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PACKAGING FILLED WITH POWDER AND METHOD OF PROVIDING IT
PACKUNG GEFÜLLT MIT PULVER UND VERFAHREN ZU DEREN BEREITSTELLUNG
EMBALLAGE REMPLI DE Poudre ET SON PROCÉDÉ DE PRODUCTION

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a packaging filled with powder, and a method of providing a packaging filled with powder.

[0002] Stringent requirements with regard to hygiene and dosage are imposed on packaging for baby food. Therefore, such a powder is currently stored in cylindrical metal cans that are sealed by a metal lid or plastic lid that has to be opened before use and that is reclosable in a simple manner. Scoops that are so designed that an accurate volume of pulverulent material is delimited therein are used for dosage. By levelling off, a predetermined amount can be accommodated in the volume of the scoop cavity. It is important that this amount is accurately specified in order, on the one hand, to guarantee that the baby receives sufficient food and, on the other hand, as far as possible to prevent problems with constipation in the children. It must be understood that pulverulent material must be understood to be any granular material, in particular spray-dried food products, as well as agglomerates of the powder particles.

[0003] In such a packaging, such a scoop is generally loose between the top of the contents and the bottom of the lid on the product.

[0004] After the scoop has been used, some users replace the scoop in or on the product. Other users consider it to be unhygienic to put the scoop back into the contents of the container after use. Therefore, the scoop is frequently stored outside the container, which in practice further increases the risk of contamination. On the other hand, the size and the height of such containers are so designed that as compact as possible a volume is obtained in order to obtain optimum filling of the shelf at the point of sale.

[0005] US 6 604 645 B 1 discloses a container having a lid to which a scoop is moulded and connected thereto by a film hinge. The top of the container is provided with a seal enclosed by the assembly of the lid and scoop. At first use the scoop is separated from the lid. Sealing of the container at the location where the lid should connect to the wall of the container is very complicated. Stack ability of the lid prior to assembly with the container is limited due to the shape thereof.

[0006] FR 2 747 107 discloses a container which is sealed off and having on top thereof a ring comprising a scoop as well as a lid. After removal of the scoop from the ring and tearing off the seal, the ring can be positioned on the container after which the lid can become effective.

[0007] In both US 6 604 645 and FR 2 747 107 the user has to break away the scoop from a further plastic part involving the risk of particles getting into the food material which might be highly dangerous.

[0008] EP 0 611 703 A discloses a container filled with powder and a method of providing it, wherein a sealing foil is welded to the inside well of the container at a distance from a top edge of the container.

[0009] The invention aims to provide a container, lid, scoop assembly wherein the scoop is not permanently connected with the lid so that breakage is not longer necessary. Furthermore, the lid to be used with the container should be easily stackable with other lids during production thereof. The contents of the container should be guaranteed by the provision of a seal on top of the contents. The use of scoops having a different volume should be possible without substantive changes to the lid.

[0010] According to the invention this is realized with the method of claim 1.

[0011] Stacking of the lids is provided by keeping the height of the lid relatively low. On the other hand there is an indication on the lid that a scoop is provided inside the container. Such an indication is an elevation of the lid having (part of) the shape of the scoop. The scoop is not connected to any of the lid and container, after filling the container with the intended contents. This means that breaking away of the scoop from another part of the package is not necessary after it has been filled.

[0012] According to the invention part of the volume of the scoop is accommodated by the top part of the container. To that end the seal is provided somewhat below the top edge of the container. This distance between the seal and the top edge of the container is preferably between 20 and 50 mm, and more in particular about 30 mm.

[0013] According to the present invention the user is encouraged to place the scoop in a accommodation made in the lid after using the scoop for the first time. This accommodation is partially delimited by the elevation described above. In particular, the open end of the bowl-shaped part of the scoop can be accommodated in this elevation. As a result the volume of the container does not increase to a significant extent, but, on the other hand, it can be ensured that the scoop can be stored in the container under the most hygienic conditions out of contact with the filling in the container.

