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BACON PACKAGE AND SEPARATOR FOR BACON SLICES

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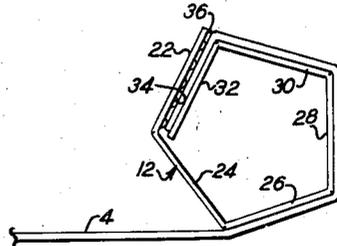
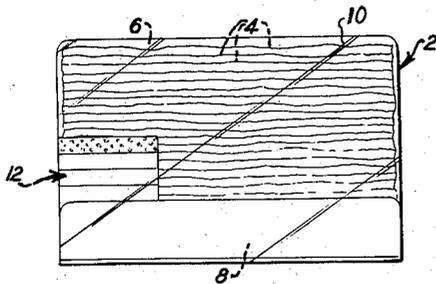


Fig. 1

Fig. 5

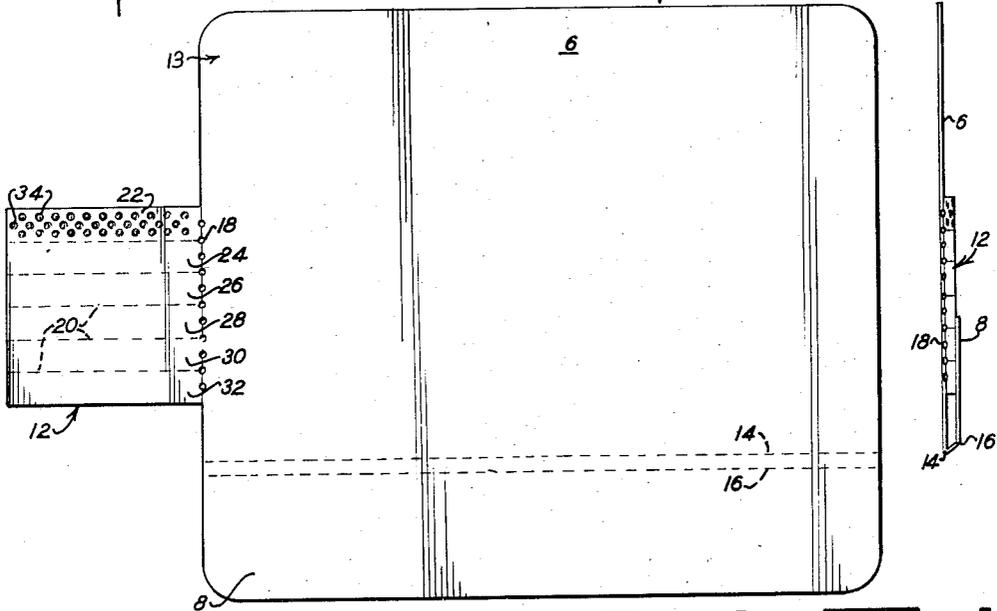


Fig. 3

Fig. 2

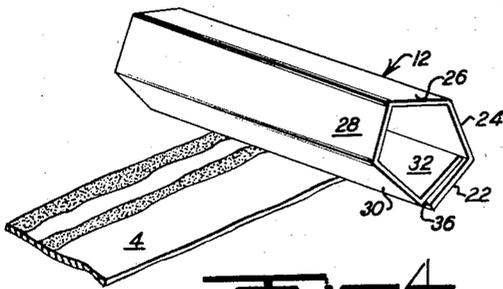


Fig. 4

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**BACON PACKAGE AND SEPARATOR FOR BACON SLICES**

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4 Claims. (Cl. 99—174)

This invention relates to a bacon package and separator for bacon slices, and more particularly to a bacon package having a detachable portion which may be manipulated so as to facilitate the removal of individual bacon slices from the package.

For many years it has been customary to market bacon slices in packages consisting of a cardboard base member upon which the bacon slices are arranged in edge-overlapped or shingled relation and a thin sheet of transparent material surrounding the bacon slices and the base member. In general, such packages have been very satisfactory in use. They are economical insofar as space requirements are concerned, and they permit the purchaser to inspect the bacon with ease.

However, the task of removing individual slices of bacon from such a package is not always an easy one. Unless the bacon is stored under very carefully controlled conditions, the overlapped portions of the several bacon slices tend to adhere to each other. This is so particularly after the package has been opened initially and subsequently returned to storage, as is the case, for example, when some of the bacon slices are used on one day and the remaining slices are used on a subsequent day.

It has been customary heretofore for housewives to separate adhering bacon slices by manipulating such slices with their fingers and with simple kitchen tools such as knives and forks. However, the operation is not a pleasant one. Much time is wasted, and the fingers become coated with grease removed from the surfaces of the bacon slices. Moreover, the bacon slices frequently are torn when handled in this manner. As a result, many housewives have developed strong objections to the preparation of bacon, and bacon is not served in many homes as often as it might be if the slices could be removed easily from the bacon packages.

