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(54) **A packaging for food products**

Verpackung für Lebensmittel

Emballage pour des produits alimentaires

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(73) Proprietor:
**BARILLA ALIMENTARE S.P.A.
43100 Parma (IT)**

(72) Inventor: **Landi, Adriano
I-43100 Parma (IT)**

(74) Representative:
**De Nova, Roberto et al
c/o JACOBACCI & PERANI S.p.A.
Via Visconti di Modrone 7
20122 Milano (IT)**

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Description

The present invention relates to packaging for food products in general and for oven products in particular, of the type comprising a container tray in which food products are accommodated and which has a base, side walls and an opening of which the periphery is provided with a rim projecting relative to the side walls, and comprising a sealed film wrapper in which the container tray and associated food products are wrapped.

Reference is made to EP-A-0 391 712.

It is well known that, in the field of packaging and presentation to the consumer of food products in general and oven products in particular, wide use is made of so-called container trays which, in order to preserve the organoleptic quality and freshness of the products contained therein, are completely closed and sealed in a generally transparent film wrapper.

It is also known that the upper portion of the packaging generally carries information for the consumer, that is to say, references to the type, quality and weight of the packaged products, as well as references to the manufacturing company such as the name, the company's colours, trade marks and so on, which enable the packaged product to be identified.

However, the recognised efficiency of contributing in the above-mentioned manner to the presentation of the products is substantially lacking when the packaging is arranged on shop shelves, such as, for example, in supermarkets.

The packages of the type in question inevitably have to be stacked on the shelves one on top of the other with the result that a large proportion of the information which it is most desired to communicate to the consumer at the moment of purchase is hidden.

On the other hand, the growth in the use of shop shelves or counters with inclined surfaces or other similar arrangements is obstructed by the economic burdens which their use entails, bearing in mind the space requirements of such structures and the current high cost of supermarket space.

There is an urgent requirement to provide packaging which, while ensuring adequate "protection" of the food products assigned to them, as well as satisfactory "information" for the consumer regarding the type and quality of the products, can be arranged vertically or so that they can be read on the shelves of conventional shelving arrangements.

Another urgent requirement in the above-mentioned packaging sector is that, once opened, it should be possible to re-close the sealed wrapper in order to preserve the freshness of the unconsumed product. At present, this requirement is satisfied by using clips or elastic bands or adhesive systems, but these require the use of wrappers that have dimensions greater than the dimensions of the container trays; this, in addition to increasing the space requirement of the packaging, makes them more difficult to balance in a stacked posi-

tion on the shelves.

The aim of the present invention is to devise and provide packaging for food products which has structural characteristics which can at the same time satisfy the above-mentioned requirements, overcoming all the disadvantages mentioned above with reference to the prior art.

This aim and others which will become clear from the following description are achieved in accordance with the invention by a packaging of the type specified in the following claim 1.

The characteristics and advantages of the invention will become clear from the following detailed description of a preferred embodiment which is given purely by way of non-limiting example with reference to the appended drawings, in which:

- Figure 1 is a perspective view of a packaging according to the present invention;
- Figure 2 is a perspective view of a plurality of packagings of the type of Figure 1;
- Figure 3 is a sectional view of a packaging of the type of Figure 1;
- Figure 4 is a perspective view of two components of a packaging of the type of Figure 1 in a different arrangement; and
- Figure 5 is a view in longitudinal section of Figure 4.

With reference to the appended drawings, a packaging for food products 2, in particular for oven products, is generally indicated 1.

The packaging 1 comprises a wrapper 3 and a container tray 4 produced from a suitable plastics material normally used for packaging food products.

The wrapper 3 is preferably produced from a polypropylene film which completely surrounds the container tray 4 in which the food products 2 are accommodated. The film is heat-sealed at the ends so that the food products 2 contained in the packaging 1 are suitably sealed.

The container tray 4 comprises a base 5 and side walls 6 delimiting an opening 7 at the top. The opening 7 is provided at its periphery with a rim 8 which projects therefrom relative to the above-mentioned side walls 6. The rim 8 has a transverse profile in the shape of a step.