[0014] More particularly, the elevation described above has a height of 2 - 25, in particular 4 - 15 mm, measured between the maximum of the height and the base of the elevation.

[0015] The lid according to the present invention preferably consists of a plastic material, that is hingedly connected to a lid rim, which likewise consists of plastic and is clamped on the container wall or fixed thereto in some other way. Preferably, the lid rim is provided with a levelling off edge, that is to say an angled portion or strip to avoid accumulation of powder in the corner under which the top edge of the scoop can be scraped in a simple way in order to provide accurate reproducible and convenient dosage of the volume of product in the scoop.

[0016] In the case of conventional packaging it has proved to be a problem to remove the entire contents from the packaging. The reason for this is that manipulation within the relatively restricted space of the packaging is difficult. Moreover, it is not hygienic always to replace the scoop in the contents of the packaging after use, as is now customary.

[0017] In the case of known packaging, on hygienic
The problem is the potentially long storage time, which can be achieved without any problem with the seal according to the invention. The packaging is made essentially gastight from the space in which the powder is present. Such a separation is possible by making the interior of the container wall of a heat-sealable material and, after introducing the powder, to produce a film cover on the powder with the heat-sealable material by heat sealing. A film providing a gastight seal is thus produced above the powder. The scoop can be placed on this film in some way or other.

According to the present invention the space in which the scoop is accommodated is separated in an essentially gastight manner from the space in which the powder is present. Such a separation is possible by making the interior of the container wall of a heat-sealable material and, after introducing the powder, to produce a film cover on the powder with the heat-sealable material by heat sealing. A film providing a gastight seal is thus produced above the powder. The scoop can be placed on this film in some way or other.

According to a further advantageous embodiment of the invention, the packaging is made essentially rectangular. A rectangular construction has significant advantages with regard to packing and positioning on the shelf. Optimum use of volume can be achieved, also being possible, when positioning on the shelf, easily to place the desired side facing the consumer in order to increase the power for stimulating an impulse to buy.

A further advantage of an essentially rectangular packaging is that manipulation with the scoop is appreciably simplified. After all, for a given surface area, compared with a circle, the length of the diagonal of a rectangle is appreciably greater than the diameter of a circle. Preferably, the corners of the rectangle are rounded. There is preferably a levelling-off edge in the corner. This edge is preferably more than 9 mm wide measured from the corner and can comprise a triangle or a strip spaced from the corner. If a strip is used powder cannot accumulate in the adjacent corner. Such strip can have a width of 7-11 mm. The space from the nearest edge thereof to the corner is more than 4 mm and preferably about 5-9 mm.

According to claim 1, wherein the container wall contains a heat-sealable material known in the state of the art.

Heat-sealable material. The plastic used can be any material and, after introducing the powder, to produce a film cover on the powder with the heat-sealable material by heat sealing. A film providing a gastight seal is thus produced above the powder. The scoop can be placed on this film in some way or other.

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the wall during heat sealing are not able to escape and remain enclosed.

[0029] After removing the film along the tear line, an edge of the film remains on the side walls. This edge will preferably be less than 5 mm, more preferably less than 4 mm, in order to allow the opening to the product to be as large as possible. The film consists of a material on which the user cannot injure him- or herself.

[0030] The container is preferably provided with means promoting gripping, such as finger recesses. As a result of the rectangular design of the container, one side of the packaging is optimum for each size of hand. One of the sides may have a maximum width of at most approximately 12.0 cm and is preferably 6 to 11.6 cm in order to make good grasping by the consumer possible. The other side may have size of 11.6-15.0 cm and more preferably 12.4-13.5 cm. The maximum height of the packaging including the lid is 22 cm and preferably approximately 10 - 20 cm and more preferably 15-20 cm.

[0031] The invention also relates to a method of providing a pack filled with powder according to claim 9.

[0032] More particularly, the containers are produced from blanks at the packing location, so that only small volumes of packaging material have to be fed to the packaging installation. More particularly, the container is first produced and this is then filled and provided with the seal described above and only then is the lid, including lid rim, fitted. The introduction of gas before/during application of the seal can be carried out either on a continuous basis or batchwise.

