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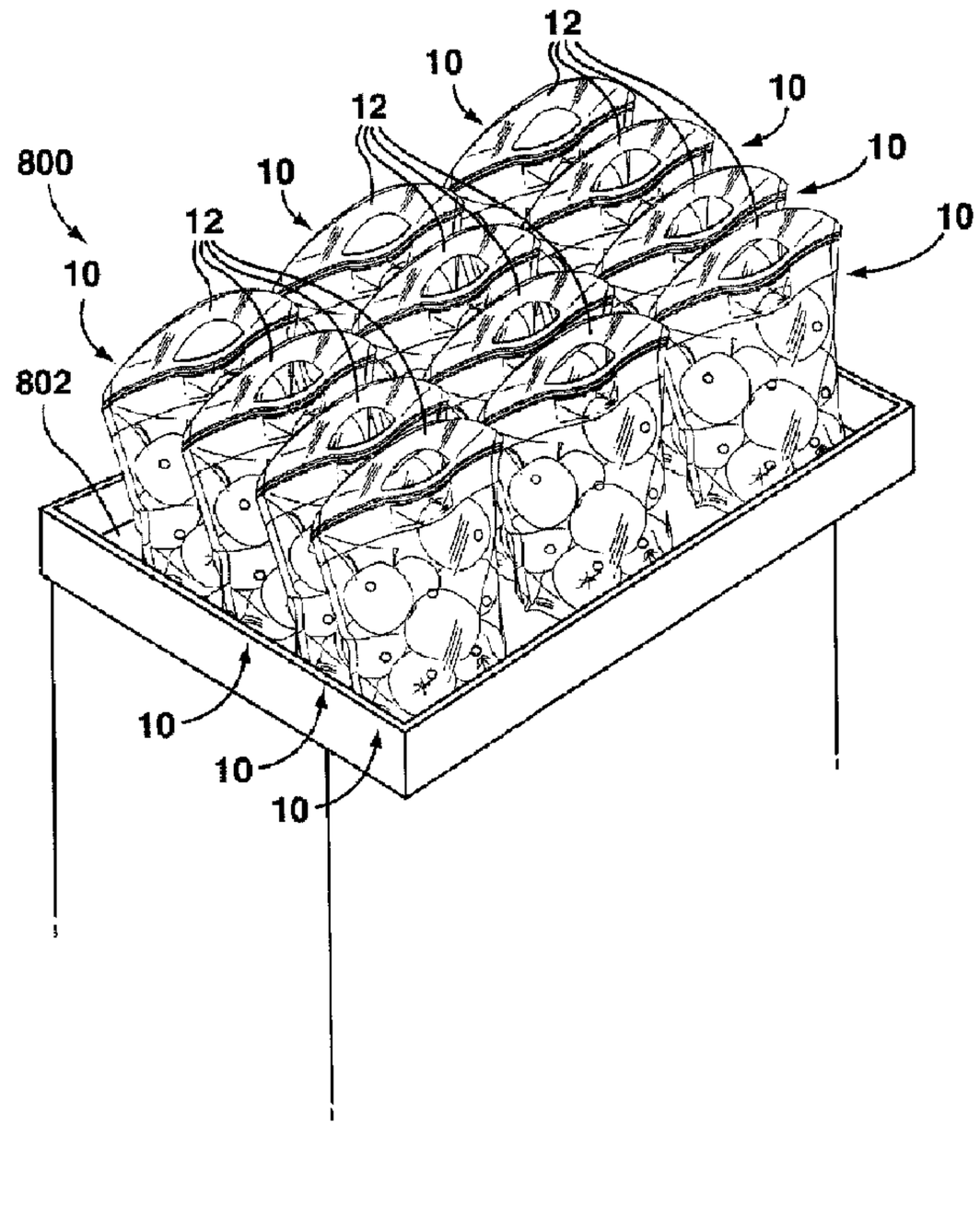
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(54) Titre : EMBALLAGE POUR FRUITS ET LEGUMES FRAIS ET PROCEDE EN VUE DE LEUR PRESENTATION A LA VENTE

(54) Title: PRODUCE PACKAGE AND METHOD FOR DISPLAYING PRODUCE FOR SALE



(57) Abrégé/Abstract:
A produce package comprises a bag and a quantity of fresh, unfrozen produce. The bag comprises a handle for carrying the bag, a base opposite the handle for supporting the bag on a surface when the bag is full, and at least one sidewall distinct from the base and extending between the base and the handle. The base and the at least one sidewall cooperate to form an interior volume of the bag and the produce is disposed within the interior volume of the bag. At least a portion of the bag is transparent for viewing the produce. Such produce packages may form part of a produce display comprising a plurality of the produce packages arranged in a single layer on a display surface with each produce package in an upright position in which the handle of the bag is at an upper end of the produce package.

ABSTRACT

A produce package comprises a bag and a quantity of fresh, unfrozen produce. The bag comprises a handle for carrying the bag, a base opposite the handle for supporting the bag on a surface when the bag is full, and at least one sidewall distinct from the base and extending between the base and the handle. The base and the at least one sidewall cooperate to form an interior volume of the bag and the produce is disposed within the interior volume of the bag. At least a portion of the bag is transparent for viewing the produce. Such produce packages may form part of a produce display comprising a plurality of the produce packages arranged in a single layer on a display surface with each produce package in an upright position in which the handle of the bag is at an upper end of the produce package.

PRODUCE PACKAGE AND METHOD FOR DISPLAYING PRODUCE FOR SALE

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present disclosure relates to produce packaging and display.

BACKGROUND

[0002] A wide variety of containers for packaging food are known in the art. These include boxes of various types, bags of various kinds, such as the bag for pulverulent comestibles taught by U.S. Patent No. 3,438,567 to Bell Jr., as well as various types of rigid or semi-rigid plastic containers.

[0003] Bags are commonly used to package frozen produce like fruit and vegetables, since the frozen state of the produce makes it less susceptible to damage. However, the packaging of fresh, unfrozen produce such as fruit and vegetables for display and sale presents particular challenges. Produce packages are often stacked on top of one another, which can lead to damage such as bruising. Also, consumers typically like to examine fresh produce fairly carefully for bruises and the like, yet such handling can itself lead to bruising and other damage as the produce packages are moved around by consumers. One solution has been to provide flat-topped, transparent stackable plastic punnets, such as those taught by U.S. Patents No. D632,561, D630,507 and D619,889 owned by Vortex Packaging Niagara Inc. These punnets allow fairly large volumes of produce to be displayed by stacking the punnets atop one another, and enable consumers to examine the produce through the transparent containers while providing some protection against damage. While the punnets provide an effective

solution to the above-noted problems associated with the display and sale of fresh, unfrozen produce, they are generally more expensive than bags for a given volume of produce.

SUMMARY

[0004] Fresh, unfrozen produce such as fruit is packaged in bags having a base enabling the bag to stand upright on a display surface when full and a handle enabling a customer to easily grasp the bag and lift it away from the display. The produce packages, comprising the bags and the produce therein, are arranged in a single layer on the display surface to prevent damage, with the handle at the upper end.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0005] These and other features will become more apparent from the following description in which reference is made to the appended drawings wherein:

FIGURE 1A is a top perspective view of an exemplary produce package in a closed configuration;

FIGURE 1B is a top perspective view of the produce package of Figure 1A in an open configuration;

FIGURE 2 is a bottom perspective view of the produce package of Figure 1A;

FIGURE 3 is a front view of the produce package of Figure 1A;

FIGURE 4 is a side view of the produce package of Figure 1A;

FIGURE 5 is a top view of the produce package of Figure 1A;

FIGURE 6 is a bottom view of the produce package of Figure 1A;

FIGURE 7 is a top perspective view showing the produce package of Figure 1A being carried by its handle;

FIGURE 8 is a perspective view of a produce display in which a display surface thereof is generally horizontal;

FIGURE 9 is a perspective view of a produce display in which a display surface thereof is substantially inclined;

FIGURE 10A is a plan view of a blank for making a bag for the produce package of Figure 1A with the blank in an unfolded configuration;

