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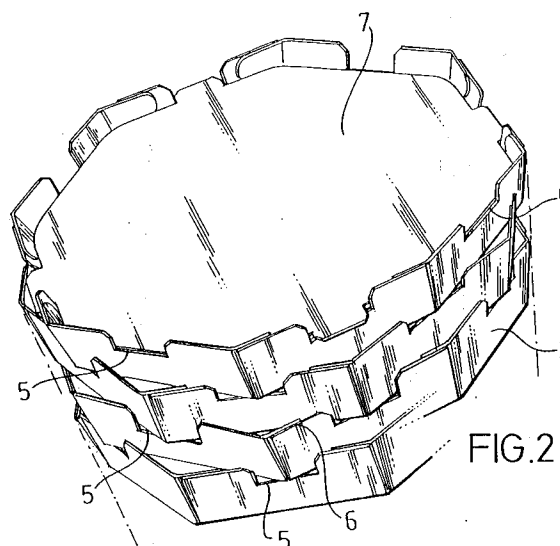
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(54) **A tray-like container for food articles, particularly pizzas.**

(57) A tray-like container for food articles and especially for pizzas, comprises a flat polygonal bottom (2), a peripheral holding sidewall (3) extending from the flat bottom (2) and which defines an upper polygonal edge (4) of the container; this upper edge has a series of cutouts (5), each at the location of a respective side.



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This invention relates to a tray-like container for food articles, particularly takeaway pizzas, having a polygonal bottom and a peripheral holding sidewall which extends from the flat bottom and defines a polygonal upper edge for said container.

Takeaway pizzas are those pizzas which are picked up from the places where they are externally made, e.g. restaurants or some other trade outlets, for consumption at some remote place.

It is known a first type of tray-like container which is made of paper material for quick packaging takeaway pizzas.

Such containers have a flattened parallelepipedic shape and are erected from corresponding cardboard diecuts by folding up and engaging together some flaps thereof.

This operation is customarily performed by the pizza makers themselves, and is an awkward one requiring some time. Pizza makers are known to work under press of time and cannot spare much of it for erecting the containers.

To overcome this drawback, the prior art has proposed pre-formed tray-like containers; these containers usually have a flat square-shaped bottom with sidewalls which also include a lid connected to one of said sidewalls.

In addition, in order to have them reduced to a suitable size for storage and transport, facilitated folding lines are provided along the sidewalls whereby the container can be collapsed into a flat configuration against its bottom.

Thus, the operator can readily pick up such a pre-formed container from a stack, and by unfolding it about the fold lines erect a container for packaging takeaway pizzas.

However, such a container has a drawback in that its walls lack in stiffness because weakened by the facilitated folding lines, so that they may bend against the pizza therein, especially where a number of such containers are stacked together.

It is the object of this invention to provide a tray-like container for takeaway pizzas which has such constructional and performance features as to overcome the drawbacks mentioned above with reference to the prior art.

This object is achieved by a container as indicated being characterized as in appended Claim 1.

The features and advantages of this invention will become more clearly apparent from an embodiment thereof described hereinafter by way of non-limitative example, with reference to the accompanying drawings.

In the drawings:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a container according to the invention; and

Figure 2 is a perspective view of a stack of containers according to the invention.

With reference to the drawing views, a container according to the invention, generally shown at 1, has a flat octagonal bottom 2.

A sidewall 3 extends peripherally from the flat bottom 2 and defines an upper edge 4 of the container; advantageously, said sidewall 3 is divergent toward the edge 4, thereby imparting a flared configuration to the container 1. The upper edge 4 is provided with a set of cutouts 5 which locate centrally in each respective side 6.

A removable lid 7 is associated with the container 1.

Containers embodying this invention can be easily laid into a stack, both in the empty condition and when filled with pizzas.

In fact, their flared configuration allows them to be nested inside one another in large numbers while still empty, thereby occupying small spaces.

When pizzas are placed into these containers, they can be stacked upon one another in an offset arrangement with the apices of the octagonal bottom of one container positioned at the cutouts in the edge of the container directly underneath.

