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(54) **Package for food products and method for using the same**

(57) A package for a food products comprising a bucket-like chamber containing the treated food product and a reservoir chamber placed inside and above said bucket-like chamber, containing the fluid for the treatment of the food product, which chambers are connected to each other through means suitable in order to obtain the final edible product.

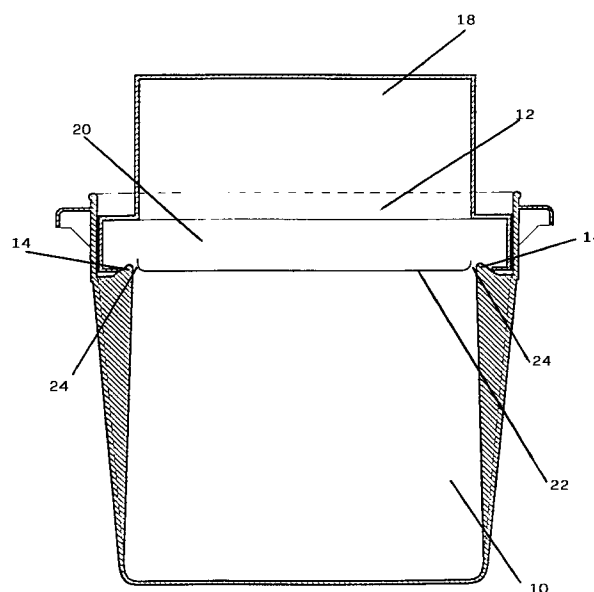


FIG. 2

EP 0 841 261 A2

Description

The present invention relates to a package for food products and a method for using the same.

It is well known to use food product packages, comprising solid food products, optionally frozen, deep-frozen or dehydrated and the possible separated, usually powdered additives, which represent the condiment of said products. The final edible food product is obtained by treatment with water and facultative subsequent heating.

Food products consisting of a base ingredient in single pieces and additional ingredient, which is the condiment applied on the surface of the base ingredient pieces as granules are further known.

The subsequent addition of water and the following heating allow a final edible product to be obtained.

Therefore such packages require the handling of parts of the food product package by the consumer and the addition of water and subsequent heating after the removal of the food product either combined or non-combined with its ingredients.

Therefore it would be a clear advantage to have a package comprising all the substances in order to obtain the final edible product.

An object of this invention is to provide a package for food products comprising all the additives and water or other fluid for the food product to be cooked inside the package together with the base ingredients without requiring addition of ingredients from the outside. It is hence clear that the advantage of avoiding contaminations and, as a consequence, of ensuring a microbiological quality of the final edible food product is available without the need of adding ingredients from the outside.

It is also an object of this invention to provide a package allowing the final food product to be obtained at room temperature without heating.

It is a further object of this invention a method for using this package, which allows the easy handling of its ingredients in order to obtain the final product.

A further advantage achieved after the preparation of the final edible food product has to be emphasized, namely the possibility of using the parts of said package for various use at the consumer's discretion such as containers for food products and so on.

The foregoing objects are accomplished by having a package for food products according to this invention with the features indicated in the characterizing part of claim 1. Further advantageous characteristics of said food product package are recited in the dependent claims.

The features, objects and advantages of the package will be more apparent from the following description and from the attached drawings pertaining to a non limiting example of an embodiment of this invention.

- Fig. 1 is a cross-sectional view of the package wherein said package is represented with its parts

as arranged before the preparation of the final edible product; and

- Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the package wherein said package is represented with its parts as arranged during the preparation of the final edible product.

Fig. 1 shows the package comprising a bucket-like chamber 10 containing the food product to be hydrated, preferably dehydrated rice, optionally combined with the condiment ingredients and a reservoir chamber 12 arranged in an upper position and containing sterile water for hydration, optionally added with condiment ingredients in order to obtain a cooking broth.

The bucket-like chamber 10 has internal beaks 14 extending inwards from the inside walls of the bucket-like chamber 10. This bucket-like chamber 10 is sealed at the top by a lid 16, preferably made of plastics, whose external perimeter leans upon the inside walls of the bucket-like chamber 10 and whose surface area is placed on the inside reservoir chamber 12, which comprises a lower concave part 18 placed inside the bucket-like chamber 10 and a closure portion 20 leaning upon said beaks 14 and sealed at the top by a film 22 of an easy-to-tear material, preferably aluminized plastic material.

