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(54)

A FOOD CONTAINER

- (57) The present invention relates to a food container (1) comprising a bowl (2), an insert (3) and a lid (4), where said insert (3) has an upper face (6) facing said lid (4) and a lower face (7) facing said bowl (2), and said insert (3) is characterized in that it comprises at least one socket (5), where said at least one socket (5) is open towards the lower face (7) of said insert (3) and said opening is closed by a film (8) and said at least one socket (5), preferably dome-shaped, has, at the top of said dome, a perforating element (10) facing the inside of the socket itself, said insert (3) being made of a semi-rigid material, at least in the portion which forms said at least one socket (5) and said film (8) adapted to be perforated by said perforating element (10) .

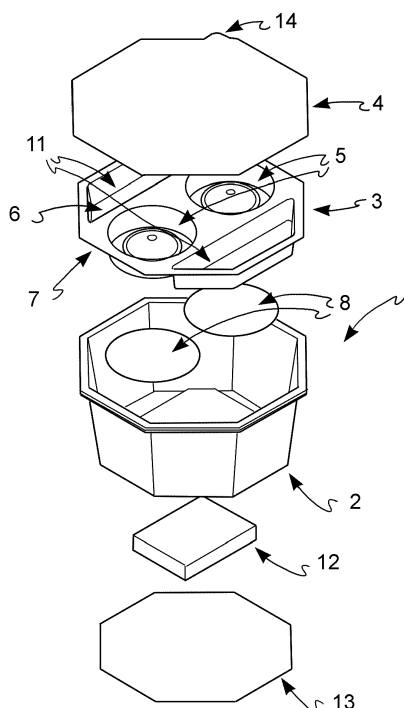


FIG. 2

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a food container (1) comprising a bowl (2), an insert (3) and a lid (4), where said insert (3) has an upper face (6) facing said lid (4) and a lower face (7) facing said bowl (2), and said insert (3) is characterized in that it comprises at least one socket (5), where said at least one socket (5) is open towards the lower face (7) of said insert (3) and said opening is closed by a film (8) and said at least one socket (5), preferably dome-shaped, has, at the top of said dome, a perforating element (10) facing the inside of the socket itself, said insert (3) being made of a semi-rigid material, at least in the portion which forms said at least one socket (5) and said film (8) adapted to be perforated by said perforating element (10).

Background art

[0002] An ever-increasing need in contemporary society to consume meals away from home, joined to the equally strongly-felt need to still consume pleasing and nutritionally balanced foods, without losing sight of convenience and practicality features, has led to a widespread dissemination of ready-made, single-dose foods.

[0003] In order to meet the above requirements, over the past few decades much has been invested in the food container industry to find disposable containers with the most suitable functional features for each particular food.

[0004] In particular, the need to package salads to be consumed in the same packaging in which they are sold has led to the development of multi-compartment bowls: a first compartment intended to accommodate the salad and at least a second container, of smaller size, adapted to accommodate the dressing. By way of example, US7163102 B2 describes a multi-compartment container, in which the further secondary compartments are placed at the bottom of the main compartment, separated from said main container by a film.

EP2691315 also describes a container which is functional for keeping different food separate, in which a first upper portion is present, having a perforating element adapted to break the protective film of the second portion, which is lower than said first portion.

The need is felt to find alternative solutions to those suggested, optimizing food preservability and having advantageous handling features.

Description of the invention

[0005] The present invention relates to a food container which advantageously allows to keep different foods in separate compartments, with the possibility of mixing them when needed in a simple manner.

Description of the drawings

[0006]

Figure 1: perspective view of an embodiment of the container according to the present invention, closed.

Figure 2: exploded view of an embodiment of the container according to the present invention.

Figure 3: bottom view of the container/lid according to the present invention.

Detailed description of the invention

[0007] The present invention relates to a food container (1) comprising a bowl (2), an insert (3) and a lid (4).

[0008] In an embodiment, said container (1) is shown closed in Figure 1, and in Figure 2 an exploded view thereof is outlined.

[0009] Said bowl (2) is preferably made of polypropylene. The base of said bowl is circular, or has the shape of a different geometric figure. In a preferred embodiment, it is octagonal. In a preferred embodiment, the height of said bowl is less than the diameter thereof.

[0010] Said insert (3) has an upper face (6) and a lower face (7), where said lower face (7) faces the inside of said bowl (2) when said insert (3) is positioned on said bowl (2). Figure 3 shows said insert (3) in detail. Said insert (3) is characterized in that it comprises at least one, preferably two, sockets (5), where said at least one socket (5) is open on the lower face (7) of said insert (3). The opening of said sockets (5), facing the lower face (7) of said insert (3), is closed by a film (8) positioned on the opening itself. In a preferred embodiment, said sockets are dome-shaped. A perforating element (10) is placed on the top of said dome, facing the inside of the socket itself. Said perforating element (10) preferably has a length approximately equal to or less than the height of said dome, so as to be contained inside the socket (5) when it is closed by said film (8). In an even more preferred embodiment, said perforating element (10) has a length such as to keep in slight tension said film (8) which closes said socket (5).

