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(54) **SEVERABLE FILM PACKAGE ENCLOSING STACKED CONFECTIONERY PRODUCT PIECES**

DURCHTRENNBARE FOLIENVERPACKUNG BEINHALTEND GESTAPELTE SÜSSIGKEITEN

EMBALLAGE EN FILM SECABLE CONTENANT DES PRODUITS DE CONFISERIE EMPILES

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Description

FIELD OF THE INVENTION:

[0001] The present invention relates generally to a package device for supporting and dispensing product pieces arranged in a stacked array. More particularly, the present invention relates to a film package formed around a vertically stacked array of confectionery product pieces which is severable along the length of the package to dispense to product.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION:

[0002] It is common to package and distribute various product pieces arranged in a vertically stacked array. In the confectionery industry, for example, candy pieces are often arranged in a longitudinally stacked array and are covered or wrapped in an outer wrapping forming an elongate stick-like package. Most often, the outer wrapper is formed of a foil or foil like material. While a paper or film wrapper may be placed over the foil, the foil is usually employed inasmuch as the foil can be opened and reclosed once one or more of the stacked candies are removed. Foil is known to have "dead fold" characteristics in that an extent of the foil which remains after removal of the candy can be folded down onto the opened end of the package to enclose the remaining candy pieces.

[0003] While the foil outer wrap serves adequately to hold, dispense and reclose the candies arranged in a stacked array, the use of foil as an outer wrapper does have certain disadvantages.

[0004] One disadvantage is that the foil forming the outer wrap is relatively expensive. Moreover, foil lacks the marketing and advertising potential of other less expensive materials. For example, many candy packages are formed of one or more layers of plastic film. The plastic film, in addition to being less expensive than metallic foil, is more easily manufacturable. Additionally, plastic film can be easily printed with product information, advertising and decorative indicia. Still further, plastic film can include transparent or translucent windows which allow viewing of the product contained therein. Features such as these are not readily applicable to foil wrappers. Therefore, with the use of foil, a second outer wrapper must be applied thereover so as to include informational indicia thereon. This also increases the cost of the packaging.

[0005] WO 2004/110880A1 discloses a packaged confectionery product in which a plurality of confectionery product pieces are arranged in a longitudinally stacked array and enclosed in a wrapper. The wrapper comprises a laminate including a metallic foil inner layer and an outer layer that provides structural integrity. The outer layer of the wrapper has a number of scored regions spaced longitudinally apart along one face of the confectionery package.

[0006] DE 9303965U1 discloses a package for stacked, sheet like objects such as napkins. The napkins are arranged in a plurality of partial stacks and enclosed within an outer wrapper. Lines of weakness are formed in the wrapper between each pair or adjacent partial stacks so that each partial stack can be removed from the package whilst remaining enclosed within a portion of the wrapper.

[0007] It is, therefore, desirable to provide an outer wrapper for stacked confectionery product pieces which overcomes many of the disadvantages associated with the use of metallic foil.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0008] In accordance with the invention, a packaging device enclosing confectionery product is provided for supporting and dispensing confectionery product as set out in claim 1. Further aspects of the inventive packaging device are set out in the claims dependent on claim 1.

[0009] The elements and features of the present invention may be better understood through a study of the following drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

[0010]

Figure 1 is a perspective side view of an embodiment of a packaging device of the present invention.

Figure 2 is a perspective side view of another embodiment of a packaging device of the present invention.

Figure 3 depicts a roll from which a sheet may be taken and employed with the embodiment as depicted in Figure 2.

Figure 4 depicts a roll from which a sheet may be employed with the embodiment as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 5A depicts an embodiment of a packaging device of the present invention with an adhesive thereon.

Figure 5B depicts an embodiment of a packaging device of the present invention with a tear strip therein,

Figures 6A through 6D depict the sheet having weakened portions in various positions, as may be used with the various embodiments of the present invention.

Figure 7 is a perspective side view of another embodiment of a packaging device of the present invention with a scored weakened portion.

Figure 9 depicts a roll from which a sheet may be employed with the embodiment as depicted in Figure 7.

Figure 11A, 11B, 11C, and 11D depict various configurations which the outermost confectionery product piece may take once at least one confectionery product piece is removed from the packaging device of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS:

[0011] The present invention provides various embodiments directed to a packaging device for supporting a plurality of confectionery product pieces in longitudinal or stacked array, in sealed accommodation. The packaging device provides retaining support for the plurality of confectionery product pieces as well as ease in dispensing one or more of the confectionery product pieces from the packaging 10. In accordance with the invention, the confectionery the product pieces, as used herein, are confectionery products, such as gum and candy, lozenges, stacked product pieces, and the like.

[0012] The embodiments of the present invention relate generally to a packaging device containing a plurality of confectionery product pieces that are arranged and packed in a longitudinally adjacent direction to one another. The packaging device of the present invention allows for the confectionery product pieces to be stored and dispensed from their longitudinally adjacent configuration. The packaging device of the present invention also allows a user to remove one or more confectionery product pieces from the package in an effective and efficient manner.

[0013] As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the packaging device 10 includes an elongate package 12. The elongate package 12 encloses a plurality of adjacent confectionery product pieces 18 in a longitudinal array. As additionally shown in Figures 3 and 4, the elongate package 12 may be configured from a sheet 14 or substrate which may be used to cover the plurality of pieces 18 in order to promote support and retention of the confectionery product pieces therein. The elongate package 12 may be made various types of plastic, as may be desired. The elongate package 12 may be composed of a sheet 14 of plastic or film wrap. While a sheet or film formed of resilient plastic is shown and contemplated herewith, the present invention contemplates employing a sheet of film formed of any material which is generally not readily rupturable, i.e., rupture-resistant, and rendering it rupturable as described hereinbelow. Other materials that may be employed include polyester (PET), metalized polyester (MPET), polyprolylene (OPP), Metalized polypropylene (MOPP), polyethylenes (PE's, including for example LDPE, MDPE, and HDPE), or polyethylene co-polymers (including LLDPE, EVA, and surlyn ionomer). Desirable characteristics of the sheet 14 used with the present invention include, for example, quality of barrier material provides, physical properties, scalability, and/or cost effectiveness.

