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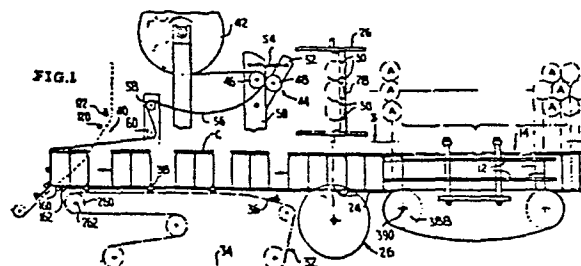
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54 Method and apparatus for forming packages and an article package.

57 An apparatus is disclosed (Figure 1) wherein one or more articles are packaged as a unit by the wrapping of a film (56) of shrinkable plastics material thereabout, the film being provided as a continuous web. The apparatus is adapted to the packaging of plural articles arranged in a plurality of rows. The apparatus receives articles in nested rows and is provided with means (14) for automatically bringing adjacent articles into transverse alignment. The articles are then moved in clusters (C) to a wrapping station (40) where a continuous film (56) is engaged over the top of each cluster (C) and held in place by an upper conveyor (106) while at the same time the cluster is being engaged by and supported by a lower conveyor (68) which moves in unison with the upper conveyor (106). Film drawing means (116) then moves down between each pair of adjacent clusters and draws the necessary film, after which the film is severed into individual wraps followed by the directing of a rear bottom flap (64) into underlying relation with respect to the rear part of the cluster. Thereafter, the partially wrapped cluster is moved onto a platform (66) wherein the front flap (62) is both tightly drawn with respect to the cluster and positioned beneath the cluster and the rear flap (64). The apparatus also includes spacer means (124) movable in between partially wrapped adjacent clusters to stabilize and maintain the spacing thereof.



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl. ²)
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	
D	<u>US - E - 28 535 (GANZ)</u> * Column 3, line 11 to column 5, line 47; column 7, lines 38-49; column 10, line 20 to column 23, line 9; figures 1-19 * ----	1-3,9, 15,17, 18,24, 25,27, 28,32, 33	B 65 B 11/10 B 65 D 71/00
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.²)
			B 65 B B 65 D
			CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS X: particularly relevant A: technological background O: non-written disclosure P: intermediate document T: theory or principle underlying the invention E: conflicting application D: document cited in the application L: citation for other reasons
			&: member of the same patent family, corresponding document
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search	Date of completion of the search		Examiner
The Hague	09-07-1979		CLAEYS