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(54) Packaging method

(57) The invention refers to an improved packaging method comprising the following steps :

(a) providing a tray with heat-sealable rims
(b) loading said tray with the product to be packaged
(c) applying a lid on top of said tray, the contacting surfaces of the tray rims and of the lid web being of materials which can be heat bonded to each other to effect sealing of the packaging, and
(d) heat-sealing said lid to the tray rims, optionally with a modified atmosphere between said lid and said tray,

wherein the improvement consists in the use, as the tray lidding, of a bi-axially oriented heat-shrinkable film that is characterized by a maximum shrink force, at the temperature that is attained in the area of the lid-sealing station, not higher than 0.05 kg/cm in at least the transversal direction.

The improved method will provide a better appearance to the package and allow a better visual inspection of the package content from the outside because thinner material (as thin as 10-15 μ) with better optical properties can be used, the sealed lid will be kept tight on top of the tray, and no distortion of the tray will occur. This will also reduce the amount of plastics waste to be disposed of. By using bi-axially oriented heat-shrinkable films having, at the temperature that is attained in the area of the lid-sealing station, a free shrink of at least 10 %, and preferably of at least 15 %, the presence of undesired floppy borders will also be avoided.

The invention also comprises the thus obtained package.

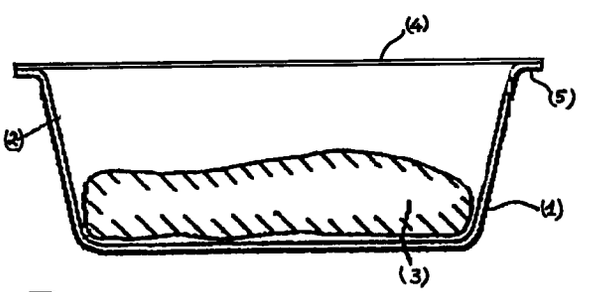

Fig. 1

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 96 10 2512

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.6)
Y	US 4 927 677 A (KASAI) * the whole document * ---	1-11	B65D77/20
Y,D	EP 0 206 826 A (KUREHA KAGAKU KOGYO KABUSHIKI KAISHA) * the whole document * ---	1-11	
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A	FR 2 058 240 A (SIDAPLAX) * the whole document * ---	1,4,5,7, 11	
A	GB 1 006 466 A (MONSANTO) * the whole document * ---	1,5,7,11	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
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The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE	1 December 1997	Leong, C

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

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