[0014] The sheet 14 may be opaque, translucent, or transparent at one or more areas of the sheet 14, as may be desired. Further, in the case of translucent or transparent portions of the sheet 14, the visual aspects of the sheet 14 may be tinted or color-coded, for example, to correspond to different flavored or colored pieces 18 within. Also, the translucent or transparent portion of the sheet 14 may act as a window to allow a user to view the contents of the package. This may be desirable when the contents of the package have aesthetically pleasing design, including various colors, swirling effects, and the like. Additionally, the sheet 14 may correspond to one or more trademarks, trade names, or brand architecture, as may be desired. As such, the package 10 may be tied to the products 18 retained inside through one or more of these visual elements.

[0015] As noted above, the sheet 14, and more particularly, the plastic film is generally not readily rupturable and may be formed from a wide variety of materials, such as polyester or polyethylene. In addition, the sheet 14 is formed of a single layer.

[0016] After the sheet is wrapped around the pluralité of longitudinally stacked pieces 18, the sheet may be shrunken to fit tightly over the pieces 18, as may be done with the physical characteristics of the sheet 14 or through the application of heat or hot air to a surface of the sheet 14.

[0017] The plastic sheet 14 is more economical to manufacture and apply to the longitudinal stack of pieces 18 to eliminate the added bulk associated with folding and refolding the dead fold region of excess foil packaging. As plastic film may tend to be resilient and stretch, it may be difficult to break, as by tearing to dispense a consumable from a stack held within a plastic wrapper. The present invention contemplates employing a non-metallic sheet which is generally not readily tearable and rendering it tearable as described hereinbelow.

[0018] The packaging device 10 of the present invention allows a user to efficiently and effectively remove one or more pieces 18 from the elongate package 12 while, *inter alia,* allowing the user to remove the waste packaging with the pieces 18. Thus, the packaging device 10 of the present invention solves the problem of dead fold packages and the bulk of the waste associated with the dead fold of foil wrappers. As one or more of the pieces 18 is removed from the packaging device 10, so too is the portion of the elongate package 12 that the removed pieces 18 are wrapped in. Thus, as the pieces 18 may be removed from the packaging device 10 of the present invention, the packaging results in a clean edge or severed end of the packaging device. The present embodiments allow and promote a clean edge of the packaging device 10 after one or more pieces 18 may be severed and/or removed therefrom.

[0019] With reference to Figures 1-4, preferred embodiments of the packaging device 10 of the present inven-

tion include the package 12 having a plurality of longitudinally spaced apart weakened locations. The weakened locations 20 extend perimetrically around the package. As shown in Figure 1, the weakened locations 20 are positioned between adjacently stacked pieces. The weakened locations are discontinuous, spaced apart and generally parallel. The weakened locations may be formed by various techniques, including but not limited to perforations, score lines, laser cuts and the like. The weakened locations may be a pattern of interrupted, generally linear weakened locations extending straight across the package as shown in Figures 1 and 4 or may have a wavy configuration as shown in Figures 2 and 3. While the arrangement of the weakened locations 20 shown in Figures 1-4 is one preferred embodiment, other arrangements, locations and shapes are within the contemplation of the present invention. Moreover, while the weakened locations are shown as spaced apart locations, this need not be the case. Examples of other embodiments of the weakened locations and their arrangements are shown and described hereinbelow.

[0020] For example, the weakened locations 20 may be formed by placing perforations partially through the plastic sheet 14. In the alternative, the weakened location 20 may be formed by a laser cut placed partially through the sheet 14. Similarly, any type of scoring by mechanical means, weakening by UV light or electromagnetic radiation, or industrial solvent or chemical treatment, may be employed to form the weakened locations 20 partially through the plastic sheet 14.

[0021] The weakened location 20 may take one or more forms, as may be desired. For example, the weakened location 20 may be interrupted (discontinuous) or continuous. The interrupted weakened locations 20 in the sheet 14 of the elongate package 12 may be the result of chemical treatment to the wrapper, UV radiation or other light treatment, perforation, indentation, or a partial cut. As shown in Figures 3 and 4, the weakened locations 20 may be produced on the sheet 14 prior to its formation around the plurality of consumables 18 as the elongate package 12. Also, the weakened locations 20 may be formed on the sheet 14 before it is configured into the elongate packaging 12 or after the packaging device 10 is assembled.

[0022] The weakened locations 20 may be arranged to be placed only partially through the sheet so as to maintain the environmental and sealing capabilities of the sheet 14 placed over the plurality of confectionery product pieces 18. These weakened locations 20 are sufficiently deep so as to allow a tearable force to rip or sever the sheet 14 upon twisting or tearing the piece from the packaging device 10. The depth of the weakened location may be selected so as to regulate the amount of force necessary to tear the sheet 14 to sever the elongate package 12 at a desired location. While it is preferred that the weakened locations extend only partially through the sheet, in certain instances where environmental sealing may not be necessary, the weakened locations 20 may extend fully through the elongate package 12.