Fig. 2 shows an embodiment of the package according to the invention during the preparation of the final edible product, said package comprising the bucket-like chamber 10, containing the food product, preferably as rice combined with ingredients during the hydration step, in contact with sterile water for hydration, preferably water with additives for a cooking broth in order to obtain the final product, preferably risotto and the reservoir chamber 12, rotated of 180 degrees from the position of Fig. 1, and having the closing portion 20 inserted in beaks 14 in a such position as to cause the film 22 to be pierced by said beaks 14, so as to obtain openings 24 for the fall of the hydration water inside the bucket-like chamber 10.

The above described various parts represented in Figs.1 and 2 are combined according to the method for using the package of this invention whose characterizing steps are recited in Claims 6 and its preferred embodiment is now described in detail.

The present package for food products may be of any suitable size according to the product amounts to be prepared. This package is opened by snap-releasing the lid 16, preferably made of plastics, and the reservoir chamber 12, containing in its lower part 18 the sterile water for hydration, preferably added with condiments for the risotto cooking broth, is taken out and rotated of 180 degrees from its original position, allowing the closing portion 20 to contact the beaks 14 of bucket-like chamber 10. By pressing down the said reservoir chamber 12 the aluminum sealing film 22 is pierced by the beaks 14 and this allows the sterile water for hydration, preferably being a cooking broth for risotto, to be poured

through lacerations 24 over the food product, which is preferably dehydrated rice, and included in the bucket-like chamber 10. In this way the hydration of the food product is obtained at room temperature. However the means to connect the chamber 10 with the reservoir chamber 12 could be in other forms such as a tear-off tab incorporated in the film 22, a partition sheet to be pulled out from the package and so forth.

According to this invention said hydration step occurs preferably in two hours, after which the removal of the upper reservoir chamber 12 from the bucket-like chamber 10 gives the edible product, preferably a product based on the risotto, optionally combined together with the condiments.

It is obvious that many modifications as many varieties of ingredients, which are comprised in the package can be made to the previously described preferred illustrative and non limiting embodiment in relation to both base food product and sterile water for hydration which represents the cooking broth. Variations and substitutions of parts with other functionally equivalent parts may be resorted to the present preferred embodiment without departing from the scope of the appended claims.

Claims

1. A package for food products characterized by the fact that said package comprises a bucket-like chamber (10), containing the food product to be hydrated, optionally combined with its ingredients, a reservoir chamber (12) containing water or other fluid with facultative condiment additives and means to connect said chambers in order to obtain the final food product.
2. A package for food products according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that said package comprises a bucket-like chamber (10) containing the food product to be hydrated, optionally combined with its condiment ingredients and a reservoir chamber (12) placed above and arranged inside said bucket-like chamber (10) containing sterile water for hydration optionally added with condiment ingredients, said bucket-like chamber (10) having internal beaks (14) and above a sealing lid (16) in contact with the outside and placed above the reservoir chamber (12), said reservoir chamber (12) comprising a lower concave part (18) inserted inside the bucket-like chamber (10), a closure portion (20) placed on beaks (14) of the bucket-like chamber (10) and sealed by a film (22) of an easy-to-tear material, where the bucket-like chamber (10) is rotated to cause the said film (22) to be pierced by the beaks (14).
3. A package for food products according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the food product contained in the bucket-like chamber (10) is dehydrated rice optionally combined in order to obtain the final product as risotto.
4. A package for food products according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that sterile water for hydration comprised in the reservoir chamber (12) is sterile water added with ingredients in order to obtain a cooking broth for the final product as risotto.
5. A package for food products according to claim 1, characterized by the fact that the lid (16) is made of plastics and the film (22) sealing the reservoir chamber (12) is made of aluminum.
6. A method for using the package according to any of the previous claims, characterized by the fact of contacting the dehydrated food product, optionally combined with other ingredients, and contained in the bucket-like chamber (10), with water or other fluid for hydration added with facultative condiments, contained in a reservoir chamber (12), by using means to connect each other in order to obtain the final edible product.
7. A method for using the package according to any of the previous claims, characterized by the fact of comprising the following steps:
 - a) opening the lid (16) sealing the package and external to the reservoir chamber (12) comprising the sterile water for hydration;
 - b) turning the reservoir chamber (12) of 180 degrees from its original position and contacting it with the beaks (14) being inside the bucket-like chamber (10);
 - c) pressing the reservoir chamber (12) downwards in order to allow the beaks (14) to pierce the film (22) sealing the reservoir chamber (12) and the sterile water to be poured over the food product comprised in the bucket-like chamber (10);
 - d) resting the food product in order to hydrate it and subsequently removing the upper reservoir chamber (12) in order to obtain the final edible product.
8. A method for using the package for food products according to claim 6, characterized by the fact that the step d) for hydration is carried out in two hours at room temperature.
9. A food product, preferably of risotto, when obtained according to the method for using the package of claims 6-7.

