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• **Moglia, Roberto**
43100 Parma (IT)

(74) Representative: **Zambardino, Umberto et al**
Botti & Ferrari S.r.l.
Via Locatelli, 5
20124 Milano (IT)

(71) Applicant: **BARILLA G. E R. FRATELLI S.p.A.**
43100 Parma (IT)

Remarks:

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86 (2)
EPC.

(72) Inventors:
• **Concari, Giuseppe**
43100 Parma (IT)

(54) **A package for dried pasta**

(57) The present invention concerns a package (10) for dried pasta in nests or bundles (12), arranged in a single layer, comprising a flattened parallelepiped container (10a), wherein a first (14) and a second (16) opposed large quadrilateral main walls, are spaced apart from one another, connected and stiffened together at their edges by a plurality of small side walls (18,20,22,24), of a reduced width, a first side wall (18) having a greater height than the side wall (20) opposed thereto, whereby the container (10a) has a substantially trapezoid cross-section and wherein, inside the container (10a), there is located a septum (36) substantially parallel to the second main wall (16) and spaced apart from the latter by a length substantially equal to the height of the layer of dried pasta.

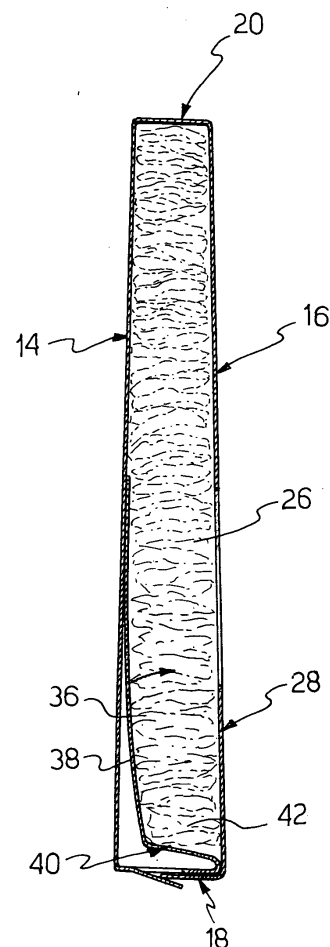


FIG. 2

Description

Technical field

[0001] The present invention refers to a package for dried pasta, arranged in a single layer, particularly but not exclusively intended for long pasta, wound around itself in the shapes commonly called nests or bundles or similar. Said package is of the type comprising a flattened parallelepiped container in which two large, quadrilateral main walls, placed opposite each other, are spaced apart, connected and stiffened together at their edges by a plurality of small side walls.

Known Art

[0002] In the known art, to pack dried pasta, for example said nests or bundles, in a single layer, substantially parallelepiped box containers are used, which are particularly flattened, since, to keep the pasta in the desired single layer arrangement, they must be only slightly higher than the height of the single layer itself.

[0003] It is well known that packages of this type require particular care during handling and storing operations, considering that the "resting" position on one of the larger walls is the position in which they remain stable: in particular, when they are placed on the shop shelves, these packages are normally stacked one on top of another up to a height which guarantees good stability.

[0004] Although advantageous from many points of view, the packages of the type described above have known drawbacks.

[0005] Firstly, there is a high risk of damaging both the products packed in a single layer and the packages themselves which, when stacked, are subjected to the weight of the overlying packages.

[0006] In particular, in the case of long, dried and notoriously fragile pasta, such as nests and bundles of pasta, the damage can be considerable and lead to breaking and crumbling of the packed product: it is easy to understand the disappointment of consumers when they find a broken nest or bundle. Furthermore, said risk of damage is increased when, as in most cases, one of the larger sides of the package is provided with a window to allow product "visibility".

[0007] One way, in the known art, to overcome this problem was to strengthen the package, with a consequent increase in the cost of the package itself.

[0008] Another way of limiting the risk of crushing was to reduce the size of the window so as to reduce the incidence of this weakening factor of the package: it is easy to understand that this choice is not appreciated from a commercial point of view.