It is an object of this invention to overcome the objections and disadvantages mentioned above and to provide a means for separating adjacent slices of bacon and for removing them from a package without tearing them.

Another object of this invention is to combine a bacon package and a separator for bacon slices in such a way that the bacon may be packed by the operations customarily employed heretofore and in such a way that the completed package will have all of the advantageous characteristics of the conventional shingle-type bacon package mentioned above.

A more specific object of this invention is to provide a bacon package having a separator for bacon slices formed as an integral part thereof, the separator being so constructed that it does not materially increase the overall thickness of the bacon package.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide a blank of cardboard or other suitable material with scor-

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ing lines, indentations, and perforations, so arranged that the blank may be folded into the proper shape for the formation of a combination bacon package and separator for bacon slices.

5 The foregoing objects may be realized, according to a preferred embodiment of the invention, by the provision of a bacon package in which the bacon is arranged in edge-overlapped relation upon a cardboard base or backing member, in which a cardboard separator element is attached to an edge of the base member in such a way that it may be folded over portions of the bacon slices supported upon the base member, and in which a thin sheet of transparent material surrounds the base member and the bacon slices to hold the several elements in position.

10 In the preferred embodiment of the invention, the separator element is a cardboard strip which may be rolled into the form of a tube having an opening therein for the reception of the end of a bacon slice. In use, the end of a bacon slice is inserted into such opening, and the tube is rolled along the length of the bacon slice to wrap the slice about its external surface. This procedure is very easy to carry out, and it serves to remove the individual slices from the package without tearing them.

15 The separator and the base member of the bacon package preferably are formed from a single cardboard blank. Although the shape of this blank may be varied somewhat, depending upon the exact package shape desired, it should in general include a main portion adapted to form the base member of the package, and a second portion connected to the main portion by a line of perforations and scored in such a manner that it may be rolled into a separator element of the type referred to above. A blank of this type has the important advantage that the separator element may be disposed within the package in overlying relation with respect to the bacon slices by a simple folding operation. Then, when the housewife wishes to remove the bacon slices from the package, the separator element can be detached from the base member by tearing the cardboard along the perforated line.

20 A better understanding of the structure of the present invention will be gained from a consideration of the following detailed description of an embodiment thereof illustrated in the accompanying drawings, in which:

25 Fig. 1 is a face view of a combination bacon package and separator according to the invention;

30 Fig. 2 is an edge view of the package of Fig. 1 with the transparent covering element and the bacon slices removed in the interest of clarity;

35 Fig. 3 is a plan view of a blank for use in forming the package of Fig. 1;

40 Fig. 4 is a perspective view showing the separator element of the package of Fig. 1 in operative position with respect to the end of a bacon slice; and

45 Fig. 5 is an elevational view of the bacon separator showing a bacon slice wrapped partially around its periphery.

50 Referring initially to Fig. 1, it will be observed that the package 2 of this invention is very similar in appearance to the bacon packages which have been used for many years. A plurality of bacon slices 4 are disposed upon a base or backing member 6 in edge-overlapped or shingled relation, a flap 8 integral with the base member 6 is folded over the bacon slices 4 at one end of the package 2, and a thin sheet 10 of transparent material such as cellophane or Pliofilm is wrapped around the bacon

slices 4 and the base member 6 to hold the several elements of the package in position.

The portions of the package 2 just described are conventional, and it will be obvious to persons skilled in the art that these may be varied substantially. Some bacon packages of this type include end flaps, similar to the flap 8, which extend over one or more ends of the bacon slices 4. See, for example, the package disclosed in United States Patent No. 2,565,976, to Mayer. The present invention is applicable to all of these various specific forms of bacon packages.

The package 2 also includes a separator element 12 which may be used by the housewife to remove individual bacon slices 4 from the package 2. As suggested in Figs. 1 and 2, it is adapted to overlies the end portions of certain of the bacon slices 4 in the package 2, and it is held in place by the flap 8 and the transparent sheet 10. The separator element 12 preferably is integral with the base member 6 of the package 2, but this is not absolutely essential in all cases. If desired, for example, the separator 12 might be inserted into the package 2 during the packing operation.

Fig. 3 illustrates a blank of cardboard, plastic, or other suitable material, which may be folded so as to produce the base 6, the flap 8, and the separator 12 of the package 2. This blank includes a large rectangular body portion 13 having a separator portion 12 connected to one edge thereof. The body portion 13 is scored along lines 14 and 16 to facilitate bending of the blank to form the base member 6 and the flap 8 of the package. The small rectangular separator portion 12 of the blank is connected to the body portion 13 by a line of perforations 18, so that it may be folded inwardly, as suggested in Figs. 1 and 2, and so that it may be removed from the base 6 when desired.