A covering 9 is fitted removably to the base 5 of the container tray 4. The covering 9 is provided with a respective rim 10 projecting from the side walls 6 of the container tray 4. According to a preferred embodiment, the rim 10 of the covering 9 is homologous to the rim 8 of the container tray 4.

The covering 9 is provided with a central handle 11 produced in one piece therewith. The handle 11 is engaged in a mating slot 12 which is produced in one piece with the base 5 and projects towards the inside of the container tray 4.

Preferably, the covering 9 has a transverse profile homologous to that of the opening 7 with which the cov-

ering 9 is to be removably engaged.

It should be emphasised that the engagement between the handle 11 and the slot 12 of the base 5 enables the covering 9 to be joined to the container tray 4 inside the packaging 1. As a result, the rim 10 of the covering 9 and the rim 8 of the opening 7 of the container tray 4 constitute two strong support lines which can be used over their entire extent and which enable the packaging 1 to be supported in a vertical position, or in a position in which it can be read, on a support surface 13 (Figures 2 and 3). Since the distance between the above-mentioned support lines is the same as the thickness of the packaging 1, the latter is balanced in a stable manner.

The covering 9 is readily separated from the base 5 of the container tray 4 when the wrapper 3 has been opened.

With reference to Figures 4 and 5, the covering 9 is advantageously engaged in the opening 7 in order to close the container tray 4 in sealed manner. This enables the food products that are not immediately consumed when the packaging 1 has been opened to be preserved inside the container tray 4.

The packaging according to the invention has the advantage that it can be arranged on a shelf so that it can be read and the purchasing public can see the face bearing all the information necessary to identify the product and the manufacturing company.

In addition, the packaging according to the invention solves the problem of preserving food products that are not immediately consumed when the packaging has been opened. The covering enables the container tray to be closed in sealed manner and to be opened in a simple and rapid manner without using clips, elastic bands or other equivalent closing means.

Another advantage of the present invention resides in the simplicity of implementation of the proposed solution which is excellently suited to the packaging machines currently used.

It will be appreciated that, in order to satisfy contingent and specific requirements, a person skilled in the art could modify and adapt the food product packaging described above or could replace elements thereof by other, functionally equivalent elements, without exceeding the scope of protection of the invention as defined by the following claims.

Claims

1. A packaging for food products in general and for oven products in particular, of the type comprising a container tray (4) in which food products (2) are accommodated and which has a base (5), side walls (6) which are provided with information for the consumer and an opening (7) of which the periphery is provided with a rim (8) projecting relative to the side walls (6), comprising a sealed film wrapper (3) in which the container tray (4) and associated

food products (2) are wrapped, and comprising a covering (9) for the container tray (4) disposed underneath the tray and inside the film wrapper, characterised in that said covering is fitted in a removable manner to the base (5) thereof by means of a handle (11) provided on the covering and a mating slot (12) provided on the base and is provided at its periphery with a respective projecting rim (10) in order to co-operate with the rim (8) of the opening (7) in supporting the packaging in a vertical position in which the information can be read.

2. A packaging according to Claim 1, characterised in that the transverse profile of the rim (8) of the opening (7) of the container tray (4) is in the shape of a step.
3. A packaging according to either of the preceding Claims, characterised in that the rim (10) of the covering (9) is homologous to the rim (8) of the opening (7) of the container tray (4).
4. A packaging according to Claim 1 or 3, characterised in that the covering (9) has a transverse profile homologous to that of the opening (7) of the container tray (4) for the engagement of the covering (9) in the opening (7).
5. A packaging according to Claim 1 or 3, characterised in that the base (5) comprises a slot (12) which projects towards the inside of the container tray (4) and in which a handle (11) of the covering (9) is inserted and mated with the slot (12).
6. A packaging according to Claim 5, characterised in that the handle (11) and the slot (12) are produced in one piece with the covering (9) and the base 5, respectively.