[0033] It has been indicated above that the container is preferably of rectangular cross-section. More particularly, this rectangular shape bulges outwards to some extent in the middle of at least two opposing sides. Such bulging can be limited and is preferably less than approximately 7 mm and more preferably less than 2 mm on the short side and less than approximately 16 mm on the long side. However, acute angles should preferably be avoided. That is to say, with respect to the straight line connecting the points of greatest deflection/inflection, the outward deviation is less than approximately 7 mm and approximately 16 mm, respectively, and preferably 3 - 6 and 7 - 15 mm, respectively. Moreover, the container can be provided with finger holds to facilitate handling.

[0034] As a result of the specific choice of the above-mentioned dimensions, the base surface area of the container is 120 - 150 cm², in particular 125 - 140 cm², for example 126 - 136 cm².

[0035] The packaging is in particular provided with a closure indicating tamper (tamper evidence). This is implemented in that the lid rim is provided with a peripheral part that extends upwards and that extends to the top of the lid periphery or beyond this. As a result it is not easily possible to raise the lid located within it. The circumferential rim of the lid is not accessible in the closed position. The peripheral edge accommodating the circumferential rim can be interrupted to obtain access to for example a lip extending from the lid. Such means for interrupting the peripheral edge can comprise a break away portion thereof. This is effected, for example, by fixing the break away part at two points on each side of edge. By breaking away the part the lip of the lid is exposed and the lid can be opened. When the part is broken away the above-mentioned joins to the lid rim (peripheral edge) are destroyed, so that it is clear that tampering has taken place through the interruption of the circumference line. Thereafter the lid can always easily be opened after closing.

[0036] The invention will be explained in more detail below with reference to an illustrative embodiment shown in the drawing. In the drawing:

Fig. 1 shows, diagrammatically, a perspective and partially exposed view of the container according to the invention;
Fig. 1a is a detail of fig. 1 with the lid in closed condition;
Fig. 2 shows a plan view of the seal according to the invention;
Fig. 3 shows the section along the line III-III in Fig. 1;
Fig. 4 shows the section along the line IV-IV of the lid and the container in closed position;
Fig. 5 shows in perspective view a further embodiment of the lid according to the invention;
Fig. 6 shows in top view the lid of Fig. 5; and
Fig. 7 shows, diagrammatically, an installation for the production of packs according to the invention.

[0037] In Fig. 1 a packaging according to the invention is indicated by 1. This consists of a container 2 with base 17. The base 17 is positioned inside the container so that it is somewhat raised, so that an upright rim 29 is produced. This upright rim facilitates stacking of further containers.

[0038] 3 indicates a lid with lip 18 that is joined via a hinge 5 to a lid rim 4. Lid and lid rim consist of a plastic material and are produced by injection moulding. As can be seen from Fig. 4, in the closed position the top of lid 3 close to the periphery thereof is somewhat below the top of the raised peripheral edge 23 of the lid rim. The lid 3 is provided with a depending edge 26 fitting relatively closely inside the circumferential edge 27 on the lid rim 4. The circumferential upper part of lid 3 is referred to by 28 and fits closely adjacent to peripheral edge 23. As a result it is not possible to grasp the lid except at the location of the cut-out 24 in the peripheral edge 23. In the closed position the depending part of lip 18 extends in front of cut-out 24. Access to lip 18 is prevented by part 25 being in front of lip 18. This is shown in more detail in fig. 1a. It is clear that lip 18 has a barbed protrusion engaging below a projection of part 25 and preventing lifting of lip 18 as long as part 25 is present. On delivery, the cut-out 24 is closed off by part 25, which is joined to the peripheral edge 23 on either side by two points 48 in each case. Connection of part 25 to the circumferential edge 23 can be realised in any other way such as by local decrease in thickness. Part 25 can be broken away easily
and after breaking away the lid can be opened by lifting lip 18. In this way it is clear to the user that he or she is the first person to open the pack.