FIGURE 10B is a plan view of the blank of Figure 10A in a folded configuration;

FIGURE 11A is a side view of the blank of Figure 10A in an unfolded configuration;

FIGURE 11B is a side view of the blank of Figure 10A in a folded, unsealed configuration; and

FIGURE 11C is a side view of the blank of Figure 10A in a folded and sealed configuration.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0006] Reference is now made to Figures 1A to 6, in which an exemplary produce package is indicated generally at 10. The produce package 10 comprises a bag 22 and a quantity of fresh, unfrozen produce 20. The bag 22 comprises a handle 12, a base 14 opposite the handle 12, and opposed sidewalls 16 extending between the base 14 and the handle 12. The base 14 is formed by a gusset and supports the bag 22 on a surface when the bag 22 is full, and the base 14 and the sidewalls 16 cooperate to form the interior volume 18 of the bag 22. As can be seen in Figures 1 to 6, a quantity of fresh, unfrozen produce is disposed within the interior volume 18 of the bag 22 to form the complete produce package 10. In the illustrated

embodiment, the produce is Royal Gala apples 20 although the produce package 10 may include other types of apples, other types of fruit or indeed any suitable type of produce. As can be seen in Figures 1 to 16, a portion of the bag 22, including the base 14 and most of the sidewalls 16, is transparent to enable consumers to view the produce 20 in the interior volume 18 of the bag 22.

[0007] As best seen in Figure 1B, the bag 22 further comprises an aperture 24 adjacent the handle 12. The aperture 24 opens into the interior volume 18 of the bag 22, and in the illustrated embodiment a resealable zip fastener 26 comprising two oppozed zip seal halves 126 extends across the aperture 24 for opening and closing the bag 22. In other embodiments, the zip fastener 26 may be omitted, and the bag 22 may be left in the open condition or may be provided with a non-recloseable seal across the aperture, such as a heat seal or an adhesive seal, or a resealable adhesive seal. Vents 28 are formed in the sidewalls 16 to allow the produce 20 to breathe.

[0008] One exemplary method for making the bag 22 will now be described, with reference to Figures 10A to 11C. The bag 22 is preferably formed from a single sheet of suitable food-safe plastic film, such as polypropylene. Also preferably, the plastic film is transparent so that at least a portion of the produce package 10 is transparent for viewing produce contained therein. For example, trade-marks and other indicia, such as the type and quantity of produce forming part of the produce package 10, or other decorative matter may be applied to the plastic film using food-safe paint or dye while leaving the remainder of the plastic film transparent.

[0009] Figures 10A and 11A show an exemplary blank 100 which may be used to make the bag 22; the blank 100 consists of a single sheet of plastic film. Dashed lines in Figure 10A

show the positions on the blank 100 for a gusset fold line 102 and two base-sidewall boundary fold lines 104, as well as seam sealing positions 106 and spot-sealing positions 108. The gusset fold line 102 and the base-sidewall boundary fold lines 104 are parallel to one another. In the finished bag 22, the base-sidewall boundary fold lines 104 divide the sidewalls 16 from the base 14. Thus, in the exemplary embodiment even where the bag 22 is made from a single sheet of material, the sidewalls 16 are distinct from the base 14. Two zip fastener halves 126 run parallel to the gusset fold line 102 and the base-sidewall boundary fold lines 104, and divide the sidewalls 16 from the handle halves 112 that form the handle 12.

[0010] As shown in Figures 10B and 11B, the blank 100 is folded along the base-sidewall boundary fold lines 104 and an inverse fold is made along the gusset fold line 102. After this folding operation, the portions of the blank 100 folded over against one another form the first and second opposed sidewalls 16 and the base 14 is in the form of an inversely folded gusset between the first and second opposed sidewalls 16. As shown in Figures 10C and 11C, the first and second opposed sidewalls 16 are then sealed to one another along the seam sealing positions 106 to form seams along opposed edges 114 of the sidewalls 16 transverse to the inverse fold along the gusset fold line, and opposed edges 116 of the base 12 are sealed between the opposed edges 114 of the sidewalls 116 by spot sealing at the spot-sealing positions 108.

[0011] Reference is now made to Figures 8 and 9, which show exemplary produce displays 800 and 900, respectively. Each of the produce displays 800, 900 includes a respective display surface 802, 902 and a plurality of produce packages 10 arranged in a single layer on the display surface 802, 902. The produce packages 10 are arranged to rest on their bases 14 in an upright or upstanding position so that the handles 12 of the bags 22 are at the upper ends

of the produce packages 10. Arranging the produce packages 10 in a single layer inhibits damage to the produce 20, as compared to piling the produce packages 10 atop one another. Placing the produce packages 20 in the upright or upstanding position so that their handles 12 of the bags are at the upper ends of the produce packages 10 enables consumers to easily grasp the handles 12 to remove a produce package 10 from the display surface 802, 902. Figure 8 shows a produce display 800 in which the display surface 802 is generally horizontal and Figure 9 shows a produce display 900 in which the display surface 902 is substantially inclined. Thus, as shown in Figures 8 and 9, a method for displaying produce for sale comprises providing a plurality of produce packages 10 each comprising fresh, unfrozen produce 20 and arranging the produce packages 10 on a display surface 802, 902 in a single layer with each produce package 10 in the upright position so that its handle 12 is at the upper end of the produce package 10.

[0012] The bags 22 and produce packages 10 shown and described herein are exemplary only, and the present disclosure and claims are not intended to be limited to the particular details of those particular embodiments. For example, as noted above a produce package similar to the produce package 10 may be provided with a non-recloseable seal across the aperture instead of a zip fastener, or a produce package may be provided with a reclosable adhesive seal instead of a zip fastener. Moreover, bags having structures different from that of the bag 22 used for the exemplary produce package 10 may be filled with fresh, unfrozen fruit to form a produce package; many different kinds of bags that are wholly or partially transparent and include a handle and a base for supporting the bag on a surface with the handle at the top of the bag may be used. Such alternative produce packages may also be used in the produce display and the method for displaying produce described herein.

[0013] Certain currently preferred embodiments have been described by way of example. It will be apparent to persons skilled in the art that a number of variations and modifications can be made without departing from the scope of the invention as defined in the claims.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A produce package, comprising:

a bag, comprising:

a handle for carrying the bag;

a base opposite the handle for supporting the bag on a surface when the bag is full;

at least one sidewall distinct from the base and extending between the base and the handle;

the base and the at least one sidewall cooperating to form an interior volume of the bag; and

a quantity of fresh, unfrozen produce disposed within the interior volume of the bag;

wherein at least a portion of the bag is transparent for viewing the quantity of produce.

2. The produce package of claim 1, wherein the bag further comprises an aperture adjacent the handle, the aperture opening into the interior volume.

3. The produce package of claim 2, wherein the bag further comprises a zip fastener extending across the aperture for opening and closing the bag.

4. The produce package of claim 1, wherein the base is formed by a gusset.

5. The produce package of claim 4, wherein:

the bag is formed from a single sheet of plastic film;

the at least one sidewall consists of first and second opposed sidewalls formed by two portions of the sheet of film folded over against one another;

the gusset is formed by an inverse fold between the first and second opposed sidewalls;

the first and second opposed sidewalls are sealed to one another to form seams along opposed edges of the sidewalls transverse to the inverse fold; and

opposed edges of the gusset are sealed between the opposed edges of the sidewalls.

6. The produce package of claim 1, wherein the bag further comprises vents defined through the at least one sidewall.

7. A method for displaying produce for sale, comprising:

providing a plurality of produce packages according to claim 1; and

arranging the produce packages on a display surface in a single layer;

with each produce package in an upright position in which the handle of the bag is at an upper end of the produce package.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the display surface is generally horizontal.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the display surface is substantially inclined.

10. A produce display, comprising:

a display surface;

a plurality of produce packages according to claim 1 arranged in a single layer on the display surface;

with each produce package in an upright position in which the handle of the bag is at an upper end of the produce package.