[0023] As shown in Figures 6A-6D, the depth of the weakened location 20 may be selected so as to regulare the amount of force necessary to puncture the sheet 14 at a desired location or tear region.

[0024] In addition, it may be desirable for a user to be able to tactilely line up their grip to the elongate package to accord severing, so the outside 32 of sheet 14 may include the weakened location 20 (Figure 6A). Alternatively, it may be desirable for a user to feel a continuous smooth outer side 32 of sheet 14, thus the weakened location 20 may be placed on the inside 34 of sheet 14 (Figure 6B). As may be appreciated, the weakened location 20 may be placed on both sides, either aligned or not aligned as shown in Figures 6C and 6D.

[0025] With the weakened location 20 of the elongate package 12, the packaging device 10 need not be peeled back or torn in order to remove or dispense product. Rather, a user may apply pressure to the weakened location, for example, by exerting a twisting or angled force to the entire packaging device 10 in order to remove a portion of the elongate package 12 from the package device 10. Within the remove portion is included one or more pieces 18, along with the removed portion of sheet 14 that was part of the elongate package 12. The user may easily remove a piece 18 from the elongate package 12 while at the same time reducing the size and "dead packaging", or used waste wrapper, associated with the packaging device 10. One or more confectionery pieces may be dispensed at one time. The user simply adjusts their grip to the desired area along the packaging device, and twists accordingly.

[0026] Examples of various arrangements of the weakened locations 20 are shown in Figures 11A-11B. It may, however, be appreciated that such examples should not be considered limiting.

[0027] The weakened location 20 may line up where two pieces 18 touch or lie adjacent to one another, so that when a user removes one or more confectionery product piece from the package 10. a clean edge may result on the edge of the packaging device with the outer edge of one piece 18a. This is depicted, for example, in Figure 11A. The weakened location 20 may also be configured such that once one or more confectionery product piece are removed from the packaging device. 10, the outermost piece 18b may sit partially out of the enclosed packaging 12 such that it appears slightly out of the severed sheet 14 line as in Figure 11B. As shown in Figure 11C, the weakened region 20 may also be configured such that once one or more pieces are removed from the packaging device 10, the outermost piece 18c sits within the enclosed packaging 12, such that there is a partial lip or edge created by the torn or severed sheet 14 of enclosed packaging 12 that extends beyond the edge of the outermost confectionery product piece 18c. Further, as depicted in Figure 11D, the packaging device 10 may have a weakened location that is non-parallel, such that the removal of one or more pieces 18 from the packaging

device 18 may result in the outermost pieces 18 partially protruding from an outer edge of the elongate package 12 in such a manner that a larger portion of either a top or bottom of the piece 18c protrudes from said package. In certain circumstances, it may be desirable for a user to remove at least one piece 18 from the packaging device and have the outermost piece 18 be partially exposed from said enclosed packaging 12 in order to allow a user to grip said piece 18 for a future removal, as may be the case in Figures 11B and 11D. It may also be advantageous for the outermost piece to be more protected by said enclosing package 12, as may be the case with configurations depicted in Figures 11A and 11C.

[0028] It may be desirable for the package device 10 to further include a tie (not shown). The tie may be used to tie off the end of an open elongate package 12 to prevent undesired materials from entering the elongate package 12 and/or to prevent the confectionery product piece 18 from exiting the package. The tie may be composed of one or more desired materials. The tie may be configured onto the elongate package or otherwise movable to as to be reusable as one or more consumables 18 are continually removed from the package 12. The tie may be non-rigid, semi-rigid, or rigid such that the tie may be knotted, twisted, or folded in order to retain the elongate packaging in a closed position.

[0029] The arrangement of Figure 11D also shows the weakened location 20 to be longitudinally continuous along the length of package 12, rather than discontinuous and spaced apart as shown in Figures 1-4 and 11A-11C.

[0030] It should be noted that though the weakened region 20 depicted in Figures 11A through 11D may take one or more of the forms, including continuous or discontinuous. Moreover, the weakened locations may be parallel, perpendicular, or placed in a pattern or configuration, as may be desired in order to promote a tear region at a particular site once a predetermined level of force is applied to the packaging device 10.

[0031] Also, with the removal of the packaging along with the pieces, there is no longer any dead packaging that the user must carry around with the remainder of the non-consumed confectionery product pieces. Thus, the user need not rustle or make noise with the dead fold packaging in order to remove future confectionery product pieces from the package. So, the packaging device of the present invention is less noisy than dead fold type packages.

[0032] As shown in Figures 5B, weakened location 20 may further include one or more tear strips 42. The tear strip 42 may extend longitudinally along the length of package 12 or may be perimetrically, wound around the package 12 in similar manner as shown in Figures 11A through 11D, replacing the weakened location 20 shown therein. In such an instance, one or more individual tear strips 42 may be employed, as may be desired.

[0033] The tear strip 42 may be accompanied by one or more weakened locations 20, in one or more patterns or configurations as may be desired. In use, the tear strip may allow a user to tear a portion of the elongate package in order to remove the piece 18 from the elongate package prior to consumption. The tear strip 42 may be partially torn through the elongate package 12 either prior to or subsequent to the manual force that may be applied by a user to separate one or more pieces 18 from said packaging device 10. Thus, the tear strip 42 may aid a user in removing one or more pieces from the enclosing package 12, which may securely otherwise encase the piece once it is severed from the main packaging device 10.

[0034] This is particularly beneficial, for example, when the pieces 18 are individually wrapped with a wrapper. When the pieces 18 are individually wrapped, each piece 18 may be protected from environmental concerns, so a complete region extending through the sheet 14 from the inside 34 to the outside 32 of sheet 14 may be employed. As each of the pieces 18 may be individually wrapped with wrapper 16, the user may discard the wrapper 16 along with the removed portion of the elongate package 12.