Patentansprüche

1. Verpackung für Lebensmittelerzeugnisse im allgemeinen und für Ofenerzeugnisse insbesondere des Typs, der eine Behälterschale (4) umfaßt, in der Lebensmittelerzeugnisse (2) aufgenommen werden und die einen Boden (5), Seitenwände (6), die mit Informationen für den Verbraucher versehen sind, sowie eine Öffnung (7) aufweist, deren Umfang mit einem Rand (8) versehen ist, der über die Seitenwände (6) hinaus vorsteht, und die eine abgedichtete Folienhülle (3) umfaßt, in die die Behälterschale (4) und dazugehörige Lebensmittelerzeugnisse (2) eingehüllt sind, und die eine Aodeckung (9) für die Behälterschale (4) umfaßt, die unter der Schale und im Innern der Folienhülle angeordnet ist, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** die Aodeckung an dem Boden (5) mittels eines Griffs

(11), der an der Abdeckung vorhanden ist, und eines passenden Schlitzes (12), der an dem Boden vorhanden ist, auf lösbare Weise angebracht ist und an ihrem Umfang mit einem entsprechenden vorstehenden Rand (10) versehen ist, um mit dem Rand (8) der Öffnung (7) zusammenzuwirken, und so die Verpackung in einer vertikalen Position zu halten, in der die Informationen gelesen werden können.

2. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** das Querprofil des Randes (8) der Öffnung (7) der Behälterschale (4) die Form einer Stufe hat.

3. Verpackung nach einem der vorangehenden Ansprüche, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** der Rand (10) der Abdeckung (9) mit dem Rand (8) der Öffnung (7) der Behälterschale (4) übereinstimmt.

4. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1 oder 3, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** die Abdeckung (9) ein Querprofil hat, das mit dem der Öffnung (7) der Behälterschale (4) übereinstimmt, so daß die Abdeckung (9) in die Öffnung (7) eingreift.

5. Verpackung nach Anspruch 1 oder 3, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** der Boden (5) einen Schlitz (12) umfaßt, der auf das Innere der Behälterschale (4) zu vorsteht, und in den ein Griff (11) der Abdeckung (9) eingeführt und mit dem Schlitz (12) in Eingriff gebracht wird.

6. Verpackung nach Anspruch 5, **dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß** der Griff (11) und der Schlitz (12) als ein Stück mit der Abdeckung (9) bzw. dem Boden (5) hergestellt werden.

Revendications

1. Emballage pour des produits alimentaires en général et pour des produits allant au four en particulier, du type comprenant une barquette (4) dans laquelle les produits alimentaires (2) sont logés et qui a un fond (5), des parois latérales (6) qui sont pourvues d'informations destinées au consommateur et une ouverture (7) dont la périphérie est pourvue d'un bord (8) faisant saillie par rapport aux parois latérales (6), comprenant un emballage enveloppant (3) sous forme de film hermétique dans lequel la barquette (4) et les produits alimentaires (2) associés sont emballés, et comprenant un couvercle (9) prévu pour la barquette (4) disposé sous la barquette et à l'intérieur de l'emballage enveloppant sous forme de film, caractérisé en ce que ledit couvercle est assujéti de façon amovible à son fond (5) au moyen d'une poignée (11) prévue sur le couvercle et d'une gorge conjuguée (12) pré-

vue sur le fond et est pourvu au niveau de sa périphérie d'un bord faisant saillie (10) respectif afin de coopérer avec le bord (8) de l'ouverture (7) pour supporter l'emballage dans une position verticale dans laquelle les informations peuvent être lues.

