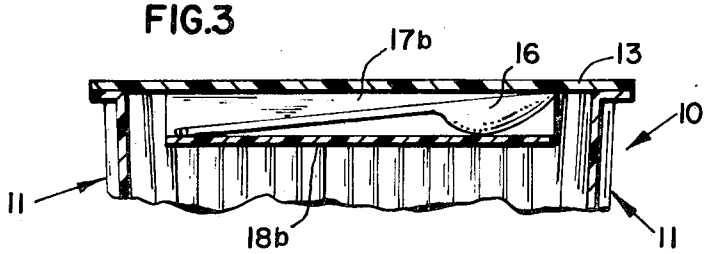


FIG.5

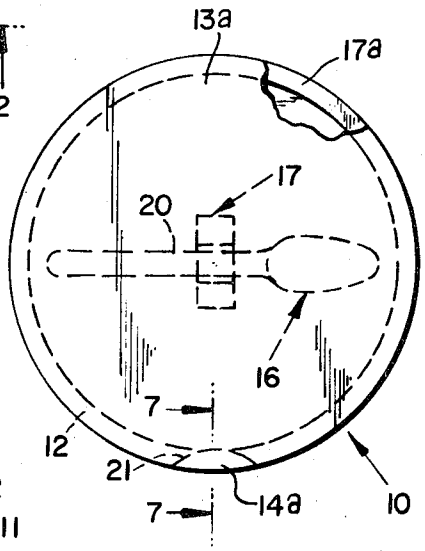


FIG.4

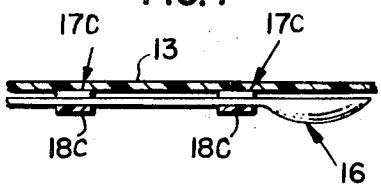


FIG.7

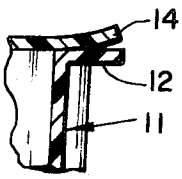
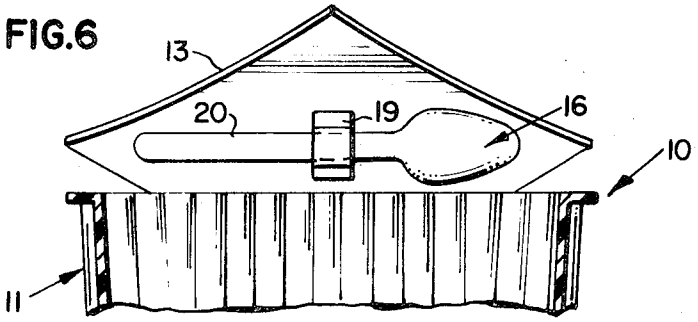


FIG.6



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COMBINATION FOOD CONTAINER AND IMPLEMENT FOR EXTRACTING THE CONTENTS

This application is a continuation in part of my co-pending application Ser. No. 815,935, filed Apr. 14, 1969, now U.S. Pat. No. 3,623,632, issued Nov. 30, 1971, wherein, however, the implement is supported within a groove formed in the cover rather than, as in the instant application where the implement is suspended from the underside of the cover.

In the prior art, wherever an implement for extracting the contents was carried or supported in any way under the container cover, the graspable tip for peeling back a tear strip or the cover itself has been so positioned that the direction in which the peeling was done was not along a line directed at right angles to a vertical plane through the implement. Applicant's own U.S. Pat. No. 3,385,501 serves as an example of such prior art; therein the direction of peeling back the tear strip lies in a common vertical plane with the implement, a straw, so that the exposed straw is tilted into the container contents. Assuming that the implement were a spoon or a fork rather than a straw and that the container held, for example, chocolate pudding or gelatin, the implement would, upon exposure thereof to be removed from the cover, be tilted downward into the food. The present invention overcomes such undesirable feature in that the implement is not tilted to immerse one end of the same into the container contents, what ever the contents and whatever its consistency.

Referring briefly to the drawing,

FIG. 1 is a fragmentary top perspective view of a combination food container and implement embodying features of the invention, showing a container rectangular in horizontal cross-section.

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken on the line 2—2 of FIG. 1 but additionally showing the bottom wall of the container.

FIG. 3 is a view similar to FIG. 2 but omitting the bottom wall and showing a more elongated support for the implement.

FIG. 4 is a fragemantary view similar to FIG. 3 but showing two spaced supports for the implement.

FIG. 5 is a top plan view of a container circular in horizontal cross-section, with a part of the cover broken away, illustrating the invention applied to such container.

FIG. 6 is a fragmentary sectional view also similar to FIG. 2 but showing the cover peeled back a sufficient distance to expose the implement in the horizontal position in which it is readily accessible without having been dipped or tilted into the container contents.

FIG. 7 is an enlarged fragmentary sectional view taken on the line 7—7 of both FIGS. 1 and 5, showin g in exaggerated form that the graspable tip of the cover is un adhered to the body flange.

It is obvious that the invention disclosed herein may be applied to a container having any useful implement or utensil suspended from the underside of the container cover. Such implement may, among others, be a straw, a spoon, a fork, or even a pair of chop-sticks. Whenever the term "cross-section" or any derivative thereof is used below it is to be understood that it signifies horizontal cross-section.