[0035] As shown in Figures 7 and 9, one technique for providing the weakened locations 20 is to place score linens 22 or perforations directly at the site where the edges of the consumables 18 are adjacent to one another. As discussed with respect to Figures 11A through 11C, the score lines or perforations may be arranged in various positions with respect to pieces 18.

[0036] The various embodiments of the packaging device 10 of the present invention may further include a means for retaining the pieces 18 within the elongate package 12. The retaining means may include, for example, releasably bonding the pieces 18 to the inner surface 34 of the sheet 14. In such a manner, the bond may be selected from one or more of adhesives, heat seals, and combinations thereof. Various glues or adhesives may be employed, as may be desired. The adhesive may be edible in the case where the adhesive is directly contacting the unwrapped pieces 18. Alternatively, the adhesive or hot seal may be administered to the wrapper 16 of the confectionery product piece 18, in instances where each confectionery product piece 18 is individually wrapped within the elongate wrapper 16.

[0037] The adhesive or other adhering means may be administered on a line 43 along the length of the inner wall 34 (as shown in Figure 5A) and/or as dabs 38 along the inner wall 34 in order to secure each of the plurality of pieces 18 to the package 12. In such a manner, once the elongate package 12 is severed and at least one confectionery product piece 18 is removed therefrom, the remainder of the pieces 18 remain retained within the package 12 unless and until the proper tearing force is applied externally to the package 12 to sever and/or remove additional pieces 18 therefrom.

[0038] Moreover, the art is replete with examples of different configurations, styles and arrangements to perforations which facilitate puncturing, tearing or ripping of various substrates. One, more, or a combination of these

examples may be likewise employed with the various embodiments of the present invention. Reference is made to the following U.S. patents and publications: U.S. Patent Nos. 3,583,558; 5,041,317, 5,496,605; 5,616,387; 6,105,776; 6,213,132; 6,277,459; 6,983,857; 7,011,226; 7,138,169; 7,311,649; and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0156018.

[0039] As may be seen by the above-referenced patents and publications, the configuration, arrangement and location of perforations may be selected for enhancing the ability of the sheet to rupture or rip or may be selected for aesthetic or manufacturing requirements.

[0040] Various changes to the foregoing described and shown structures would now be evident to those skilled in the art. Accordingly, the particularly disclosed scope of the invention is set forth in the following claims.

Claims

1. A packaging device enclosing and for supporting and dispensing confectionery product comprising:

a plurality of adjacent confectionery product pieces (18) arranged in a longitudinally stacked array;

an elongate package (12) having a wall of a single sheet (14), said elongate package encloses said stacked array of confectionery product pieces (18);

characterised in that the wall is a single layer sheet and **in that** said package has a plurality of weakened locations (20) extending perimetrically about said package spaced apart longitudinally along the length of said package permitting manual severing of the package at locations therealong to open said package to dispense said confectionery product pieces.

2. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) extend partially through said package.

3. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are selected from the group consisting of perforations, score lines, tear strips and combinations thereof.

4. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are positioned between said adjacently stacked confectionery product pieces (18).

5. A packaging device of claim 4 wherein said weakened locations (20) are generally parallel.

6. A packaging device of claim 5 wherein said weakened locations (20) extend about said package generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said package (12).

7. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are non-parallel with respect to one another.

8. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are positioned so as to overlie said stacked confectionery product pieces (18).

9. A packaging device of claim 1 including means for retaining said confectionery product pieces (18) within said package (12).

10. A packaging device of claim 9 wherein said retaining means includes releasably bonding said confectionery product pieces to an inner surface of said package.

11. A packaging device of claim 10 wherein said bond is selected from the group consisting of adhesives, heat seals or combinations thereof

12. A packaging device of claim 1 wherein said confectionery product pieces (18) are individually wrapped.

13. A package device of claim 1, further wherein said elongate package (12) is formed of plastic.

14. A package device of claim 13 wherein said plastic is selected from the group consisting of polyester, polyethylene and combinations thereof.

15. A package device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are identically configured.

16. A package device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are differently configured.

17. A package device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are configured from patterns selected from the group consisting of lines, dots, letters, shapes and combinations thereof.

18. A package device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are symmetrically positioned at each contact point of at least two confectionery product pieces (18).

19. A package device of claim 1 wherein said weakened locations (20) are asymmetrically positioned at each contact point of at least two confectionery product pieces (18).

20. A package device of claim 1, further comprising a wrapper enclosing each of the plurality of confectionery product pieces (18), the wrapper of each confectionery product piece adhered to an inside wall of

the elongate package (12) by an adhering means, said adhering means retaining the plurality of confectionery product pieces in the package after the package has been severed.

Patentansprüche

1. Verpackungsvorrichtung, die ein Süßwarenprodukt umhüllt, und zum Aufnehmen und Abgeben dessen, aufweisend:

   eine Mehrzahl an benachbarten Süßwarenproduktstücken (18), die in einer der Länge nach geschichteten Reihe angeordnet sind;
   eine längliche Verpackung (12) mit einer Wand aus einer einzelnen Schichtlage (14), wobei die längliche Verpackung die geschichtete Reihe der Süßwarenproduktstücke (18) umhüllt;
   dadurch gekennzeichnet,
   dass die Wand eine einzelne Lage ist und dass die Verpackung eine Mehrzahl an Schwachstellen (20) aufweist, die sich umlaufend um die Verpackung und
   in Längsrichtung beabstandet voneinander entlang der Länge der Verpackung erstrecken, wodurch es ermöglicht wird, dass die Verpackung an Stellen dort entlang von Hand abgetrennt werden kann, um die Verpackung zu öffnen,
   damit die Süßwarenproduktstücke abgegeben werden können.

2. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei sich die Schwachstellen (20) teilweise durch die Verpackung erstrecken.

3. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) ausgewählt sind aus der Gruppe, bestehend aus Perforationen, Nutlinien, Reißfäden und Kombinationen davon.

4. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei sich die Schwachstellen (20) zwischen den benachbart geschichteten Süßwarenproduktstücken (18) befinden.

5. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 4, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) im Allgemeinen parallel sind.

6. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 5, wobei sich die Schwachstellen (20) um die Verpackung im Allgemeinen senkrecht zur Längsachse der Verpakkung (12) erstrecken.

7. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) in Bezug zueinander nicht parallel sind.

8. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) derart positioniert sind, dass sie über den geschichteten Süßwarenprodukten (18) liegen.

9. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, die ein Mittel zum Festhalten der Süßwarenproduktstücke (18) in der Verpackung (12) umfasst.

10. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 9, wobei das Mittel zum, festhalten eine lösbare Verbindung der Süßwarenprodukte mit der Innenfläche der Verpackung umfasst.

11. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 10, wobei die Verbindung ausgewählt ist aus der Gruppe, bestehend aus Klebstoffen, Heißversiegelungen oder Kombinationen davon.

12. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Süßwarenproduktstücke (18) einzeln eingepackt sind.

13. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die längliche Verpackung (12) des Weiteren aus Kunststoff gebildet ist.

14. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 13, wobei der Kunststoff ausgewählt ist aus der Gruppe, bestehend aus Polyester, Polyethylen und Kombinationen davon.

15. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) identisch gestaltet sind.

16. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) unterschiedlich gestaltet sind.

17. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) aus Mustern gestaltet sind, die ausgewählt sind aus der Gruppe, bestehend aus Linien, Punkten, Buchstaben, Profilen und Kombinationen davon.

18. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) symmetrisch zu jedem Kontaktpunkt von mindestens zwei Süßwarenproduktstücken (18) positioniert sind.

19. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, wobei die Schwachstellen (20) asymmetrisch zu jedem Kontaktpunkt von mindestens zwei Süßwarenproduktstücken (18) positioniert sind.

20. Verpackungsvorrichtung nach Anspruch 1, des Weiteren aufweisend eine Hülle, die jedes der Mehrzahl von Süßwarenproduktstücken (18) umhüllt, wobei

die Hülle von jedem der Süßwarenproduktstücke an der Innenwand der länglichen Verpackung (12) durch ein Haftmittel anhaftet, wobei das Haftmittel die Mehrzahl von Süßwarenproduktstücken in der Verpackung festhält, nachdem die Verpackung abgetrennt wurde.

Revendications

1. Dispositif de conditionnement destiné à contenir, supporter et distribuer des produits de confiserie, comprenant :

une pluralité de paquets de produits de confiserie (18) adjacents, agencés en un groupement empilé de manière longitudinale ;
un emballage allongé (12) présentant une paroi constituée d'une feuille unique (14), ledit emballage allongé contenant ledit groupement empilé de paquets de produits de confiserie (18) ;
caractérisé en ce que la paroi est une feuille à une seule couche et **en ce que** ledit emballage présente une pluralité d'emplacements affaiblis (20) qui s'étendent de manière périmétrique autour dudit emballage et qui sont espacés de manière longitudinale sur la longueur dudit emballage en permettant une séparation manuelle de l'emballage au niveau d'emplacements le long de celui-ci afin d'ouvrir ledit emballage pour distribuer lesdits paquets de produits de confiserie.

2. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) s'étendent en partie à travers ledit emballage.

3. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont sélectionnés dans le groupe constitué par des perforations, des lignes de rupture, des bandes de déchirure et des associations de celles-ci.

4. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont positionnés entre lesdits paquets de produits de confiserie (18) empilés de manière adjacente.

5. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 4, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont généralement parallèles.

6. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 5, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) s'étendent autour dudit emballage de manière généralement perpendiculaire à l'axe longitudinal dudit emballage (12).

7. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) ne sont pas parallèles les uns par rapport aux autres.

8. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont positionnés de façon à recouvrir lesdits paquets empilés de produits de confiserie (18).

9. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, comprenant un moyen pour retenir lesdits paquets de produits de confiserie (18) à l'intérieur dudit emballage (12).

10. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 9, dans lequel ledit moyen de retenue comprend un collage libérable desdits paquets de produits de confiserie sur une surface intérieure dudit emballage.

11. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 10, dans lequel ledit collage est sélectionné dans le groupe constitué par des adhésifs, des soudages à chaud ou des associations de ceux-ci.

12. Dispositif de conditionnement selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits paquets de produits de confiserie (18) sont enveloppés de manière individuelle.

13. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel en outre ledit emballage allongé (12) est constitué de plastique.

14. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 13, dans lequel ledit plastique est sélectionné dans le groupe constitué par un polyester, un polyéthylène et des associations de ceux-ci.

15. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont configurés de manière identique.

16. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont configurés de manière différente.

17. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont configurés selon des motifs sélectionnés dans le groupe constitué par des lignes, des points, des lettres, des formes et des associations de ceux-ci.

18. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont positionnés symétriquement au niveau de chaque point de contact de deux paquets de produits de confiserie (18) au moins.

19. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, dans

lequel lesdits emplacements affaiblis (20) sont positionnés asymétriquement au niveau de chaque point de contact de deux paquets de produits de confiserie (18) au moins.