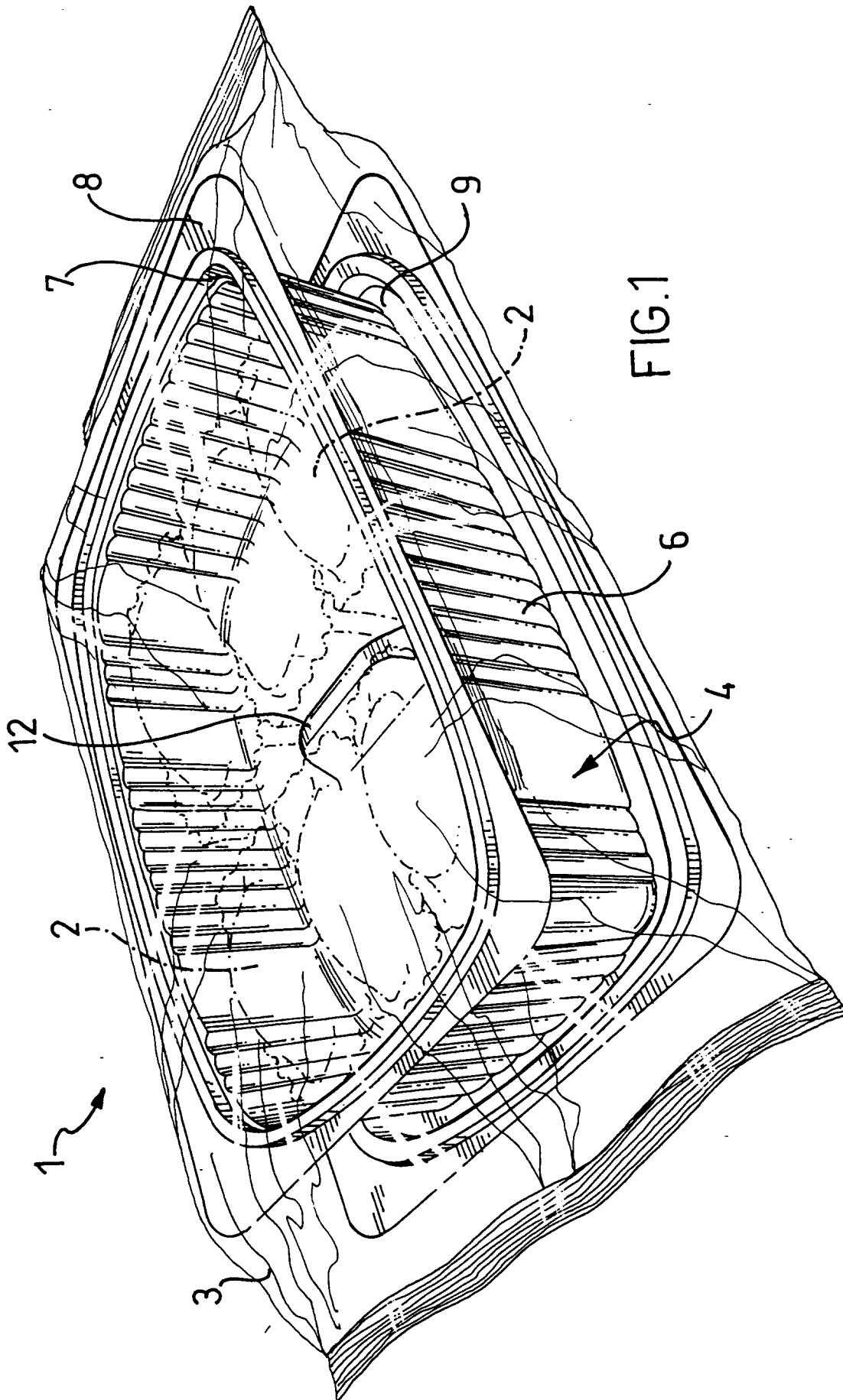
2. Emballage selon la revendication 1, caractérisé en ce que le profil transversal du bord (8) de l'ouverture (7) de la barquette (4) est en forme de marche.

3. Emballage selon l'une ou l'autre des revendications précédentes, caractérisé en ce que le bord (10) du couvercle (9) est homologué au bord (8) de l'ouverture (7) de la barquette (4).

4. Emballage selon la revendication 1 ou 3, caractérisé en ce que le couvercle (9) a un profil transversal homologué à celui de l'ouverture (7) de la barquette (4) pour l'engagement du couvercle (9) dans l'ouverture (7).

5. Emballage selon la revendication 1 ou 3, caractérisé en ce que le fond (5) comprend une gorge (12) qui fait saillie vers l'intérieur de la barquette (4) et dans laquelle une poignée (11) du couvercle (9) est insérée et est conjuguée avec la gorge (12).