11. The produce display of claim 10, wherein the display surface is generally horizontal.

12. The produce display of claim 10, wherein the display surface is substantially inclined.

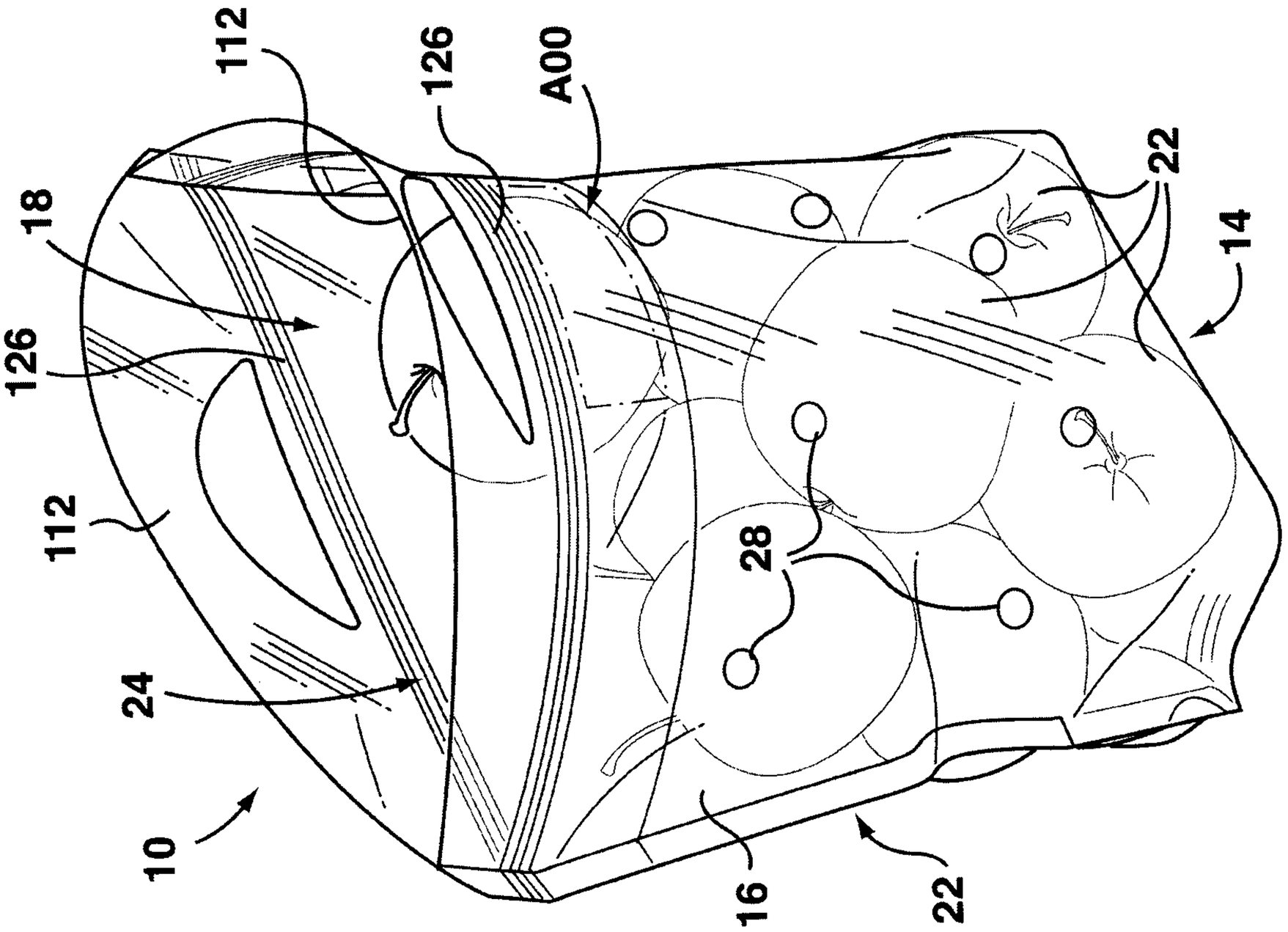


FIG. 1B

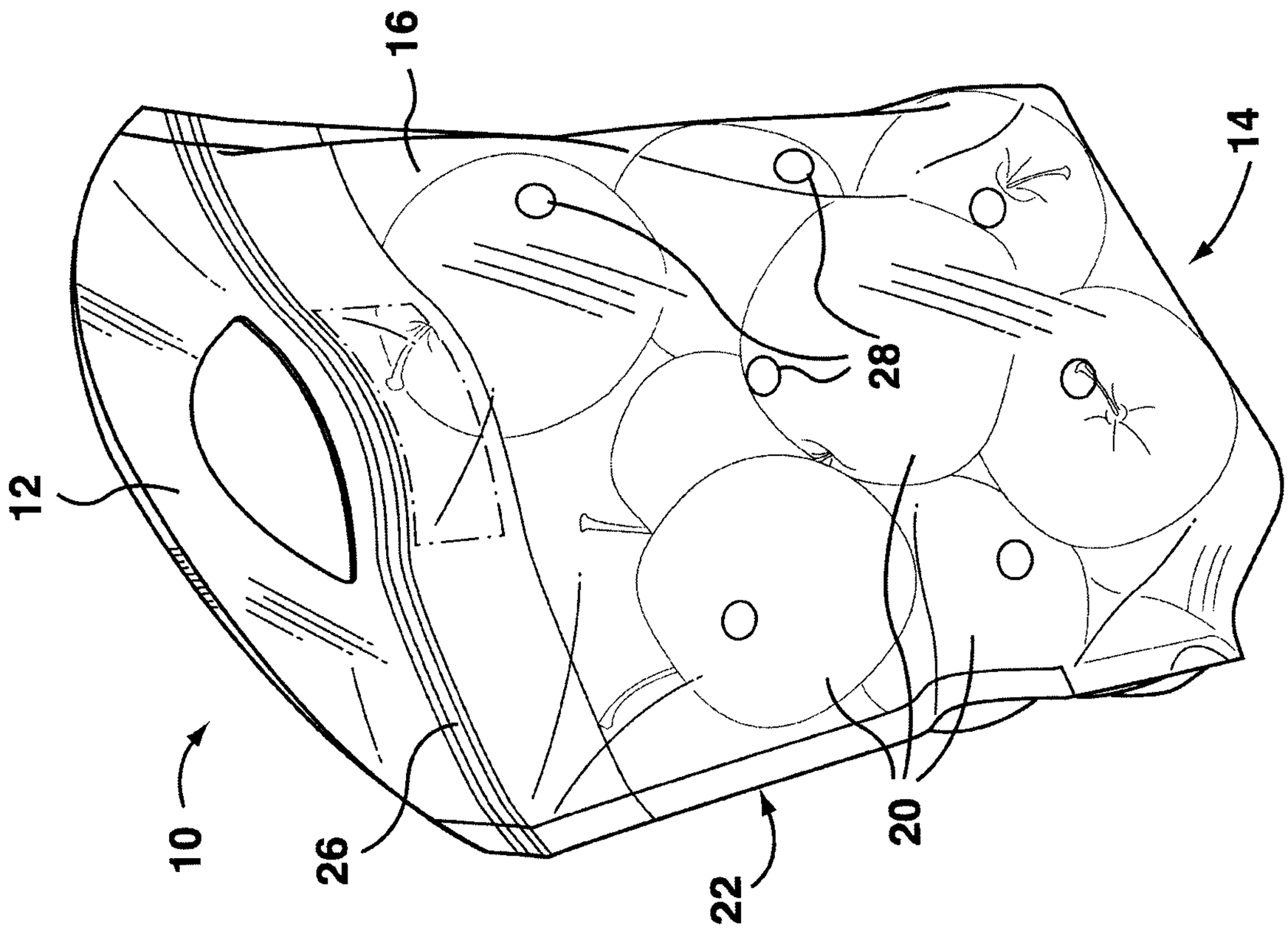


FIG. 1A

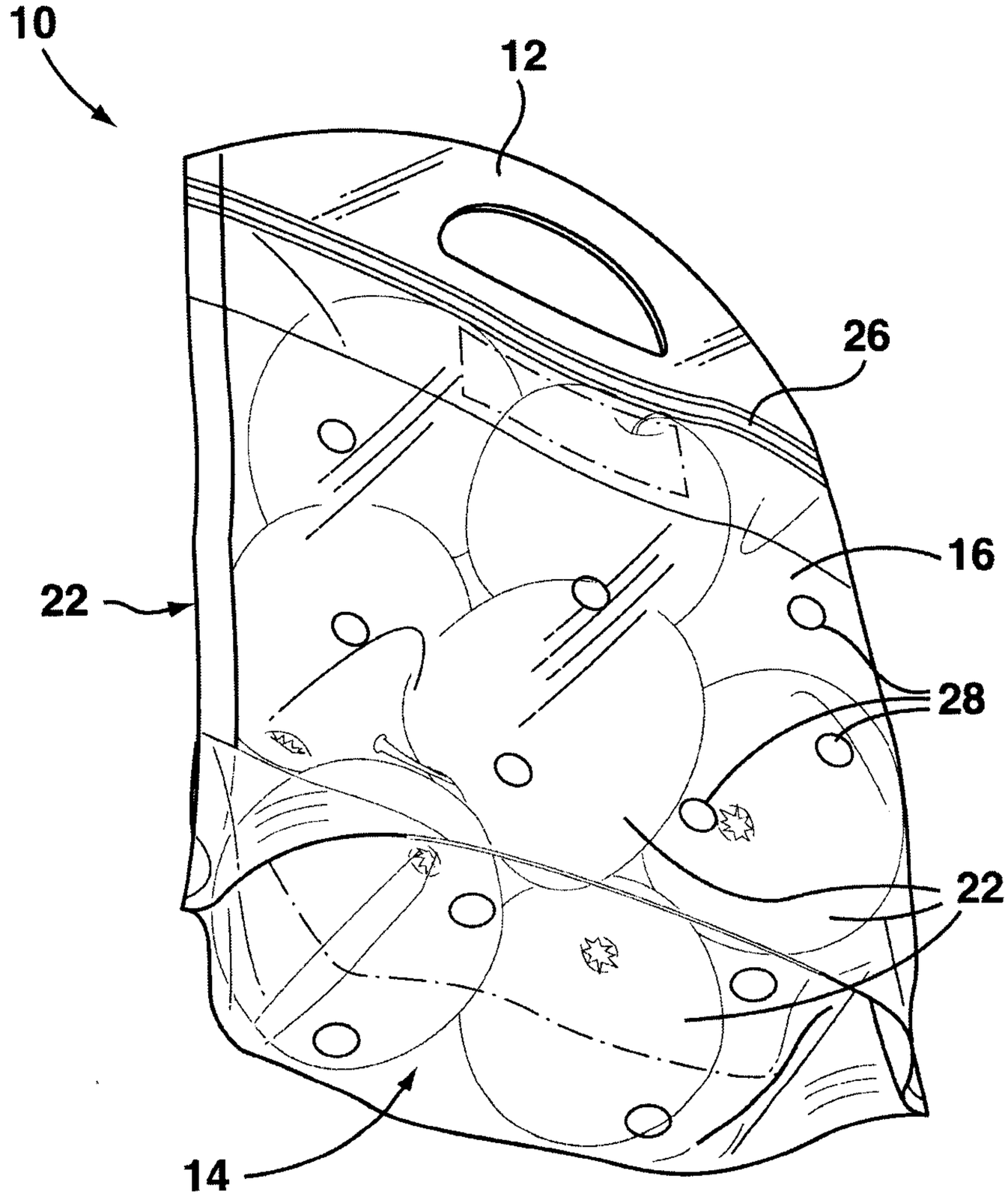