[0009] Another serious disadvantage of the known art from the commercial point of view is that, when said packages are placed on the shelves for display, the largest surface of the packages, normally the one with the

most conspicuous advertising content, is hidden or difficult for the public to see: thus, the advertising message proves to be not so incisive and almost ineffective.

Summary of the invention

[0010] The problem underlying the present invention is to create a package for dried pasta of the so-called nest or bundle type, arranged in a single layer, capable of overcoming, simply, effectively and economically, all the above-mentioned drawbacks of the known art.

[0011] This problem is solved, according to the present invention, by a package of the type mentioned above characterized in that, in said container, a first one of said side walls has a greater width than the width of the side wall opposed thereto, whereby said container has a substantially trapezoid cross-section, and in that, in said container, there is located a septum substantially parallel to one of said main walls and spaced apart from the latter by a length which is substantially equal to the height of said single layer of dried pasta.

[0012] Advantageously said cross-section is substantially a right-angled trapezium.

[0013] For a better understanding of the characteristics and advantages of the package according to the present invention, a non-limiting embodiment thereof is described below and is illustrated in the appended drawings.

Brief description of the drawings

[0014]

Figure 1 shows schematically a perspective view of a package for foodstuffs having an elongated shape, particularly for nests and bundles of pasta, according to the present invention.

Figure 2 shows schematically a cross-section of the package illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 3 shows schematically a plan view from above of a precut blank for obtaining the package of figure 1.

Figure 4 shows schematically a perspective view of a shelf where the packages of this invention are displayed.

Detailed description of a preferred embodiment

[0015] With reference to the figures, a package for dried pasta, in particular the type arranged in a single layer in nests or bundles 12, is generally indicated with 10.

[0016] The package 10 comprises a container 10a, substantially a flattened parallelepiped box, with two opposite large, quadrilateral main walls, spaced apart from

one another, connected and stiffened together at their edges by a plurality of small side walls 18, 20, 22, 24.

[0017] The package 10 is preferably manufactured in cardboard for use in the food industry.

[0018] In accordance with one aspect of the present invention, one of said side walls of the container 10a, for example the side wall 18, has a greater width than the width of the side wall 20, placed opposite it, whereby said container 10a has a substantially trapezoid cross-section.

[0019] Advantageously, said cross-section is a right-angled trapezium and, in the container 10a, the main wall 14 is perpendicular to the above-mentioned side walls 18 and 20, while the opposite main wall 16 is inclined on them.

[0020] The width of the side wall 20 (shortest base of the right-angled trapezium) is equal to or slightly greater than the width of the single layer of dried pasta to be positioned inside the package 10 of the present invention.

[0021] The two remaining side walls 22 and 24 are equal and have a right-angled trapezium shape.

[0022] The main wall 16 is provided with a central, rectangular opening 26, closed by means of a transparent film. Moreover, said main wall 16 is provided with a weakening line 28a, which delimits a substantially rectangular portion 28 and which constitutes a so-called easy opening area in said main wall 16.

[0023] Said portion 28 comprises an appendix 30, preferably with an isosceles trapezium shape, which is folded over the side wall 18, where it is delimited by weakening lines. At its shortest base, said appendix 30 is further provided with a tongue 32 which, when pulled, separates said appendix from the side wall 18.

[0024] Preferably, the side wall 18 is provided with a slot 34 where the tongue 32 is inserted when the package is closed, and where the tongue 32 is held in place by the substantially elastic spring-back, caused by the shape memory of the two opposite sides of the slot 34.

[0025] Near the side wall 18, inside the package 10, there is a septum 36 which, with the main wall 16, defines a space 38 suitable to contain and hold a layer of nests or bundles of dried pasta. In other words, the septum 36 creates, with the main wall 16, a substantially parallelepiped space where the single layer of pasta is arranged and remains stable.

[0026] In order to guarantee even greater stability for the single layer of nests of pasta, the septum 36 is preferably elastically thrust towards the main wall 16, in other words it is sprung towards said wall.