20. Dispositif d'emballage selon la revendication 1, comprenant en outre un emballage contenant chacun de la pluralité de paquets de produits de confiserie (18), l'emballage de chaque paquet de produits de confiserie adhérant à une paroi intérieure de l'emballage allongé (12) par un moyen d'adhérence, ledit moyen d'adhérence retenant la pluralité de paquets de produits de confiserie dans l'emballage une fois que l'emballage a été séparé.

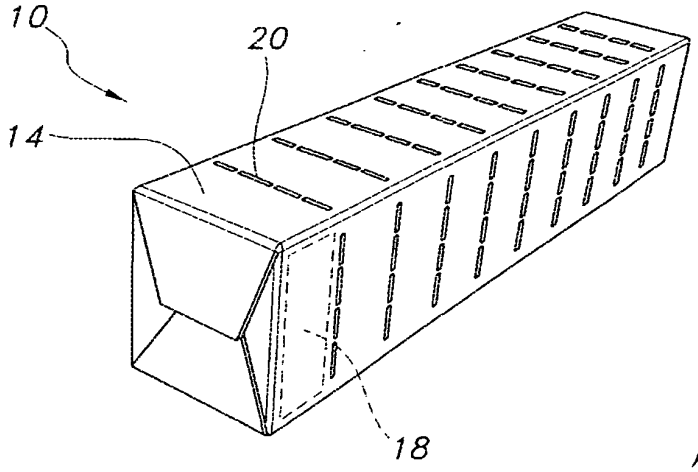

FIG. 1

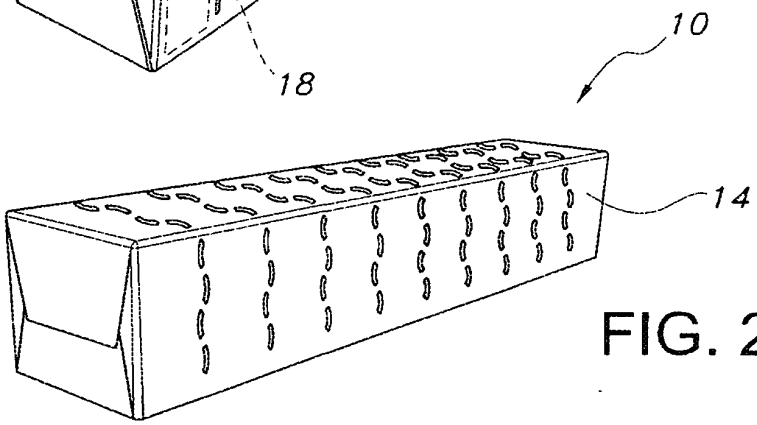

FIG. 2

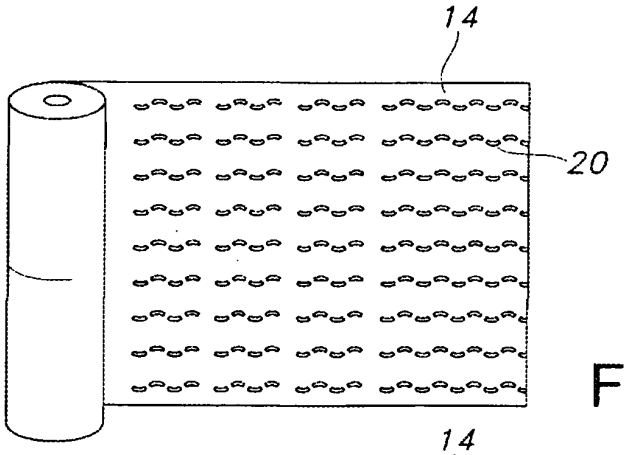

FIG. 3

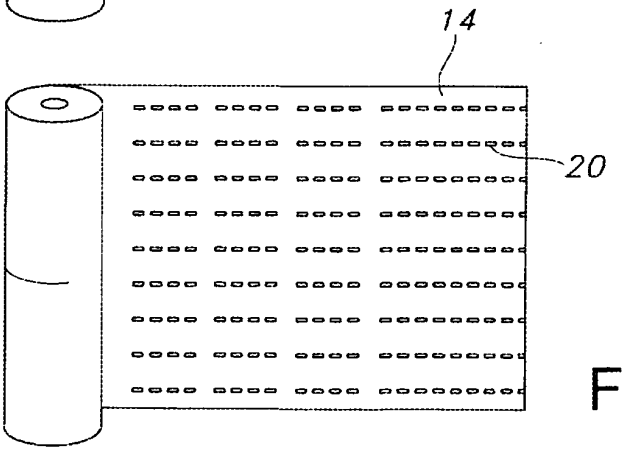

FIG. 4

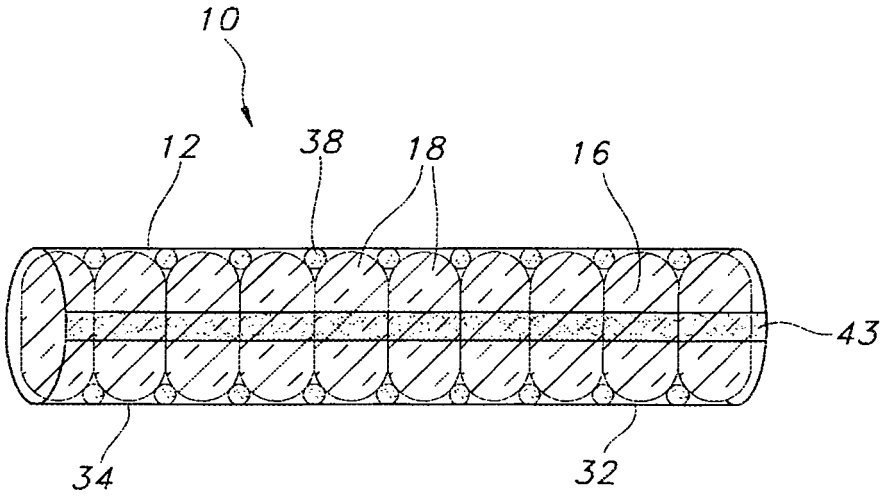

FIG. 5A

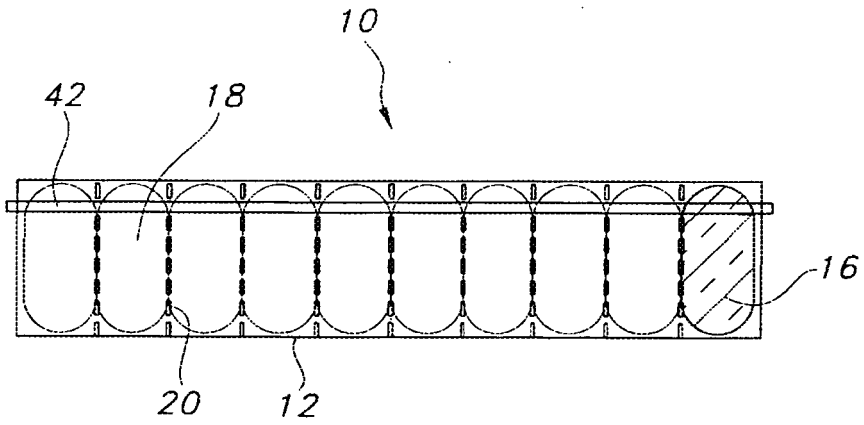

FIG. 5B

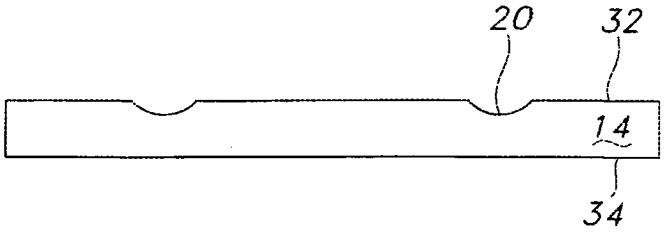

FIG. 6A

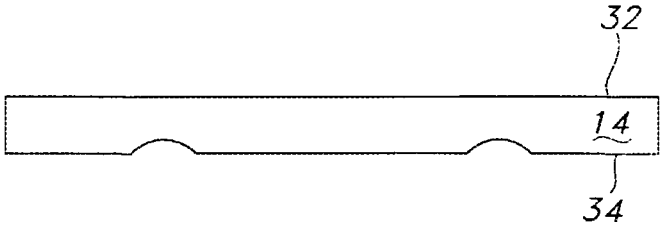

FIG. 6B

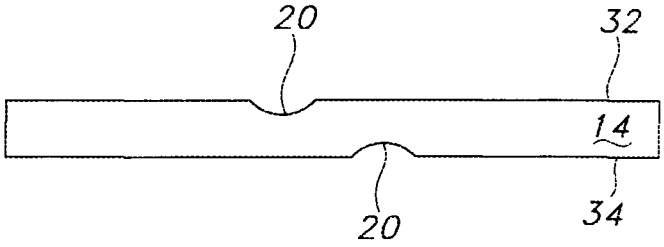

FIG. 6C