FIG. 2

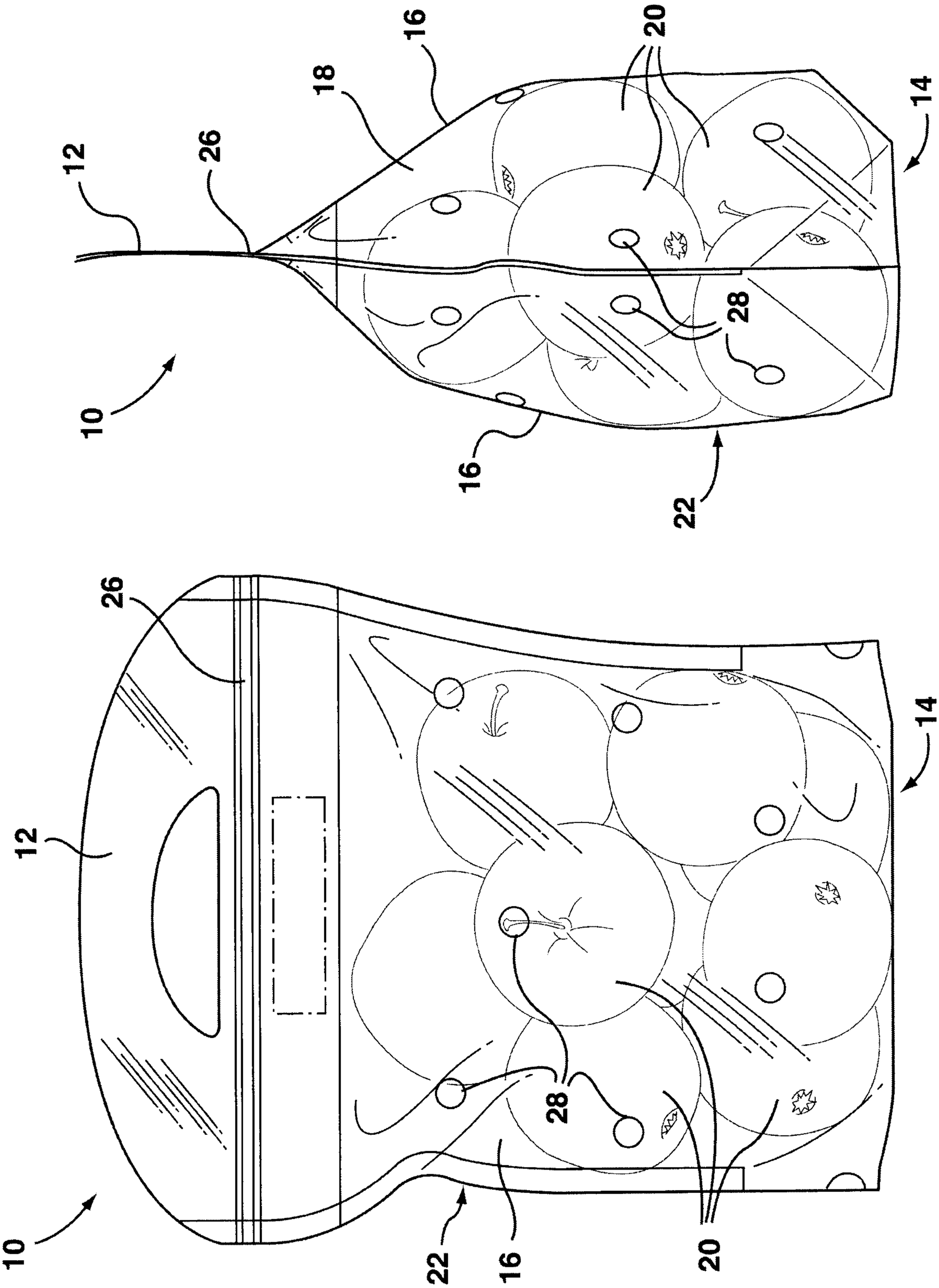


FIG. 4

FIG. 3

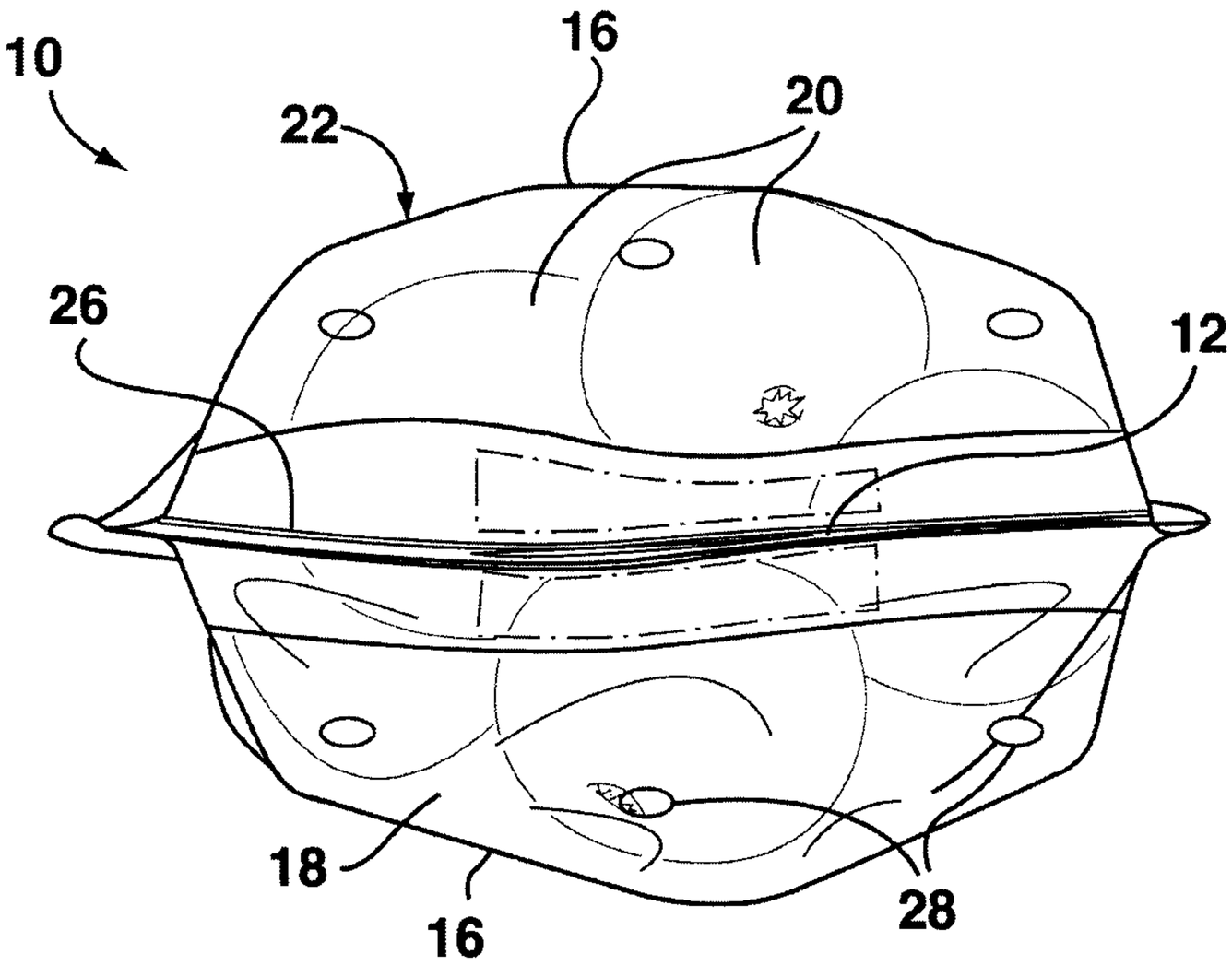


FIG. 5