6. Emballage selon la revendication 5, caractérisé en ce que la poignée (11) et la gorge (12) sont produites d'une seule pièce respectivement avec le couvercle (9) et le fond (5).



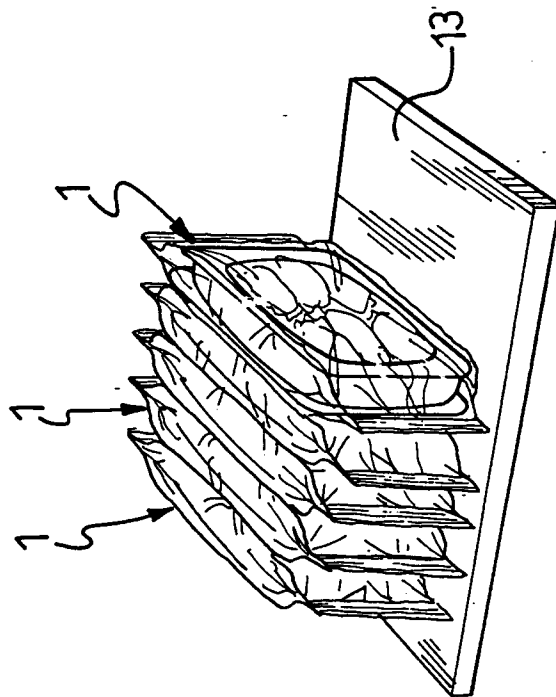


FIG. 2

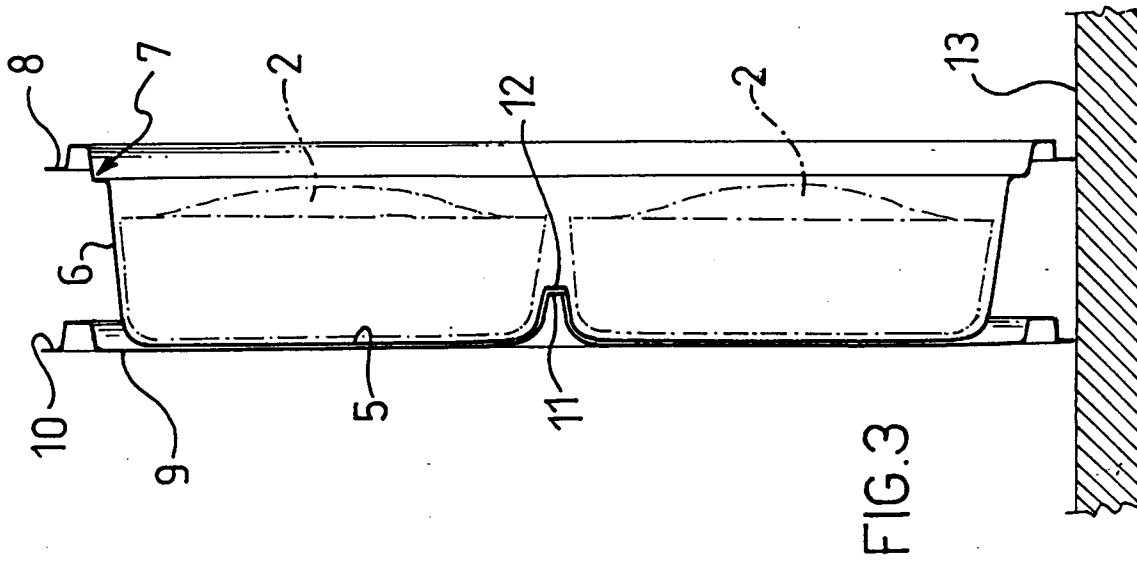


FIG. 3

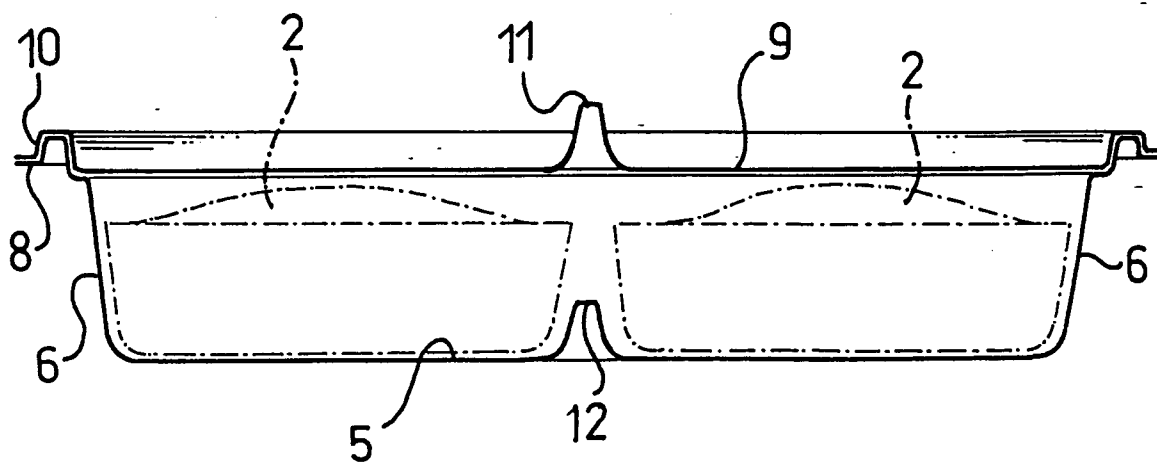
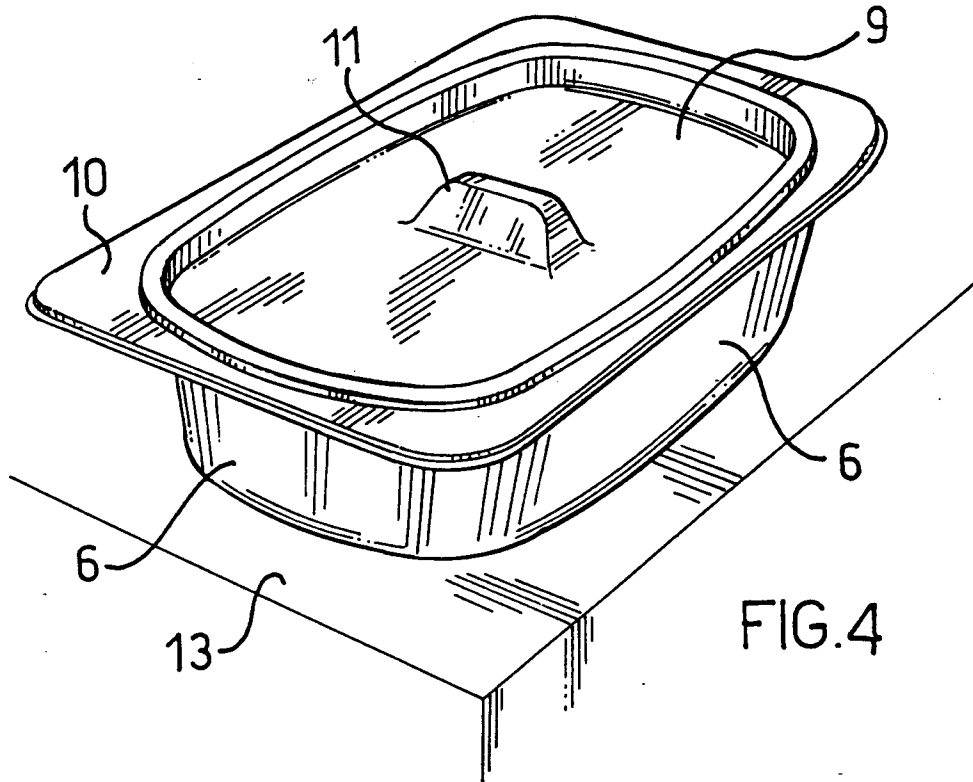


FIG. 5