[0039] If part 25 has been tampered with this will be immediately evident because it is at the outer circumference of the container. It must be understood that the evidence of first opener described above (tamper-proof evidence) can also be used in combination with packagings other than are described here and rights are explicitly requested for this. The lid rim is clamped or bonded to the container wall, or fixed in some other way known in the state of the art. The outer periphery of the lid/lid rim is such that this falls within the periphery of upright lower rim 29. The container is of essentially rectangular construction, but it can clearly be seen from the drawing that there is slight bulging in the middle of the flat walls. This is indicated diagrammatically by b for the front face. Such bulging can be limited and is preferably less than approximately 7 mm on the short side and less than approximately 16 mm on the long side. That is to say, with respect to the straight line that joins the points of greatest deflection/inflection, the outward deviation is less than approximately 7 mm and approximately 16 mm, respectively, and preferably 3 - 6 and 7 - 15 mm, respectively. Furthermore, the container can be provided with finger holds to facilitate handling thereof.

[0040] As can be seen from Fig. 1, the lid rim 4 is provided with a levelling-off strip 6. When the pack is held at an angle, the overfilled scoop can then be moved under edge 6 and an accurate volume is thus determined. Moreover, as a result of the construction of the edge, no compression of the powder or product takes place, so that there is always a reproducible amount of material in the scoop.

[0041] Product 11, which according to the invention is pulvulent baby food, is contained in the container 2. A seal 13, consisting of a film material that has been applied to the inside of the wall of the container 2 by heat sealing, has been arranged immediately above this product. This film material is provided with a weakening line 14 and a pull lip 15. When pull lip 15 is grasped, film 13 will tear along weakening line 14 and access to the product thus becomes possible.

[0042] Lid 3 is provided with a convex portion 9 that falls within the elevation produced by the upright rim 28 of a further pack optionally stacked on top of the pack shown here. Moreover, there is a further elevation 10 in which part of scoop 8 is accommodated. This part is preferably the bowl of the scoop. Optionally there can be yet a further elevation for the (end of) the handle.

[0043] The size of the scoop is dependent on the desired dosage. The elevation 10 can extend above the elevation 9, as can be seen from the cross-section according to Fig. 3. The maximum of the elevation 10 with respect to the base is indicated by “a” and is between 4 and 12 mm. Because the container is provided with a peripheral rim 28 at the bottom, these elevations fall within the space delimited by said rim 18 and base 17. For accurate centring, rim 18 is flanged inwards to some extent from the base 17, so that a clearly fixed position is obtained when stacking. The height of the base with respect to the positioning surface of the container is matched to the height of the elevation with respect to the position where the side walls of the container bear on the underlying pack. This is shown by “b” in Figure 4. The handle of scoop 8 can be clamped with a snap fit between lips 7 that are integral with the lid and are preferably located close to or in the middle of the lid. The container wall is provided with recesses 16 that correspond to the shape of the user’s fingers. Clamping the scoop to the lid avoids the scoop being dropped back into the powder after first use. If the scoop is clicked into the lid, bacterial contamination can be prevented as far as possible.

[0044] Preferably, the height of the lid is such that also after first use, when the seal is removed and scoop 8 is clamped between lips 7, the scoop extends partially in the space below the lid and defined by the top of the container 2.

[0045] The edge 23 is made upright in order to make it possible that powder that is split during movement of the filled scoop falls back into the container.

[0046] It can be seen from Fig. 3 that the wall of the container is made up of a laminate. From outside to inside this consists of a layer of board/paper 20, a relatively thin aluminium foil 21 and, arranged inside this, a layer of a plastic material 22 that can be joined to seal 13 by heat sealing. As a result of the use of the seal, the risk that foreign bodies could reach the product is limited. After all, after the seal has been applied such undesired bodies, such as plastic parts of the scoop, will remain on top of the seal and not be able to reach the powder.

[0047] A few typical dimensions of the packaging will be given below. However, it must be understood that these must be interpreted as non-limiting if baby food is packed.