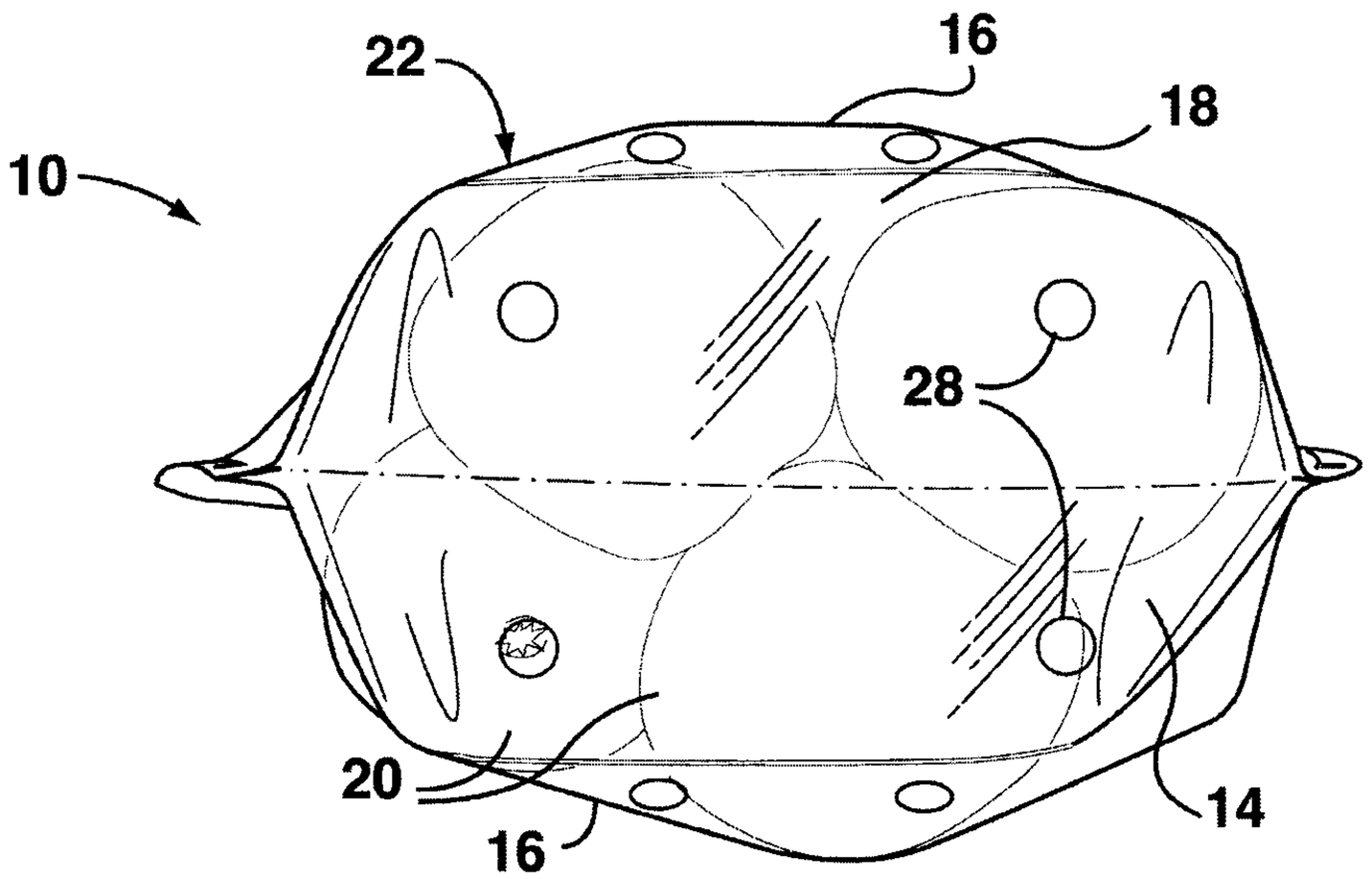


FIG. 6

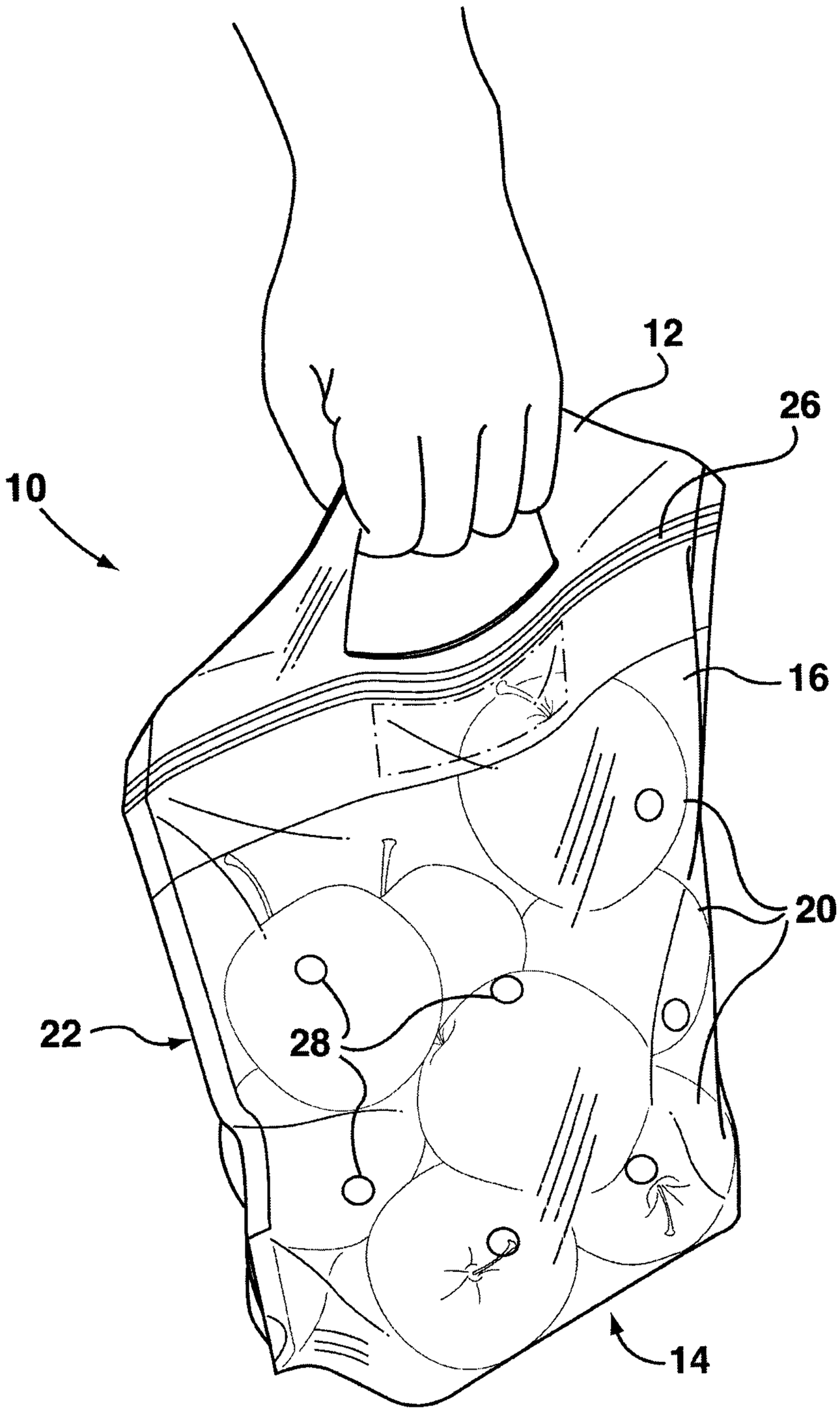


FIG. 7

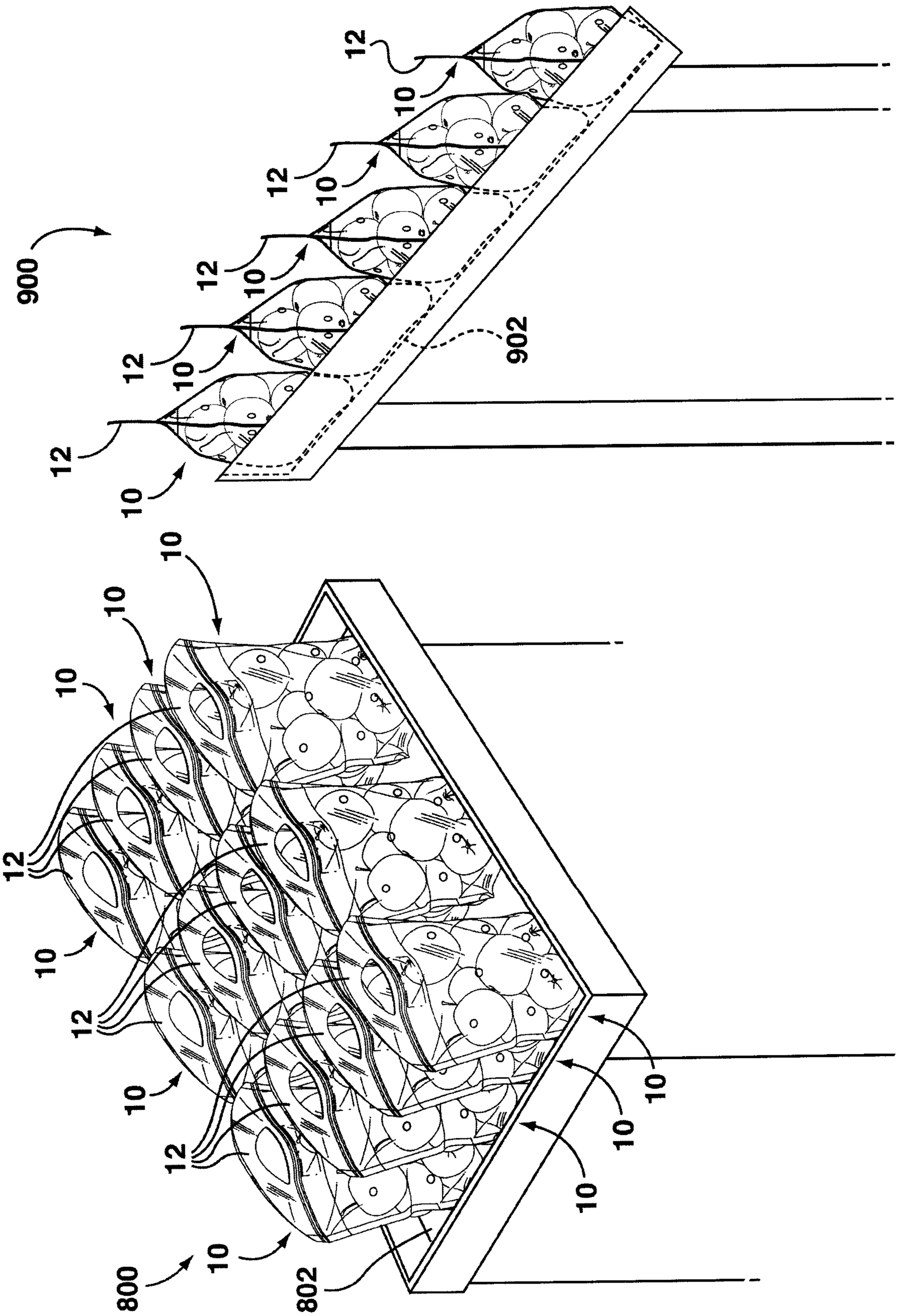


FIG. 9

FIG. 8