[0027] For this purpose, in the given embodiment, one of the larger sides of the substantially rectangular septum 36 is bound, at one of its larger side, to the larger side 16a of the main wall 16 which forms, with the side wall 18, a corner of the container 10a. The septum 36 and the side wall 18 are one single piece and are separated from one another by a folding line 42, having a series of slits on its length.

[0028] The package 10 for foodstuffs having an elongated shape, particularly for nests and bundles of pasta, according to the present invention, is conveniently prepared from a cardboard precut blank 50, as illustrated for example in figure 3.

[0029] The portions of said precut blank 50 which are to constitute the main walls and the side walls of said container 10a, are indicated with the same reference number. As specified above, the septum is also preferably formed as an integral part of said precut blank 50 where, for this purpose, an "additional" portion 56 is envisaged, associated to the portion 18 (side wall 18) from which it is separated by a folding line 56a. It should be noted that this folding line 56a makes it possible for the respective portion 56 to be elastically moved, in one direction or another, around the line itself; for this reason, in the package of this invention, said folding line 56a substantially constitutes a means to elastically push the septum 36 towards the main wall 16.

[0030] Obviously, said septum 36 can be structurally independent from the precut blank 50, and be positioned in the package 10 at a later stage, with provisions still being made for suitable means to elastically thrust it towards the main wall 16.

[0031] The package 10 of the present invention can be safely and stably rested on its side wall 18 (standing position), as well as on one of its main walls (lying-down position).

[0032] It should be noted that in the standing position, thanks to the elastic septum, the single layer of pasta nests or bundles, always remains between the septum and the main wall 16, so reducing to a minimum the risk of damage.

[0033] To open the package 10, the final consumer raises the tongue 32, so causing separation first of the appendix 30 and then of the easy-opening portion 28. In this way, the final consumer can remove all of the product contained therein or only part of it. In fact, it is possible not to consume all the product immediately since the easy-opening portion 28 can be re-closed: it is sufficient to put the tongue 32 back into its original position and insert it into the slot 34. Thanks to the elastic septum 36, excellent stability of the product remaining in the package 10 is guaranteed.

[0034] The main advantage of the elongated package for foodstuffs, particularly for nests and bundles of pasta, according to the present invention, lies in that it can be positioned vertically on the shelves in such a way that its larger surface is completely visible to the customers.

[0035] Another advantage, directly consequential to the new vertical arrangement of the package according to the invention, is the possibility to provide a large opening 26 - the so-called window -, with relative improved visibility of the foodstuffs contained therein and, consequently, better commercial "desirability" of the product by the purchaser.

[0036] A further advantage, thanks to the elastic sep-

tum 36 and the easy-opening portion 28 which can easily be re-closed, is the possibility to consume only part of the food product with the certainty that the foodstuffs remaining inside will remain in a stable position without being damaged.

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Claims

1. A package (10) for dried pasta, particularly for long pasta wound around itself in nests or bundles (12), arranged in a single layer, comprising a flattened, parallelepiped container (10a), where a first (14) and a second (16) opposite large quadrilateral main walls, are spaced apart from one another, connected and stiffened together at their edges by a plurality of small side walls (18,20,22,24), of a reduced width, **characterized in that**, in said container (10a), a first (18) side wall has a greater width than the width of the side wall (20) opposed thereto, whereby said container (10a) has a substantially trapezoid cross-section, and **in that**, in said container (10a), there is located a septum (36) substantially parallel to said second main wall (16) and spaced apart from the latter by a length substantially equal to the height of said layer of dried pasta. 10 15 20 25
2. A package according to the claim 1, **characterized in that** said septum (36) is elastically thrust towards said second main wall (16). 30
3. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said cross-section is a right-angled trapezium and that, in the container, (10a) said second main wall (16) is perpendicular to said first side wall (18) and to the side wall (20) opposed thereto. 35
4. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said second main wall (16) is provided with at least one central opening (26) closed by a transparent film. 40
5. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said second main wall (16) is provided with a weakening line (28a) delimiting thereinside a substantially rectangular portion (28) which constitutes an easy opening portion. 45
6. A package according to any of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it is manufactured from a precut blank (50). 50
7. A package according to claim 6, **characterized in that**, in said precut blank (50), a portion (56) which is to constitute said septum (36) is defined as an integral part thereof. 55
8. A package according to claim 7, **characterized in**

that said portion (56) is associated to a portion which is to constitute a main wall (16, 18) and is separated from the latter by a folding line (56a), constituting a means to elastically thrust said septum (36) towards said main wall (16).