Referring in detail to the drawing, the numeral 10 designates a container body rectanguiar in cross-section, whose sides may be mutually parallel and upright

or, as shown, may taper in a downward direction, or even, not shown, in an upward direction.

The sidewalls 11 together constitute an endless surrounding wall and are shown flared outward in a plane parallel with the bottom wall 22, to provide an endless circumferential flange 12. However, the flange 12 need not necessarily extend outward from the surrounding wall, nor necessarily lie in such parallel plane. The cover 13 is preferably dimensioned complementarily to the flange 12 so that its circumferential edge coincides with the outer circumferential edge of the flange.

The cover 13 is adhered to the flange to seal the container, but at the corner thereof, as shown in FIG. 7, a graspable tip portion, or tab, 14 is left unadhered. This free tab extends inward toward the inner circumferential edge of the flange a distance less than the width of the flange so that it does not interfere with the sealing of the container by the cover. In all such containers the cover 13 and the bottom wall 22 lie in mutually parallel planes.

The side walls 11 are shown provided with flutes 15 which strengthen the walls and permit a substantially large number of filled containers to be stacked one upon the other, and also resist their deformation, whether filled or empty, when subjected to downward pressure.

An implement, an example of which is shown as a spoon 16, is suspended from the underside of the cover by a strip 17 forming a loop 18 and having its ends 19 beyond the loop adhered to the cover. The handle 20 of the spoon registers in the loop 18 and is thus supported close to and substantially parallel with the cover, whence the loop 18 embraces the implement. FIGS. 1–3 show the spoon lying in a vertical plane through opposite corners of the cover, that is, along a diagonal or maximum dimension of the cover.

FIG. 1 shows in phantom the tab 14 after it has torn away a short distance from the flange 12, or peeled back therefrom, and owing to its position with its midpoint or apex lying at the end of a straight line, not shown, extending toward the center of the cover, the latter will be peeled back along the said straight line in a direction at right angles to the vertical planes in which the implement lies. Thus, as shown in FIG. 6, the implement will be exposed in a substantially horizontal position or, more specifically, in a position substantially parallel with the bottom wall 22. Hence the implement will not be tilted into or against the container contents.

FIG. 5 illustrates how the invention may be applied to containers which are not rectangular in cross-section, and more specifically one that is of circular cross-section. Elements shown therein , which are identical to elements previously described bear the same reference numeral, while equivalent elements bear the same numeral followed by the suffix *a*. Herein the area of the cover shown enclosed by the broken line 21 and the portion of the circumferential edge of the cover between the ends of the broken line, represents the unadhered portion of the cover, that is, the tab 14*a*. Here also to expose the implement the cover is peeled back along a line at right angles to the implement.

FIG. 3 shows a strip 17*b* providing a loop 18*b* which is identical to the strip 17 except that it has a greater width and thus provides a greater length to the loop 18*b* for supporting the implement.

FIG. 4 shows two spaced strips 17*c*, each equivalent to the strip 17, supporting in their loops 18*c* the implement 16.

The container body 10 and the cover 13 are preferably made of a suitable plastic material, with the cover preferably heat-sealed to the flange 12. The strip 17 is, as are also the equivalent strips 17*b* and 17*c*, preferably made of a thinner or weaker plastic material having its end portions 19 preferably heat-sealed to the cover. Or the various elements including the container body and cover may be made of any other suitable materials or material. The implement may either be slipped out of its supporting loop or loops in an obvious manner, or the loops may be broken to release the implement. When the cover is peeled back to to expose the implement, an access opening into the container is of course provided for insertion of the implement.

In all cases the unadhered graspable tip or tab is so positioned that the natural and normal tendency of the user is to peel back the cover in a direction at right angles to the implement, whence the implement is exposed in the horizontal position illustrated in FIG. 6.

What is claimed is as follows:

1. A combination food container and implement for extracting the contents thereof, comprising a container body which includes a bottom wall and an endless surrounding wall, the upper circumferential edge of said surrounding wall having a flange thereon throughout the length thereof, a cover formed of flexible material dimensioned to complement said flange, an elongated implement for extracting the contents of the container supported parallel with and close to the underside of said cover, supporting means secured to said underside of the cover and embracing said implement for supporting said implement as aforesaid, said cover being adhered to said flange except for an unadhered tip which extends from the outer circumferential edge of the cover part way inward over said flange, said unadhered tip being positioned at the end of an imaginary line which extends from said tip toward and at right angles to a vertical plane through said implement with the longitudinal axis of said implement lying in said plane.

2. A combination according to claim 1, said supporting means comprising at least one strip having a loop formed between the ends thereof, said ends of said strip being adhered to said cover, said implement registering in said loop.

3. A combination according to claim 1, said surrounding wall having flutes therein.

4. A combination according to claim 1, said container body being rectangular in cross-section, said unadhered tip being positioned at a corner of said cover.

5. A combination according to claim 4, said vertical plane lying along a diagonal of said cover.

6. A combination according to claim 1, said container body being non-rectangular in cross-section.

7. A combination according to claim 1, said container body being circular in cross-section.

8. A combination according to claim 7, said vertical plane extending along a diameter of said cover.

9. A combination according to claim 1, said flange extending outward from said surrounding wall and lying in a plane parallel with the plane of said bottom wall.

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