



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(88) Date of publication A3:
21.07.2010 Bulletin 2010/29

(51) Int Cl.:
B65B 9/04 (2006.01) B65B 25/04 (2006.01)

(43) Date of publication A2:
19.05.2010 Bulletin 2010/20

(21) Application number: **09175491.1**

(22) Date of filing: **10.11.2009**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE BG CH CY CZ DE DK EE ES FI FR GB GR HR HU IE IS IT LI LT LU LV MC MK MT NL NO PL PT RO SE SI SK SM TR
Designated Extension States:
AL BA RS

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(30) Priority: **12.11.2008 IT UD20080239**

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(54) **Method and plant for packaging fresh food products, such as fruit and vegetables, and food product thus packaged**

(57) A method for packaging a fresh food product (20), such as fruit and vegetables, provided externally with a protective peel, comprises at least a peeling step, in which the peel is removed from said product (20). After the peeling step, the method comprises at least a cover-

ing step, in which at least a covering film is associated with the external surface of said product (20). The method also comprises a molding step in which said covering film is made to adhere to the external surface of said product (20).

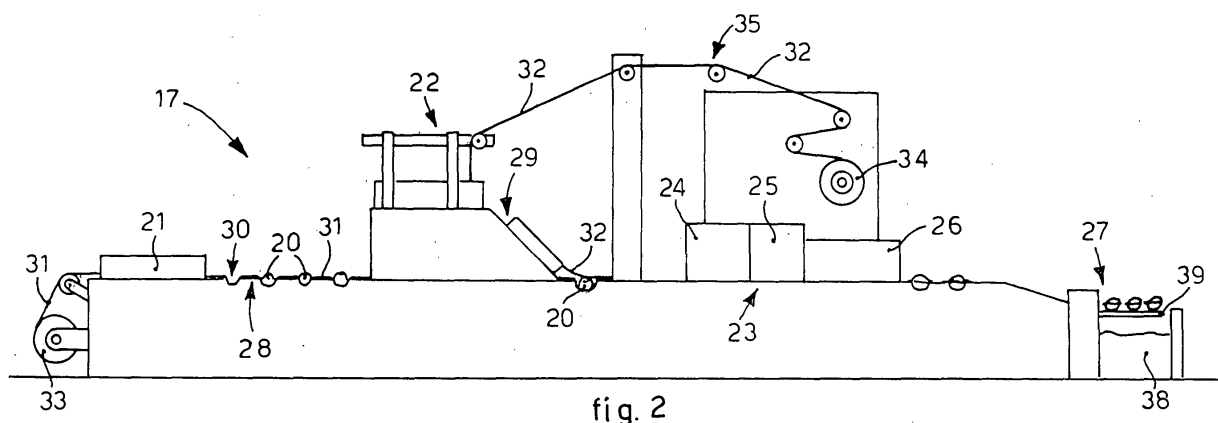


fig. 2



EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 09 17 5491

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (IPC)
Y	US 4 034 536 A (MAHAFFY REID A ET AL) 12 July 1977 (1977-07-12) * the whole document * -----	1-3, 10-12, 15,16	INV. B65B9/04 B65B25/04
Y	US 4 835 942 A (SKRMETTA RAPHAEL Q [US]) 6 June 1989 (1989-06-06) * the whole document * -----	1-3, 10-12, 15,16	
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (IPC)
			B65B
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search Munich		Date of completion of the search 15 June 2010	Examiner Ungureanu, Mirela
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>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</p> <p>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</p>			

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CLAIMS INCURRING FEES

The present European patent application comprised at the time of filing claims for which payment was due.

☐ Only part of the claims have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due and for those claims for which claims fees have been paid, namely claim(s):

☐ No claims fees have been paid within the prescribed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those claims for which no payment was due.

LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION

The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

see sheet B

☐ All further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for all claims.

☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, the Search Division did not invite payment of any additional fee.

☒ Only part of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the inventions in respect of which search fees have been paid, namely claims:

1-6, 10-13, 15, 16

☐ None of the further search fees have been paid within the fixed time limit. The present European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims, namely claims:

☐ The present supplementary European search report has been drawn up for those parts of the European patent application which relate to the invention first mentioned in the claims (Rule 164 (1) EPC).



**LACK OF UNITY OF INVENTION
SHEET B**

Application Number
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The Search Division considers that the present European patent application does not comply with the requirements of unity of invention and relates to several inventions or groups of inventions, namely:

1. claims: 1-3, 10-12, 15, 16

refers to a package, a method, and a plant for packaging a food product, with a special molding (sealing) step (unit)

2. claims: 4-6, 13

refers to a method and a plant for packaging a food product, with a special covering step (unit)

3. claims: 7, 8

refers to a method for packaging a food product, with a special anti-oxidizing treatment step

4. claims: 9, 14

refers to a method and a plant for packaging a food product, with a special shrinking step (unit)

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

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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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15-06-2010

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
US 4034536	A	12-07-1977	NONE	

US 4835942	A	06-06-1989	NONE	

EPO FORM P0459

For more details about this annex : see Official Journal of the European Patent Office, No. 12/82