Further, said cutouts make for an easy and quick alignment of the containers in the stack and improved stack stability by restraining any relative movements of the containers. The provision of such cutouts affords the advantage that, in a stacked arrangement, the bottom of one container forms a lid for the underlying container.

A further advantage is that a stack of containers formed as described above would only require that a lid be fitted over the uppermost container in the stack; this simplifies the construction of the containers of this invention and saves paper material therefor.

Lastly, notice that the octagonal shape of the container, and more generally its polygonal shape with more than four apices, affords a container shape which approaches more closely that of a pizza and fits tighter around it; thus, more material can be saved in the manufacture of the container compared to prior containers of generally parallelepipedic shape.

Claims

1. A tray-like container for food articles, particularly takeaway pizzas, having a polygonal bottom (2) and a peripheral holding sidewall (3) which extends from the flat bottom (2) and defines a polygonal upper edge (4) for said container, characterized in that said upper edge (4) has a series of cutouts (5), each at the location of a respective side (6).
2. A tray-like container according to Claim 1, characterized in that said peripheral sidewall

(3) is divergent toward the edge to impart the container with a flared configuration.

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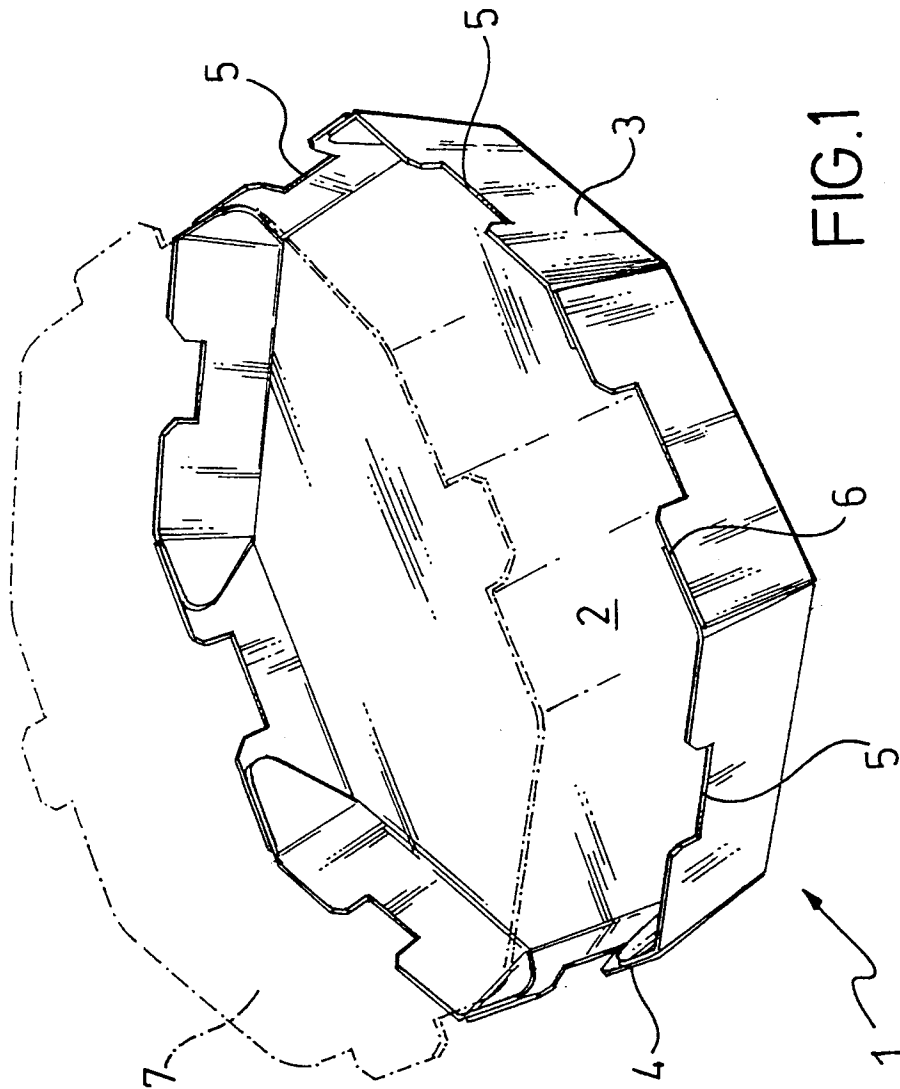
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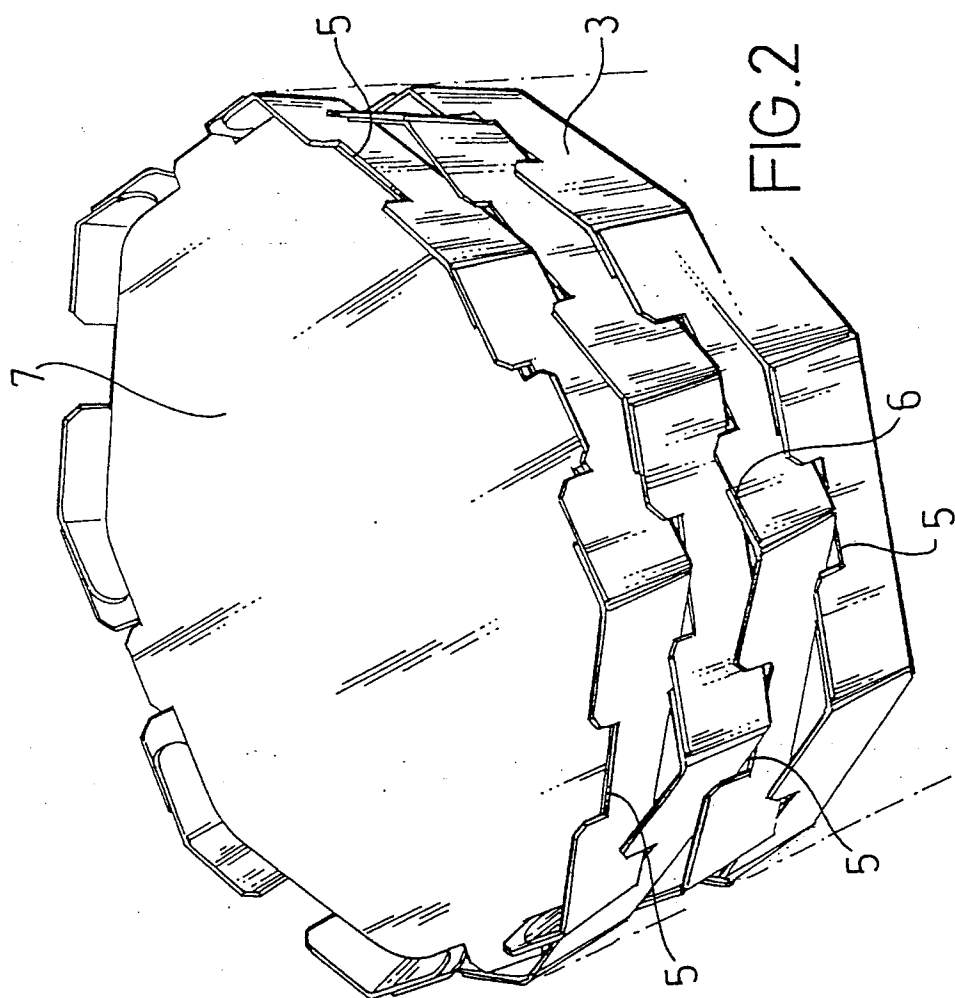
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number

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DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.5)
X	US-A-4 979 667 (SEAMAN) * the whole document * ---	1,2	B65D5/00 B65D5/20 B65D85/36
X	EP-A-0 319 493 (IMBALLAGGI BREVIGLIERI) * the whole document * ---	1	
X	FR-A-2 087 641 (PEYTIER) * the whole document * -----	1	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.5)
			B65D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 16 JUNE 1992	Examiner NEWELL P. G.
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	