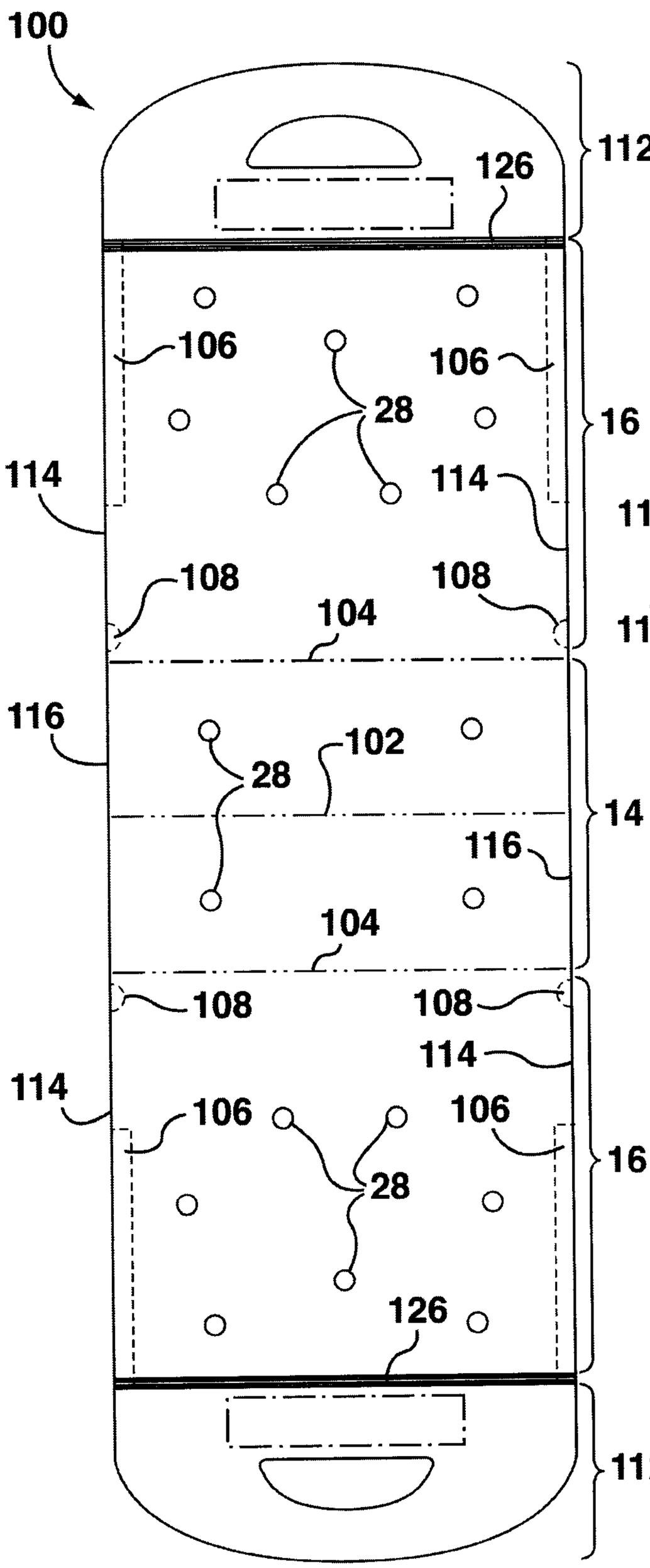


FIG. 10A

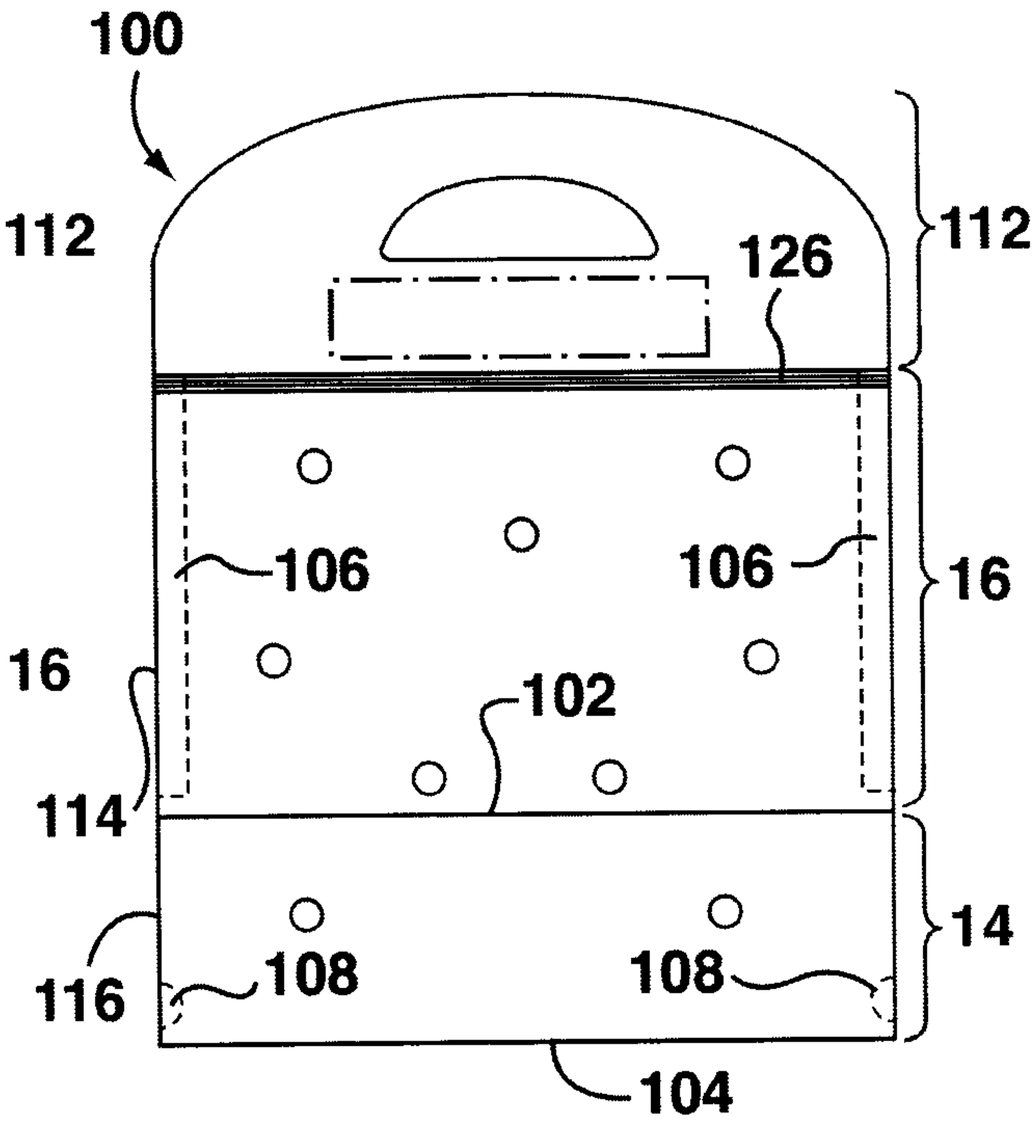


FIG. 10B

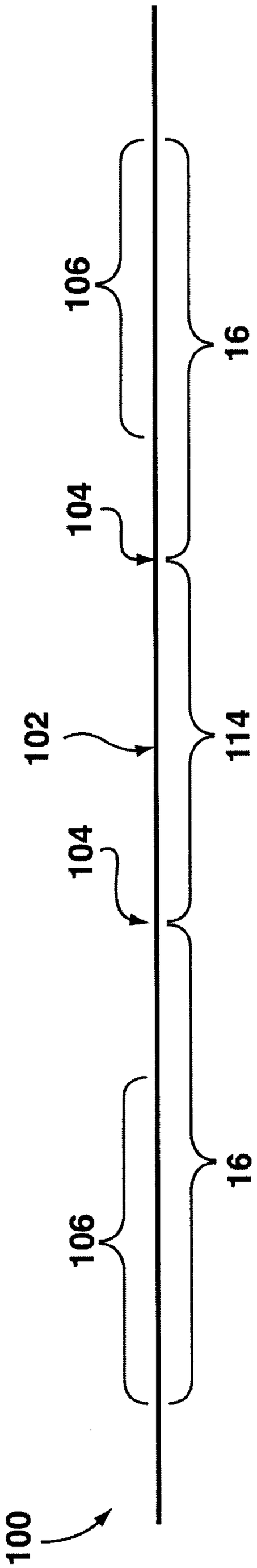


FIG. 11A