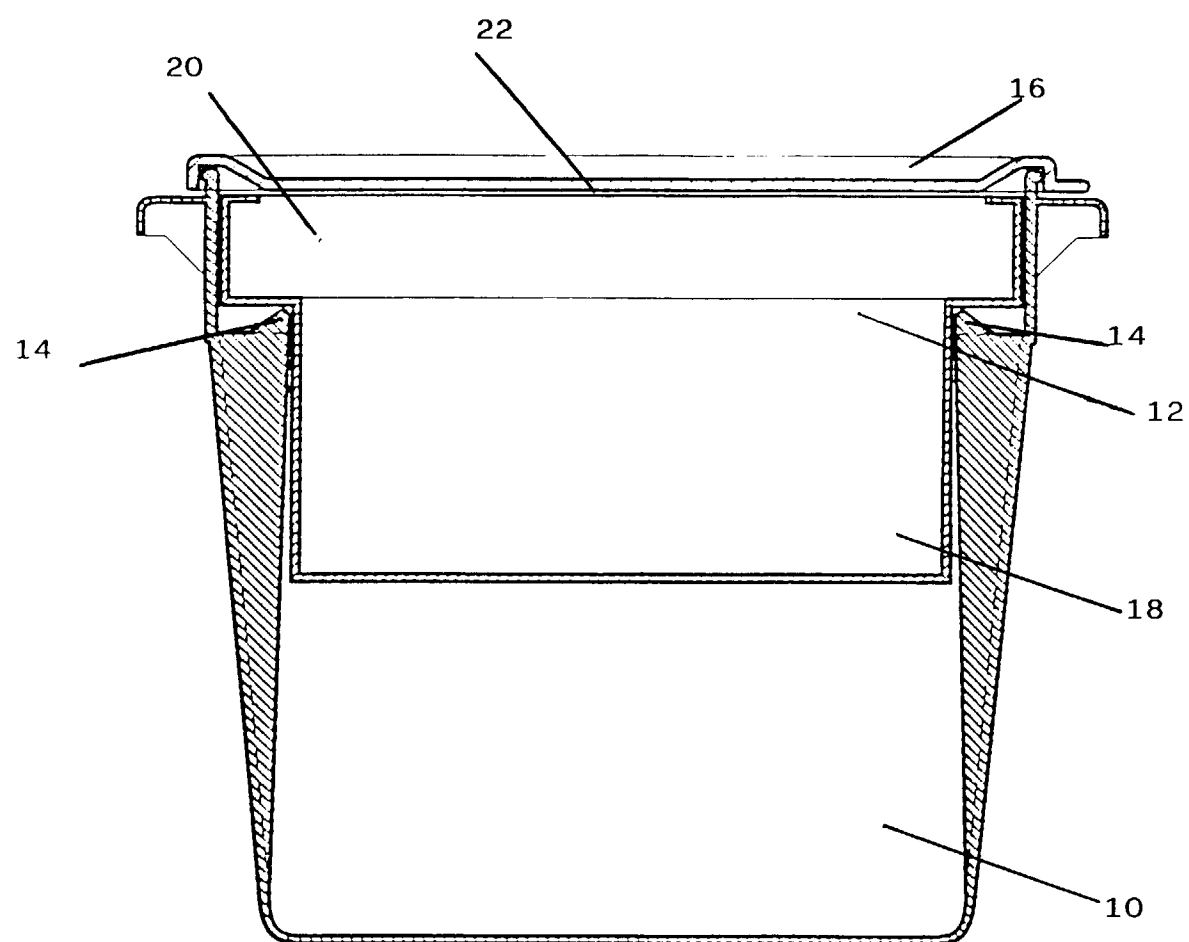


FIG. 1