Amended claims in accordance with Rule 86(2) EPC.

1. A package (10) for dried pasta, particularly for long pasta wound around itself in nests or bundles (12), arranged in a single layer, comprising a flattened, parallelepiped container (10a), wherein a first (14) and a second (16) opposite large quadrilateral main walls, are spaced apart from one another, connected and stiffened together at their edges by a plurality of small side walls (18,20,22,24), of a reduced width, and wherein a first (18) side wall has a greater width than the width of the side wall (20) opposed thereto, whereby said container (10a) has a substantially trapezoid cross-section, **characterized in that**, in said container (10a), there is located a septum (36) bound to said first side wall (18) and substantially parallel to said second main wall (16) and spaced apart from the latter by a length substantially equal to the height of said layer of dried pasta, whereby said septum (36) and said second main wall (16) define, inside the container (10), a substantially parallelepiped space (38) suitable to contain and hold said layer of dried pasta
2. A package according to the claim 1, **characterized in that** said septum (36) is elastically thrust towards said second main wall (16).
3. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said cross-section is a right-angled trapezium and that, in the container, (10a) said second main wall (16) is perpendicular to said first side wall (18) and to the side wall (20) opposed thereto.
4. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said second main wall (16) is provided with at least one central opening (26) closed by a transparent film.
5. A package according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** said second main wall (16) is provided with a weakening line (28a) delimiting thereinside a substantially rectangular portion (28) which constitutes an easy opening portion.
6. A package according to any of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** it is manufactured from a precut blank (50).
7. A package according to claim 6, **characterized in that**, in said precut blank (50), a portion (56)

which is to constitute said septum (36) is defined as an integral part thereof.

8. A package according to claim 7, **characterized in that** said portion (56) is associated to a portion which is to constitute a main wall (16, 18) and is separated from the latter by a folding line (56a), constituting a means to elastically thrust said septum (36) towards said main wall (16).

