Oct. 22, 1968 R. R. HELIN 3,407,077

HANDLE FOR A HEAT-IN-THE-BAG FOOD PACKAGE

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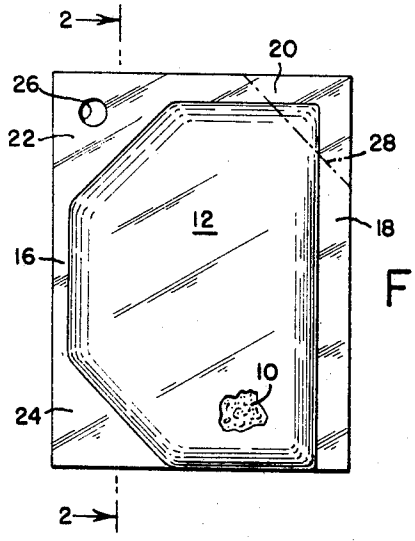


FIG. 1

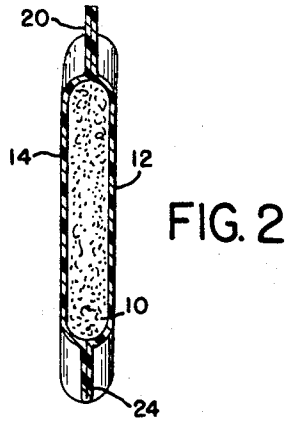


FIG. 2

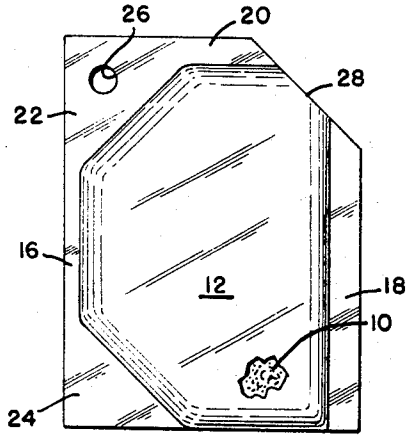


FIG. 3

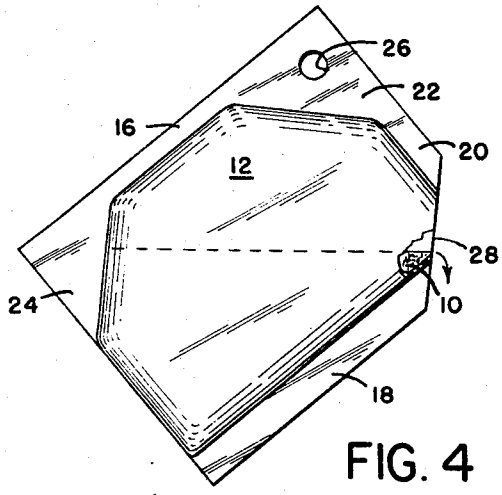


FIG. 4

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HANDLE FOR A HEAT-IN-THE-BAG FOOD PACKAGE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The disclosure describes a package in which a food product can be both sold and heated. The package has a pouch or envelope portion which holds the food product. There is a handle formed along one of the side edges of the pouch. This handle is made by sealing, to each other, corner areas of the side walls which form the pouch. These sealed corner areas are located at both the top and the bottom of the package along one of the side edges of the package.

The present invention relates to a food package. More particularly, it pertains to a food package adapted for use in the sale and heating of a food product wherein a handle forms an integral part of the package to facilitate the pouring out of the food product from the package after the product has been heated.

One object of the present invention is to provide a package in which a food product contained therein can be heated and after such heating can be easily poured therefrom.

Another object of the present invention is to provide a food package with an integral handle which permits control in pouring the food product from the package.

Other objects and advantages of the invention will be apparent from the following description in which certain preferred embodiments of the invention are disclosed. In the drawings which form a part of this application,

FIGURE 1 illustrates a preferred embodiment of a package according to the present invention,

FIG. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the package shown in FIGURE 1 taken along the line 2—2 and looking in the direction indicated by the arrows,

FIG. 3 illustrates the package shown in FIGURE 1 with one corner removed prior to pouring out the food product contained therein,

FIG. 4 shows the package of FIG. 3 in a pouring position.