The separator portion 12 of the blank illustrated in Fig. 3 also is scored transversely along six lines 20 which divide it into six segments 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, and 32, of equal lengths. The endmost segment 22 is provided with a plurality of indentations, projections, or other surface irregularities 34, for a purpose which will become apparent hereinafter.

The manner in which the separator element 12 of this invention may be utilized to remove individual ones of the bacon strips 4 from the package 2 will be evident from a consideration of Figs. 4 and 5 of the drawings. In Fig. 4, for example, the element 12 is illustrated as a five-sided tube, formed by bending the cardboard along the scored lines 20 so as to position the endmost segment 22 and 32 of the separator element in overlapping relation. It will be seen that when the element 12 is bent in this fashion, a small opening 36 is provided in the wall of the tube for the reception of the end of a bacon slice 4.

After the end of a bacon slice 4 had been inserted into the slot 36 in the tube formed by the separator element 12, the tube may be rolled along the length of the bacon slice 4 to wind the bacon slice about its periphery, as suggested in Fig. 5. During the initial winding movements of the separator element 12 relative to the bacon slice 4, the pressure of the fingers of the housewife biases the opposite end segments 22 and 32 of the tube 12 toward each other with sufficient force to clamp the bacon slice 4 in place. The effectiveness of this clamping action is materially enhanced by the presence of the surface irregularities 34 on the inner face of the segment 22, because these tend to be pressed into the soft surface of a bacon slice 4 so as to offer maximum resistance to withdrawal of the slice 4 from the opening 36.

It will be noted particularly from Fig. 4 of the drawings, that the separator element 12 is substantially wider than the strip of bacon 4. This relationship is a highly desirable one in that it permits the housewife to grip the end portions of the tubular separator element 12 during manipulations of the device. Her hands need never come

in contact with the bacon slice 4 and as a result they need not become greasy.

Although a five-sided separator device 12 has been illustrated in Figs. 4 and 5, it will be apparent that this shape may be varied without departing from the principles of the invention. The separator tube 12 upon which the bacon slices 4 are to be wound, may be three-sided, four-sided, six-sided, seven-sided, etc. Moreover, it is feasible to construct the flat separator strip 12 without scoring lines, so that the strip may be rolled into the shape of a tube of generally circular cross section.

Still other variations will suggest themselves to persons skilled in the art. It is intended therefore that the foregoing detailed description of the illustrated embodiment of the invention be considered as exemplary only, and that the scope of the invention be ascertained from the following claims.

I claim:

1. A bacon package comprising a cardboard base member, a plurality of slices of bacon disposed upon said base member in edge-overlapped relationship to each other, a cardboard separator element in the form of a strip integral with said base member and projection from an edge thereof, the line of juncture between said separator element and said base member being provided with a line of perforations to permit the folding of the separator element over end portions of the bacon slices disposed upon said base member and to permit subsequent removal of the separator element from said base member by tearing along said line of perforations, said strip being scored along lines which divide it into a plurality of segments so that when the strip is removed from the base member the strip may be bent along said scored lines to form a tubular element to be used for separating individual slices of bacon from other slices of bacon, and a sheet of transparent material overlying said folded separator element and said bacon slices and being attached to said base member for holding the bacon slices in position on said base member.

2. A separator for bacon slices comprising a strip of cardboard provided with a plurality of scored lines extending from side to side thereof at locations such as to divide said strip into a plurality of segments of substantially equal lengths, an endmost one of said segments being provided with a plurality of projections upon one of its surfaces, said strip being adapted to be bent along said scored lines to produce a tube in which the endmost ones of said segments are disposed in face-to-face relation with said projections on said one endmost segment being adjacent the other endmost segment, whereby the end portion of a slice of bacon may be inserted into the space between said endmost segments and said tube may be rolled along the slice of bacon to wind the slice about its periphery.

3. A separator for bacon slices comprising a strip of cardboard of substantially greater width than a strip of bacon provided with a plurality of scored lines extending from side to side thereof at locations such as to divide said strip into a plurality of segments of substantially equal lengths, an endmost one of said segments being provided with a plurality of projections upon one of its surfaces, said strip being bent along said scored lines to produce a tube in which the endmost ones of said segments are disposed in face-to-face relation with said projections on said one endmost segment being adjacent the other endmost segment, whereby the end portion of a slice of bacon may be inserted into said tube between said endmost segments and said tube may be rolled along the slice of bacon to wind the slice about its periphery.

4. A method of separating the uppermost bacon slice from a plurality of bacon slices disposed in edge-overlapped, face-to-face, contacting relation, comprising bringing into position adjacent an end of the uppermost bacon slice a separator comprising a strip bent to provide a tube in which the end portions of said strip are

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disposed in face-to-face relation, inserting said end of the uppermost bacon slice into the space between said end portions of the strip, and then rolling the tube lengthwise of the uppermost bacon slice to wind such slice about the tube and separate such slice from the remaining bacon slices.

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