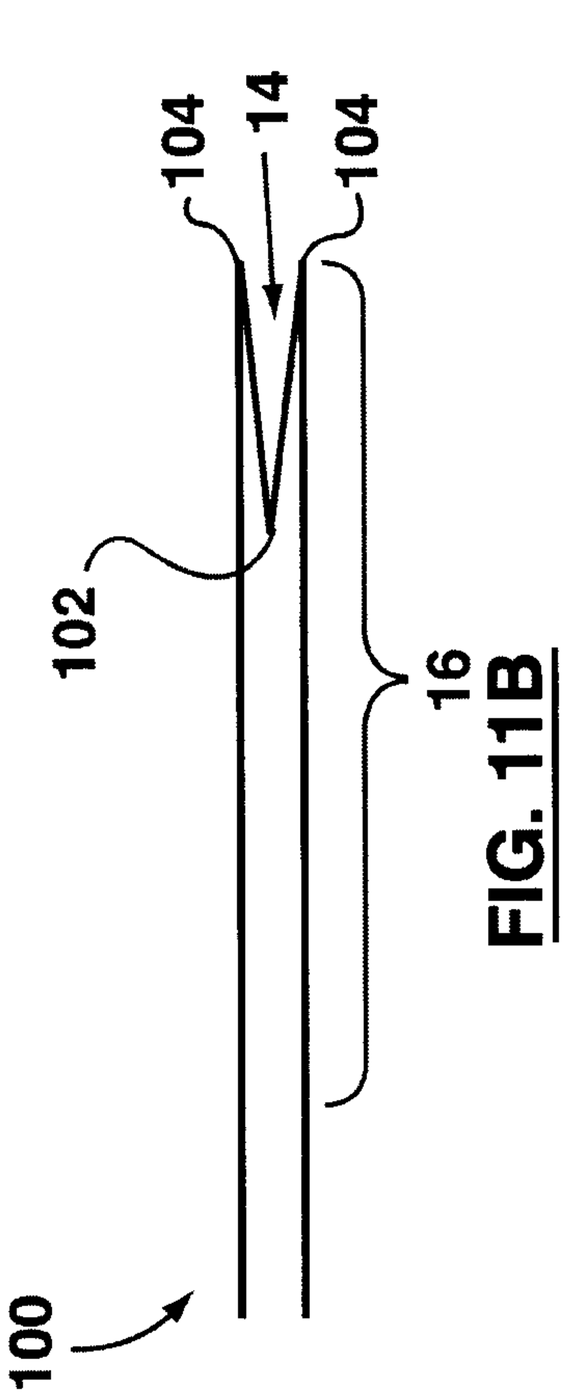


FIG. 11B

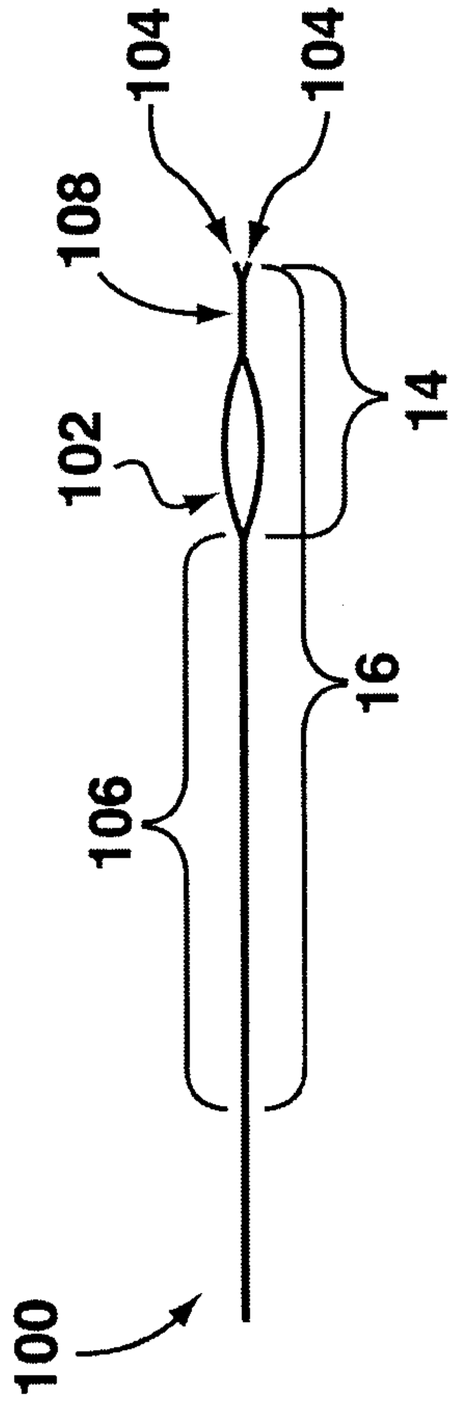
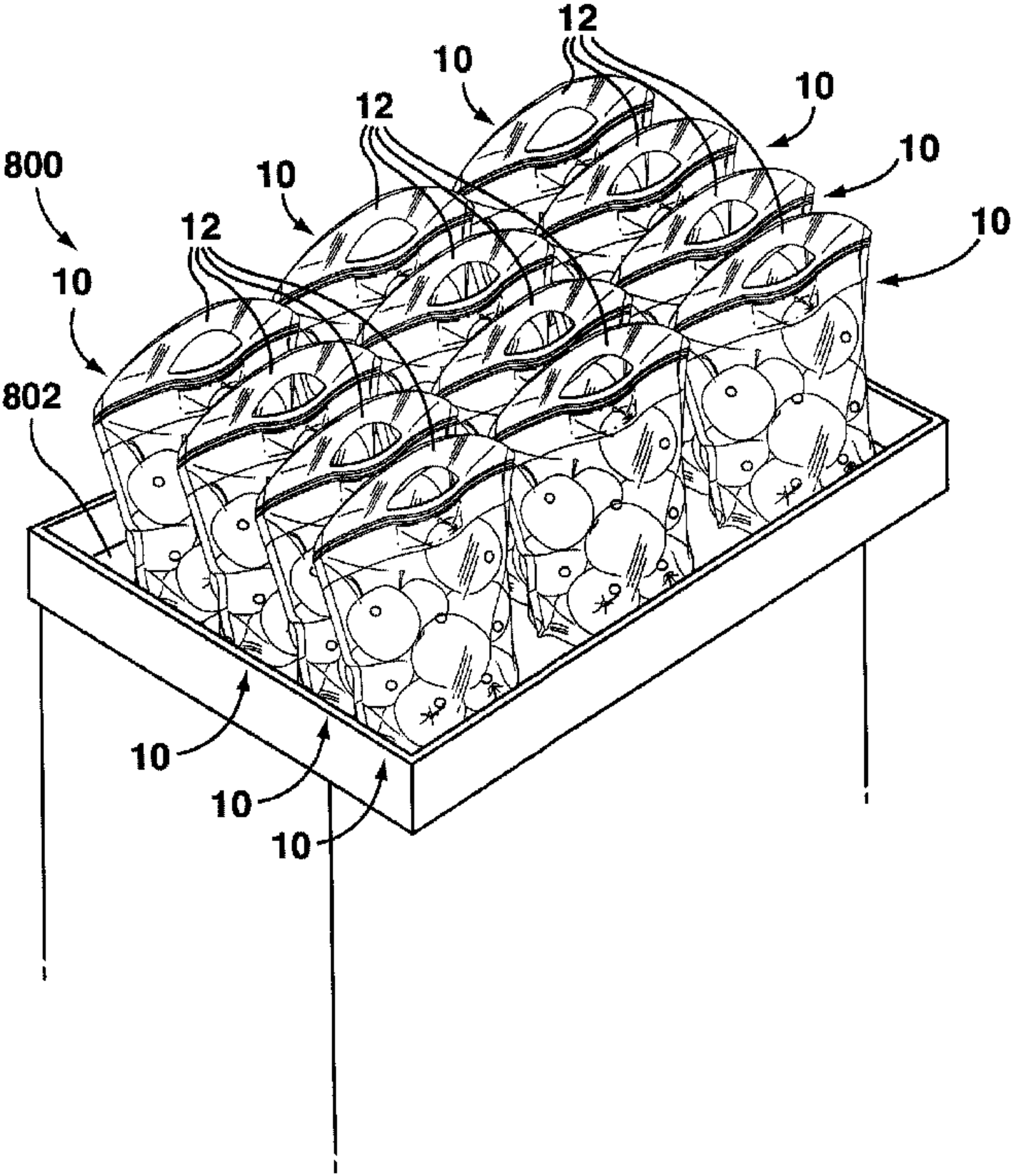


FIG. 11C


800
802
10
12