The packaged illustrated in FIGURES 1 to 4, which contains a food product **10**, is formed from a single piece of flexible material folded upon itself to provide a seamless bottom with a front wall **12** and a rear wall **14**, superimposed one on another, to form an envelope or pouch. The walls **12** and **14** are formed from a sheet of thin, glueable or heat sealable film. This sheet can be either one material, such as nylon; a lamination of two or more materials, such as polyethylene and Mylar; or a coated sheet, such as a sheet of polyethylene coated with Mylar. The walls **12** and **14** are adhered or sealed together along lateral side edge margins or seams **16** and **18**. After the pouch of the package has been filled with a food product which is pourable after it is heated, a top marginal seam **20** is formed along the top edges of the walls **12** and **14**. The seam **20** is formed by either gluing, heat-sealing, or otherwise adhering together the top marginal edges of the walls **12** and **14**. As will be readily apparent, the pouch of the package can be formed of two separate sheets of film corresponding in size to the walls **12** and **14** sealed together along the bottom as well as long the lateral side edge margins **16** and **18**.

Some of the upper corners of the walls **12** and **14** are sealed together to form a triangular sealed double surface gripping area **22**. The lower corners of the walls **12** and **14** along the lateral side edge seam **16** adjacent the triangular surface **22** are also sealed together to form another triangular sealed double surface gripping area **24**. The gripping areas **22** and **24** provide a handle for use in pouring out the food product from the package. The gripping areas **22** and **24** are minor portions of the entire area of the front and rear walls **12** and **14**.

The upper triangular surface **22** has an aperture **26** to facilitate removing the package from a heated environment, such as boiling water, after the food product contained therein has been heated. This removal is facilitated by the fact that the package can be so removed by inserting a fork or other elongated utensil into the hole **26** and thereby being able to remove the package without grasping it with one's hands.

To empty the package, a cut need only be made at **28**, and this produces an adequate opening for the complete removal of the contents from the package. After such cut **28** is made, one grasps with one hand the upper end of the handle, i.e. surface area **22**, and with the other hand the lower end of the handle, i.e. surface area **24**, and tilts the package as shown in FIG. 4 to pour out the food product **10** contained in the package.

The material for forming the walls **12** and **14** should have a relatively low specific heat so that the triangular areas **22** and **24** may be grasped by one's hands shortly after the package has been removed from a heated environment, such as boiling water. Material which has generally satisfied this requirement may be formed of the well known polyester films. One film which has proved satisfactory for the walls is polyethylene coated with "Mylar." "Mylar" is a polyester film made from polyethylene terephthalate with the polymer being formed by the condensation reaction between ethylene glycol and terephthalic acid. The thickness of the coating may satisfactorily range between 0.00025 inch to 0.00075 inch while the thickness of the polyethylene may satisfactorily range between .0015 inch to .0025 inch. Film thicknesses in these ranges are economic and also provide sufficient strength to enable the package to resist damage due to handling.

In view of the principles set forth herein, I have shown some of the ways of carrying out the present invention and some of the equivalents which are suggested by these disclosures.

Now, therefore, I claim:

1. A food product package comprising an envelope in which a food product may be heated and also in which such product may be delivered and stored prior to such heating, and a food product surrounded and contained by said envelope, wherein the improvement comprises a handle integral with and along one side edge of said envelope, said handle including an upper gripping corner area adjacent both the top and said one side edge of the envelope, said upper gripping corner being formed by sealing the front and rear wall material of the envelope adjacent the top and along said one side edge together, and a lower gripping corner area adjacent both the bottom and said one side edge of the envelope, said lower gripping corner being formed by sealing the front and rear wall material of the envelope adjacent both the bottom and along said one side edge together, whereby said gripping areas provide places where the package can be grasped by one's hands almost immediately after its removal from a heated environment, such as boiling water, and thereby facilitate the pouring out of the food product from the package almost immediately after it has been removed from such a heated environment.

2. A food product package as called for in claim **1** wherein said envelope material has a relatively low specific heat.

3. A food product package as called for in claim 1 wherein said upper and lower gripping areas are triangular in shape.

4. A food product package as called for in claim 1 wherein at least one of said two gripping areas is provided with an aperture adapted for the insertion therein of an elongated utensil to facilitate the removal of the package from a heated environment.

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