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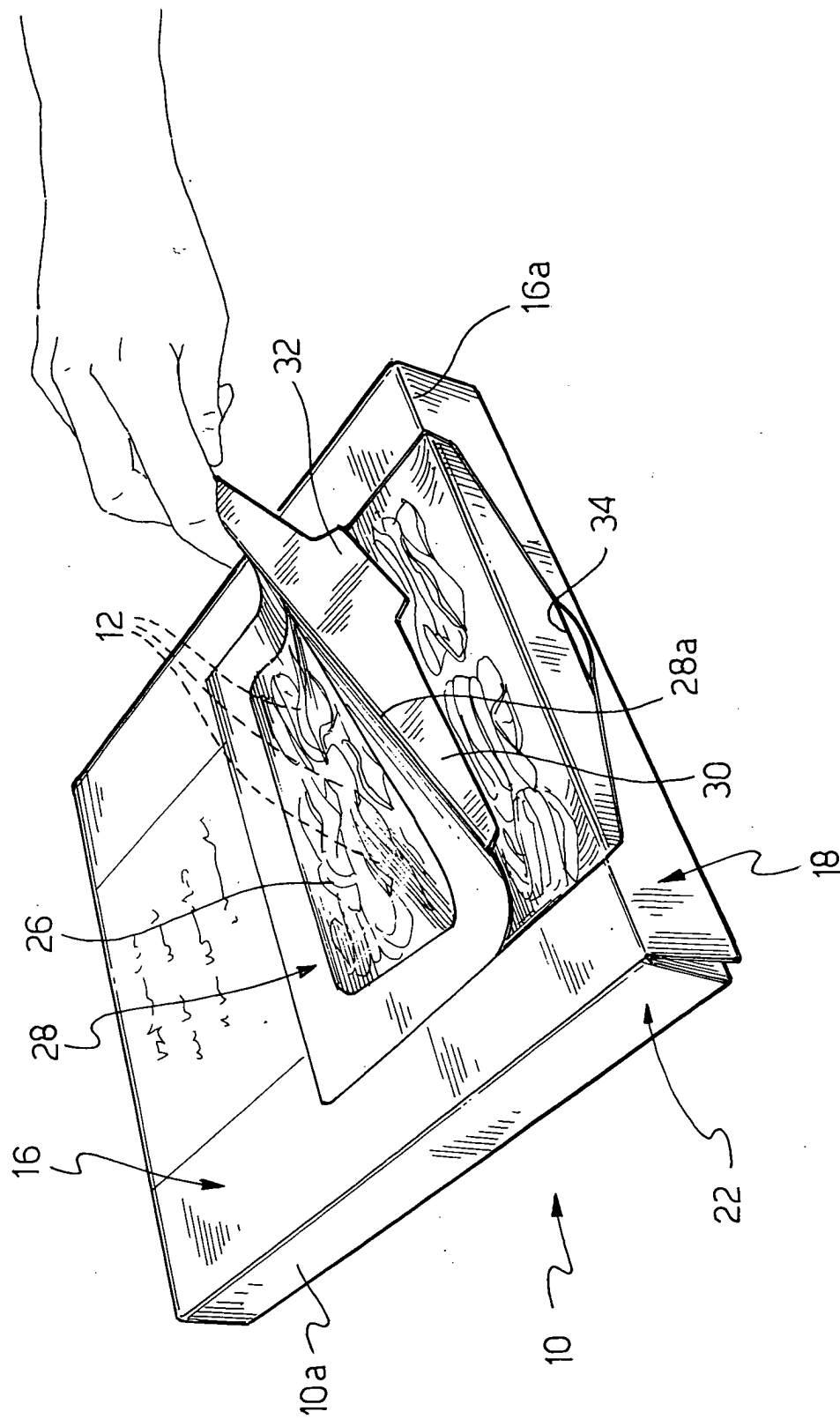