[0048] The distance between the bottom of the lid and the top of the seal is preferably between 14 and 27 mm. More particularly this distance is between 7 and 23 mm. Such a gap is precisely enough to accommodate a scoop. However, this height will vary depending on the desired volume of the scoop.

[0049] The gap below the seal and above the powder is preferably less than 10 mm and more particularly less
As can be seen from the drawing, the container is of rectangular construction, as a result of which this can be emptied to the optimum with the aid of scoop 8.

In order to optimise emptying, the length of the scoop is preferably 60 - 95 % of the diagonal of the container and more particularly 70 - 90 % thereof.

As a result of the use of rectangular containers, optimum use can be made of the available volume either in the packaging or on the shelf of the retail organisation.

In Fig. 5 a further embodiment of the lid is shown. This is generally referred to by 53 and basically correspond with lid 3 according to the previous figures. The elevation for the scoop is referred to by 60, 61. Elevation 60 is adapted to receive part of the bowl 52 of scoop 58 whilst elevation 61 is provided to receive stem 54 thereof. In between both elevation 60, 61 reinforcement ribs of the lid extend. Clamping means 57 are shown in dotted lines. This embodiment arrangement is such that in clamped position the open side of bowl 52 is directed to accommodation 60. This means that it is possible to receive bowls having different "height" between clamping lips 57. This allows for the use of several sized bowls of scoop 58 without adaptation to the design of the lid. Also, in this embodiment only part of the scoop is accommodated by the lid whilst the remaining part is accommodated by the space above the seal in the container.

An installation for the production of a pack is shown in Fig. 6. This consists of a feed station 31, into which blanks 32 are introduced. With the aid of a folding/sealing station 33 the containers 34 according to the present invention are produced therefrom. These containers consist of a wall and a base without lid. The product is then introduced at 35. At 30 the sealing film is applied by heat sealing while introducing an inert gas into the space in which the product is stored. In this way a volume that remains gastight is obtained in which the product can be stored for a very long period without damage. The introduction of gas can be carried out either batchwise or continuously in station 30. Checks on the packaging and the contents are carried out at 39. The lid, together with the lid rim, is then pressed onto the container wall and fixed thereto at 37. Collection and packing takes place at 38.

Although the invention has been described above with reference to a preferred embodiment, it must be understood that numerous modifications can be made thereto without going beyond the scope of the present application as defined in the appended claims.

Claims

1. A packaging (1) filled with powder, the packaging comprising:

   a container (2) provided with a base (17), the inside wall of the container (2) consisting of a heat-sealable material;
   a heat-sealable film (13) above the powder and joined by heat-sealing to said inside wall of the container;

   characterised by
   a lid rim (4) fixed to a top edge of the container at a distance from the heat-sealable film; and
   a lid (3) hingedly connected to the lid rim, a scoop (8) for dosing said powder, the scoop being accommodated within a top part of the container and placed on the heat-sealable film; wherein the powder is a pulverulent baby food and an inert gas is sealed within the container beneath the heat-sealable film.

2. The packaging according to claim 1, wherein the distance between the heat-sealable film and the top edge of the container is between 20 and 50 mm.

3. The packaging according to claim 1 or claim 2, wherein a gap below the heat-sealable film and above the powder is less than 10 mm and more particularly less than 5 mm.

4. The packaging according to any preceding claim, further comprising a tamper indicating closure for the lid.

5. The packaging according to any preceding claim, wherein the inert gas is nitrogen.

6. The packaging according to any preceding claim, wherein the inert gas is carbon dioxide.

7. The packaging according to any preceding claim, wherein the wall of the container is made from a paper/metal foil/plastic laminate.

8. The packaging according to any preceding claim, wherein the lid comprises an elevation adapted to receive part of the scoop and the size of the scoop is such that only part of the scoop is accommodated within the lid.

9. A method of providing a packaging according to any of claims 1 to 8, comprising falling powder into the container, placing the heat-sealable film above the powder and joining the film to the inside wall of the container, provision being made for the fitting of the lid.