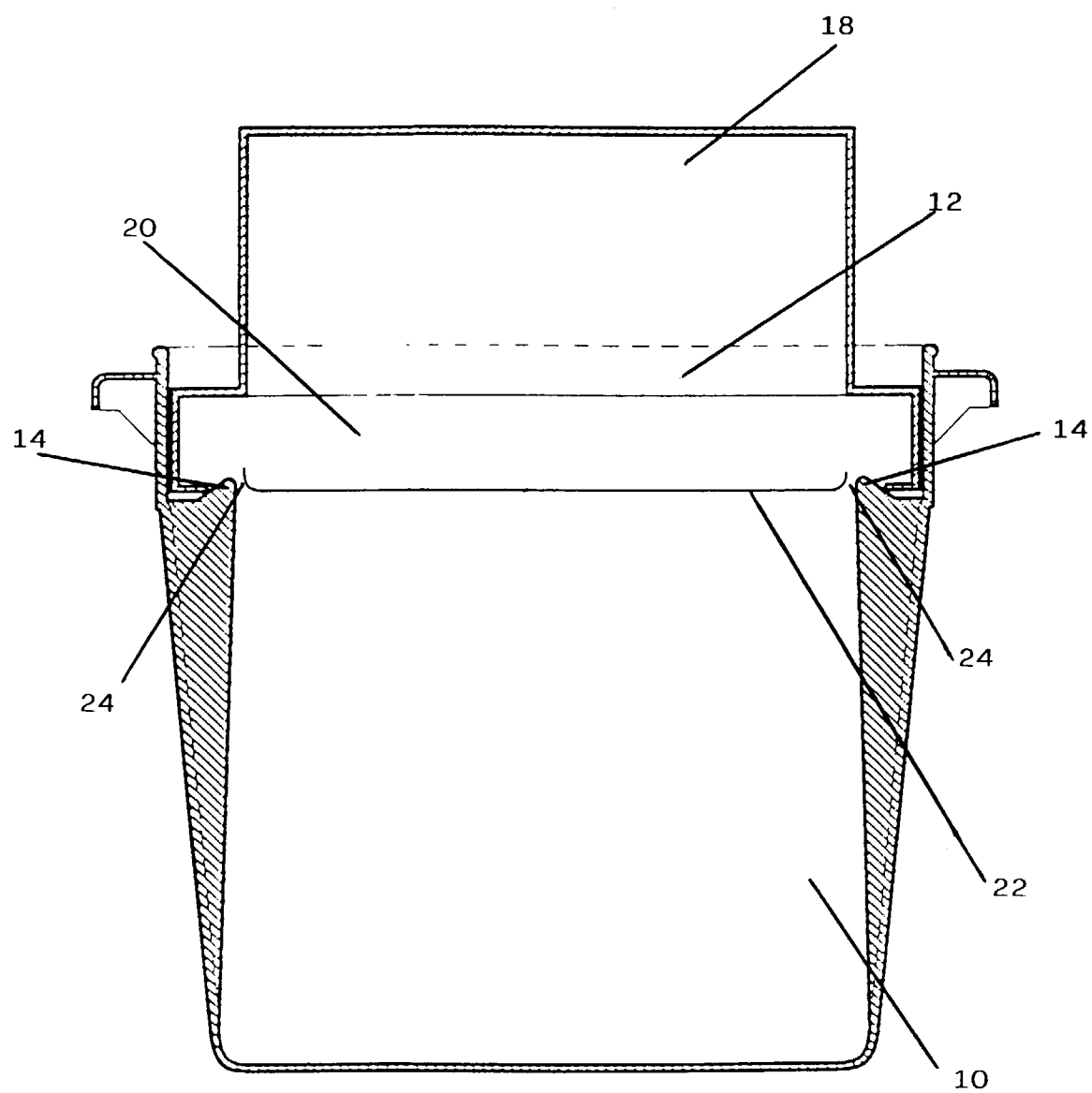


FIG. 2