FIG. 1

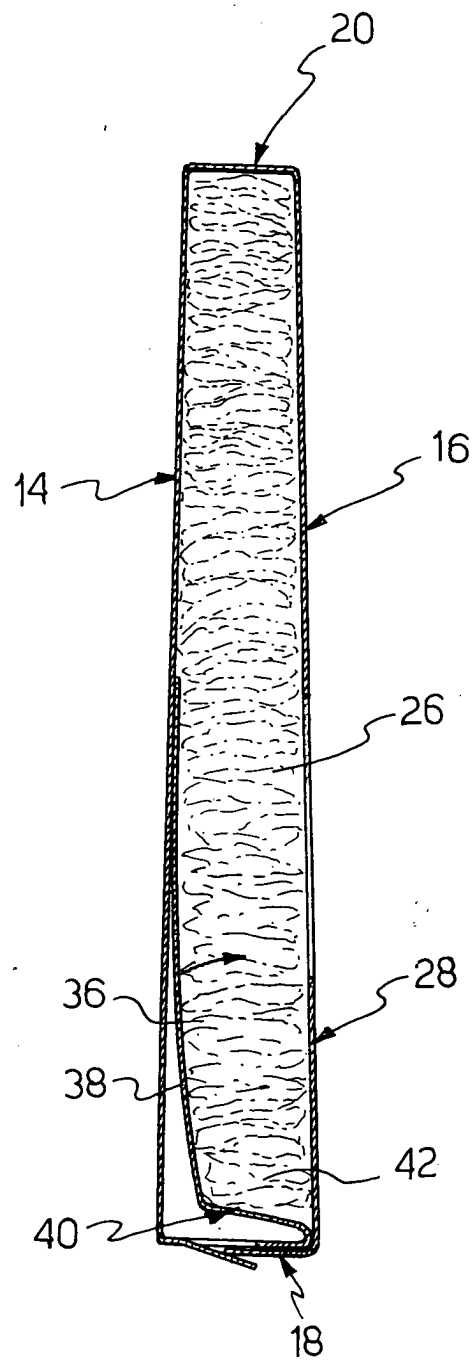


FIG. 2

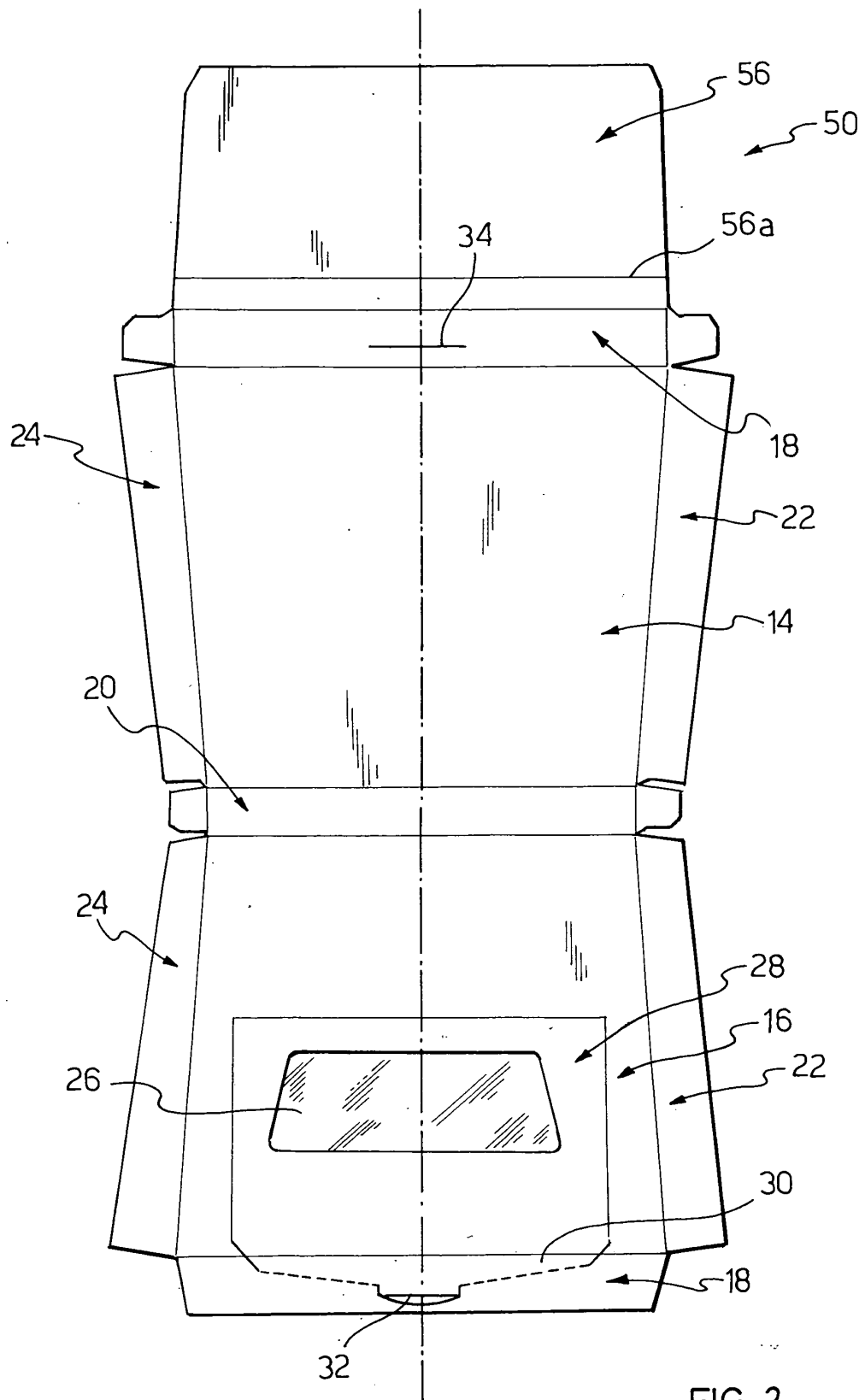


FIG. 3

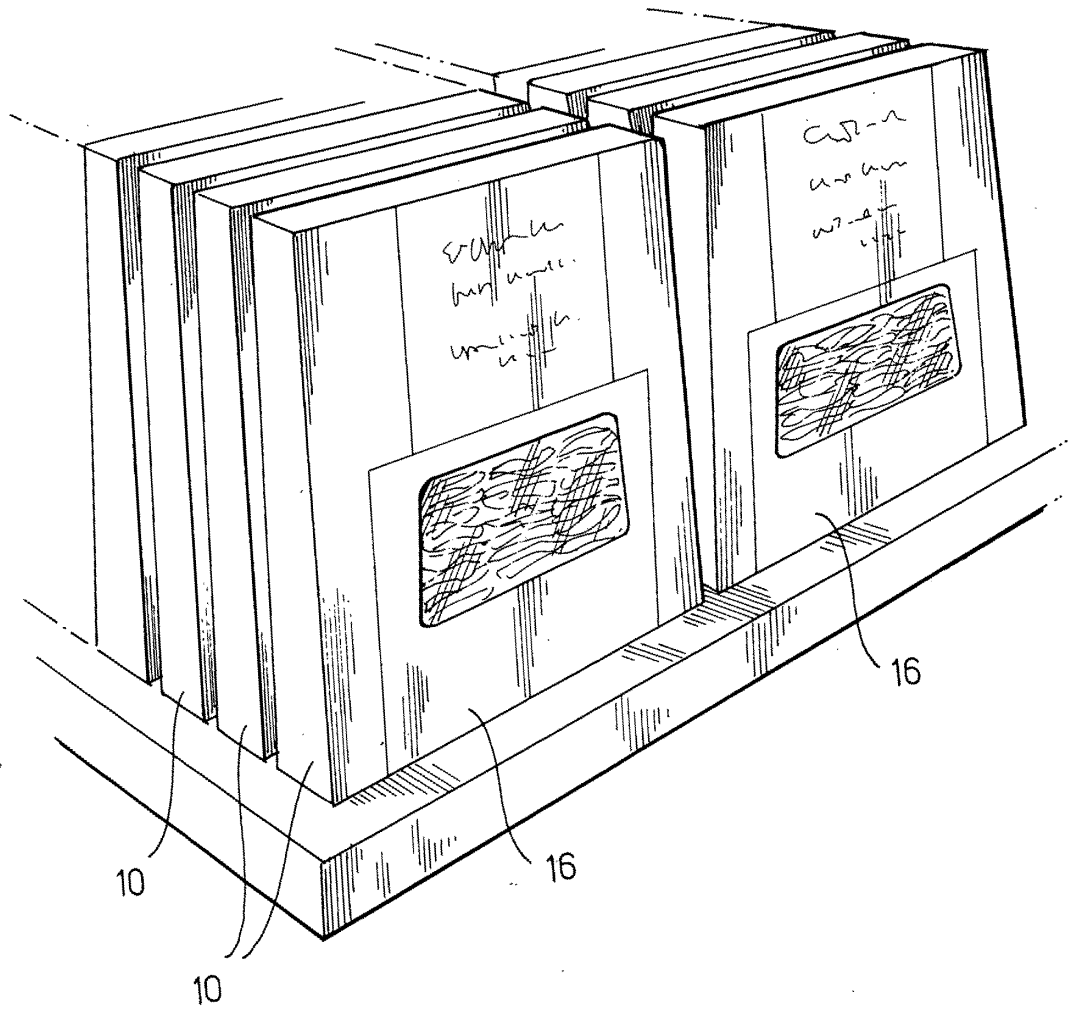


FIG. 4



European Patent
Office

EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 03 42 5711

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Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.7)
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			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.7)
			B65D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague		30 March 2004	Bridault, A
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			

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EPO FORM 1503 03/82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

EP 03 42 5711

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned European search report.
The members are as contained in the European Patent Office EDP file on
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