Patentansprüche

1. Mit Pulver gefüllte Verpackung (1), wobei die Verpackung umfasst:
einen Behälter (2), der mit einem Boden (17) versehen ist, wobei die Innenwand des Behälters (2) aus einem heißsiegelfähigen Material besteht; eine heißsiegelfähige Folie (13) oberhalb des Pulvers, und die durch Heißsiegeln mit der Innenwand des Behälters verbunden ist; gekennzeichnet durch einen Deckelrand (4), der an einer oberen Kante des Behälters in einem Abstand von der heißsiegelfähigen Folie fixiert ist; und einen Deckel (3), der klappbar mit dem Deckelrand verbunden ist, einen Löffel (8) zum Dosieren des Pulvers, wobei der Löffel innerhalb eines oberen Teils des Behälters untergebracht und auf der heißsiegelfähigen Folie angeordnet ist; wobei das Pulver eine pulverförmige Babynahrung ist und ein Inertgas innerhalb des Behälters unterhalb der heißsiegelfähigen Folie eingeschlossen ist.

2. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1, wobei der Abstand zwischen der heißsiegelfähigen Folie und dem oberen Rand des Behälters zwischen 20 und 50 mm beträgt.

3. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1 oder 2, wobei ein Abstand unterhalb der heißsiegelfähigen Folie und oberhalb des Pulvers weniger als 10 mm und insbesondere weniger als 5 mm beträgt.


5. Verpackung nach irgendeinem vorangehenden Anspruch, wobei das Inertgas Stickstoff ist.

6. Verpackung nach irgendeinem vorangehenden Anspruch, wobei das Inertgas Kohlendioxid ist.

7. Verpackung nach irgendeinem vorangehenden Anspruch, wobei die Wand des Behälters aus einem Papier/Metallfolie/Kunststoff-Laminat hergestellt ist.


Revendications

1. Emballage (1) rempli d’une poudre, l’emballage comprenant :
   un réservoir (22) muni d’une base (17), la paroi intérieure du réservoir (2) étant constituée d’un matériau thermoscellable ;
   un film thermoscellable (13) situé au-dessus de la poudre et relié par thermoscellage à ladite paroi intérieure du réservoir ; caractérisé par un rebord de couvercle (4) fixé sur un bord supérieur du réservoir à distance du film thermoscellable ; et
   un couvercle (3) relié de manière articulée au rebord de couvercle,
   une cuillère (8) pour doser la poudre, la cuillère étant reçue dans une partie supérieure du réservoir et placée sur le film thermoscellable ;
   dans lequel la poudre est un aliment pour bébé pulvérisant et un gaz inerte est scellé dans le réservoir en dessous du film thermoscellable.

2. Emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel la distance entre le film thermoscellable et le bord supérieur du réservoir est située entre 20 et 50 mm.

3. Emballage selon la revendication 1 ou la revendication 2, dans lequel un espace situé en dessous du film thermoscellable et au-dessus de la poudre est inférieur à 10 mm et plus particulièrement inférieur à 5 mm.

4. Emballage selon l’une quelconque des revendications précédentes, comprenant de plus un repère indiquant la fermeture du couvercle.

5. Emballage selon l’une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le gaz inerte est de l’azote.

6. Emballage selon l’une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le gaz inerte est du dioxyde de carbone.

7. Emballage selon l’une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel la paroi du réservoir est constituée d’un stratifié de papier feuille métallique matérique plastique.

8. Emballage selon l’une quelconque des revendications précédentes, dans lequel le couvercle com-
prend une surélévation adaptée pour recevoir une partie de la cuillère et la dimension de la cuillère est telle que seule une partie de la cuillère est reçue dans le couvercle.

9. Méthode de fourniture d'un emballage selon l'une quelconque des revendications 1 à 8, consistant à remplir une poudre dans le réservoir, placer le film thermoscellable au-dessus de la poudre et relier le film à la paroi intérieure du réservoir, l'agencement du couvercle étant assuré.
REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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