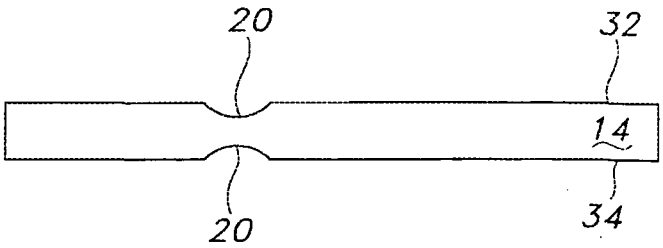

FIG. 6D

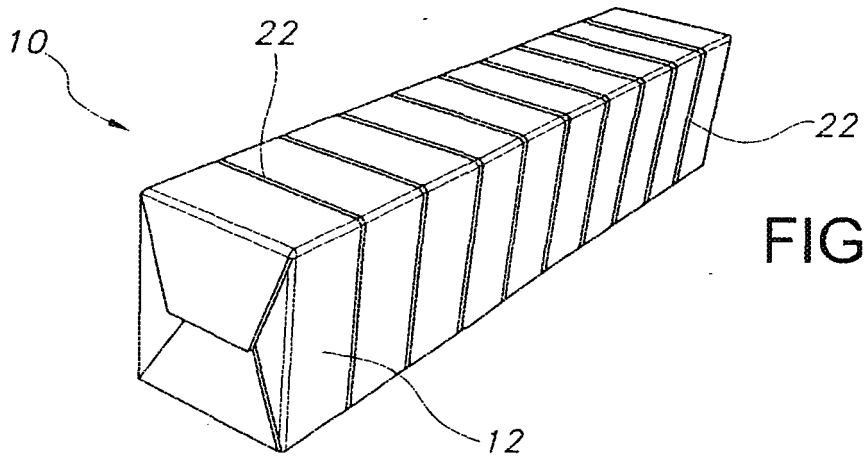

FIG. 7

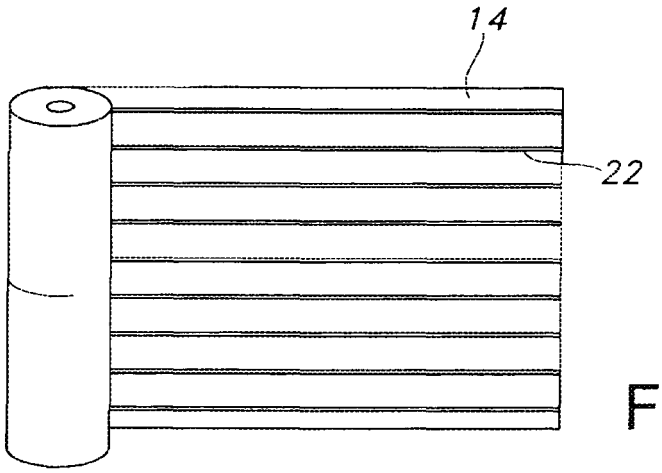

FIG. 9

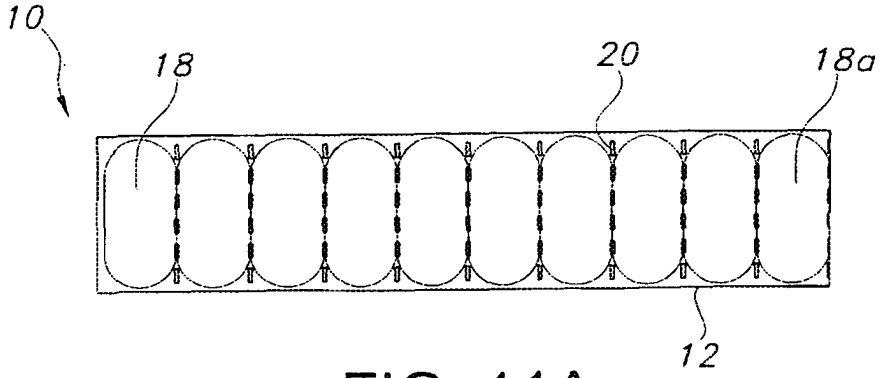

FIG. 11A

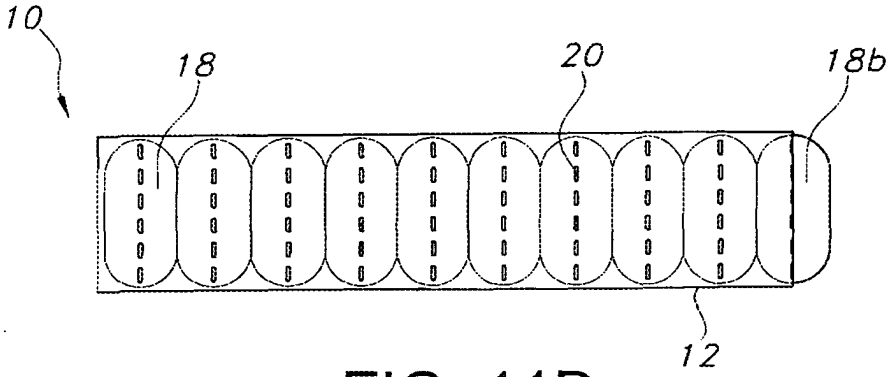

FIG. 11B

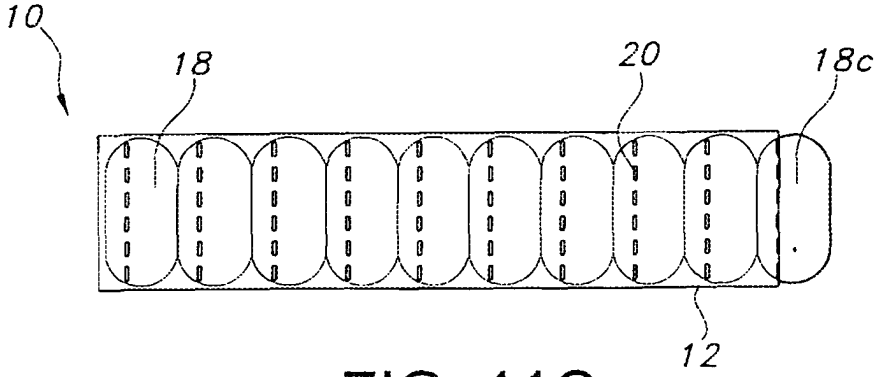

FIG. 11C

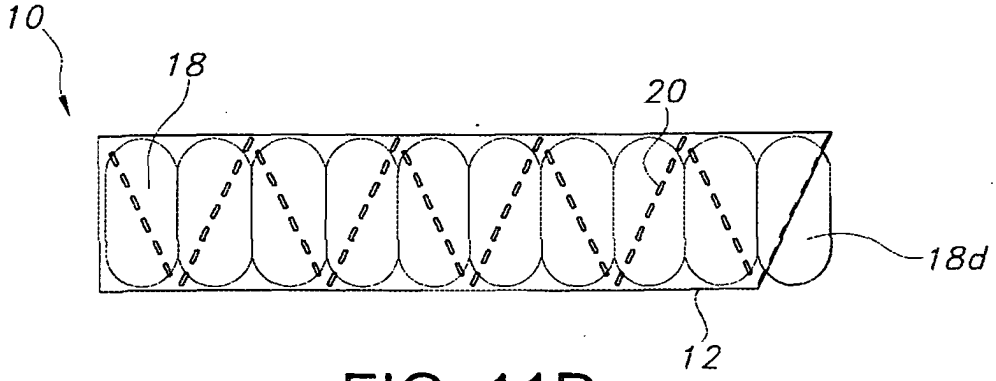

FIG. 11D

REFERENCES CITED IN THE DESCRIPTION

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