[0011] Said insert (3), or at least the portion of said insert (3) which forms said sockets (5), is made of a semi-rigid material, such as polypropylene, for example.

[0012] In an even more preferred embodiment, said insert also comprises at least one housing (11), preferably two housings (11). Said housings (11), preferably elongated in shape, are open towards said upper face (6) of said insert (3).

[0013] Said lid (4) is a lid which is positioned on said insert (3), preferably is a film which is heat-sealed on said insert (3).

[0014] In a preferred embodiment, said container (1) also comprises a kit (12). Where present, said kit (12) is housed in a recess obtained at the bottom of said bowl (2) and is held in place by a bottom (13) which preferably is a film heat-sealed on the bottom of the bowl itself. Said kit (12) comprises a napkin and/or cutlery.

Employment mode:

[0015] The container according to the present invention is adapted to contain food, preferably fresh food, such as salads, for example vegetable salads possibly with fish, pasta salads, rise salads, legume salads, cereal salads, in general. The container may be kept in the fridge. Said insert (3), said lid (4) being heat-sealed thereto, is in turn heat-sealed on said bowl (2). The closures described ensure an easy transport of the container (1), without the risk of liquid leakage therefrom.

[0016] In use, the user will follow the following steps, in the order shown:

- a) Where present, opening the bottom (13) and extracting the kit (12);
- b) Opening the lid (4), preferably by lifting a tab (14) specially arranged to open the seal;
- c) Opening the one or more sockets (5), by exerting a slight pressure on the top of the dome of the one or more desired sockets, where said slight pressure lowers said perforating element (10) which acts on said film (8) causing the breakage thereof and the consequent leakage of the contents of the socket itself into the bowl (2) below;
- d) Optionally, mixing the contents of the bowl, by stirring;
- e) Opening the insert (3), preferably by lifting a tab (15) specially arranged to open the seal.

[0017] In a particularly advantageous embodiment, said sockets (5) are two in number and contain dressings, for example oil and vinegar, respectively. The consumer is free to choose whether and what dressing to add to the dish and to add it as described.

[0018] In addition, the method allowed by virtue of the innovative container described in the present invention, ensures a clean delivery, since the opening of the sockets containing the dressing occurs towards the inside of the bowl, at a time when the bowl is sealed by the insert. This can apply to the stirring step, in which no leakage is possible since it is performed with the insert (3) still sealed on said bowl (2). The contents of the bowl are exposed to the environment only when opening said insert, which opening leaves the food already mixed and ready to be consumed. Said insert (3) is disposed of. The solution suggested in the present invention makes this advantageously possible.

[0019] In a particularly preferred embodiment, when said elongated housings (11) are present, they contain small bags containing dry dressings, such as salt, spices to be added to the dish, or further ingredients to be added to the dish, such as cheese and/or charcuterie, for example. Again, said housings may contain a cutlery and napkin kit, where said kit is not present in the housing at the bottom of the bowl.

Claims

1. A food container (1) comprising a bowl (2), an insert (3) and a lid (4), wherein said insert (3) has an upper face (6) facing said lid (4) and a lower face (7) facing said bowl (2) and said insert (3) is **characterized in that** it comprises at least one socket (5), wherein said at least one socket (5) is open towards the lower face (7) of said insert (3) and said opening is closed by a film (8) and said at least one socket (5), preferably dome-shaped, has, at the top of said dome, a perforating element (10) facing the inside of the socket itself, said insert (3) being made of semi-rigid material, at least in the portion which constitutes said at least one socket (5) and said film (8) adapted to be perforated by said perforating element (10).
2. A food container according to claim 1, wherein said perforating element (10) has a length approximately equal to or less than the height of said dome, so as to be contained inside the socket (5) when the same is closed by said film (8).
3. A food container according to claim 1 or 2, wherein said bowl (2) has an octagonal base.
4. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 3, which also comprises a kit (12) housed in a recess obtained on the bottom of said bowl (2) and held in place by a bottom (13), said kit (12) comprising cutlery and/or napkins.
5. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 4, wherein said insert (3) also comprises at least one housing (11), preferably two housings (11), preferably of elongated shape, open towards said upper face (6) of said insert (3).
6. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 5, wherein said lid (4) is a film which is heat-sealed on said insert (3).
7. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 6, wherein said insert (3) is heat-sealed on said bowl (2).
8. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 7, which comprises two of said sockets (5) and two of said housings (11).
9. A food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 8, wherein said bowl (2) and said insert (3) are made of polypropylene.
10. A method for opening a food container according to one of the claims from 1 to 9 which comprises:

a) Where present, opening the bottom (13) and

extracting the kit (12);

b) Opening the lid (4), preferably by lifting a tab (14) specially arranged to open the seal;

c) Opening one or more of said sockets (5), by exerting a slight pressure on the top of the dome of the one or more desired sockets, wherein said slight pressure lowers said perforating element (10) which acts on said film (8) causing the breakage thereof and the consequent leakage of the contents of the same in the bowl (2) below; 5 10

d) Optionally, mixing the contents of the bowl, by stirring;

e) Opening the insert (3).

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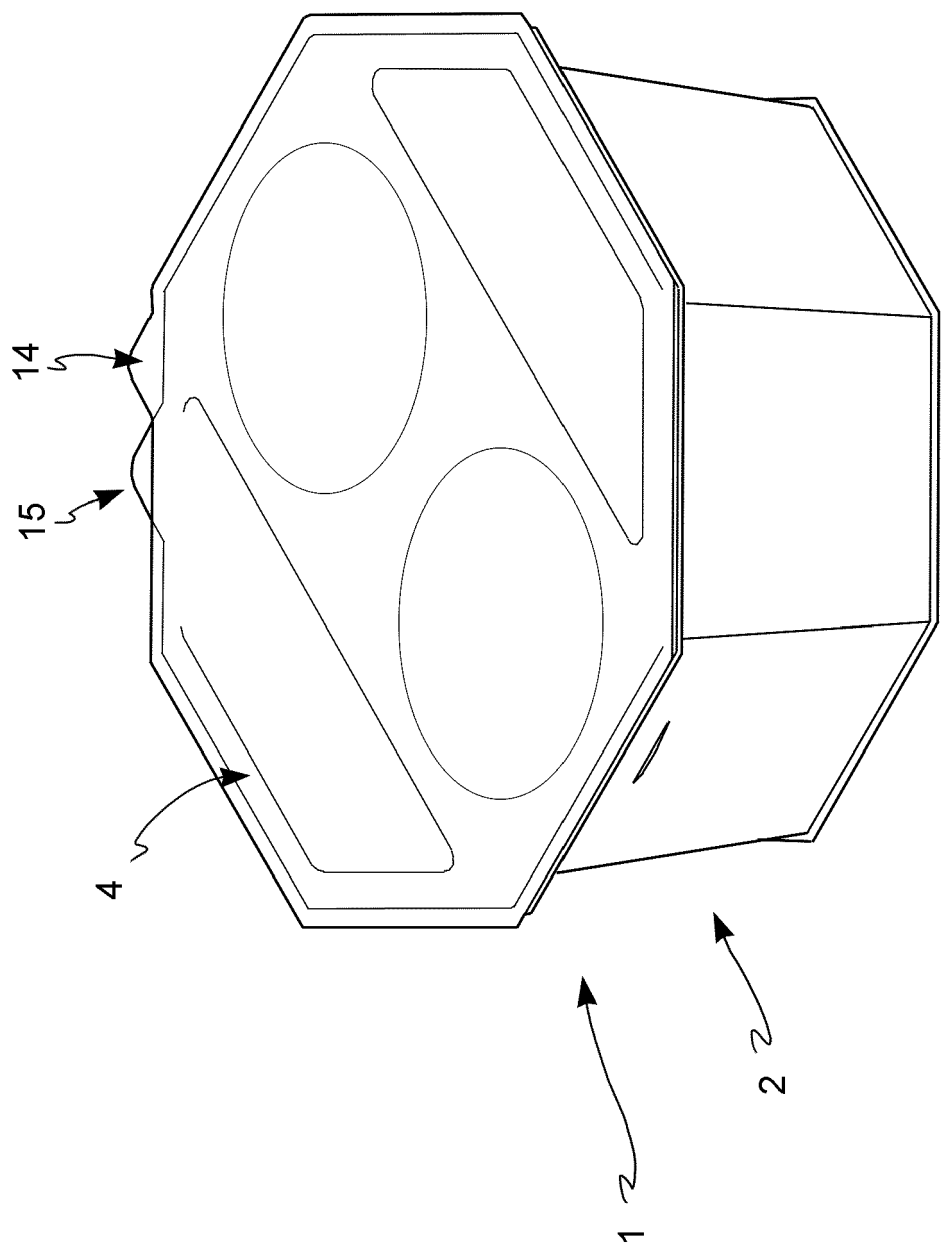


FIG. 1

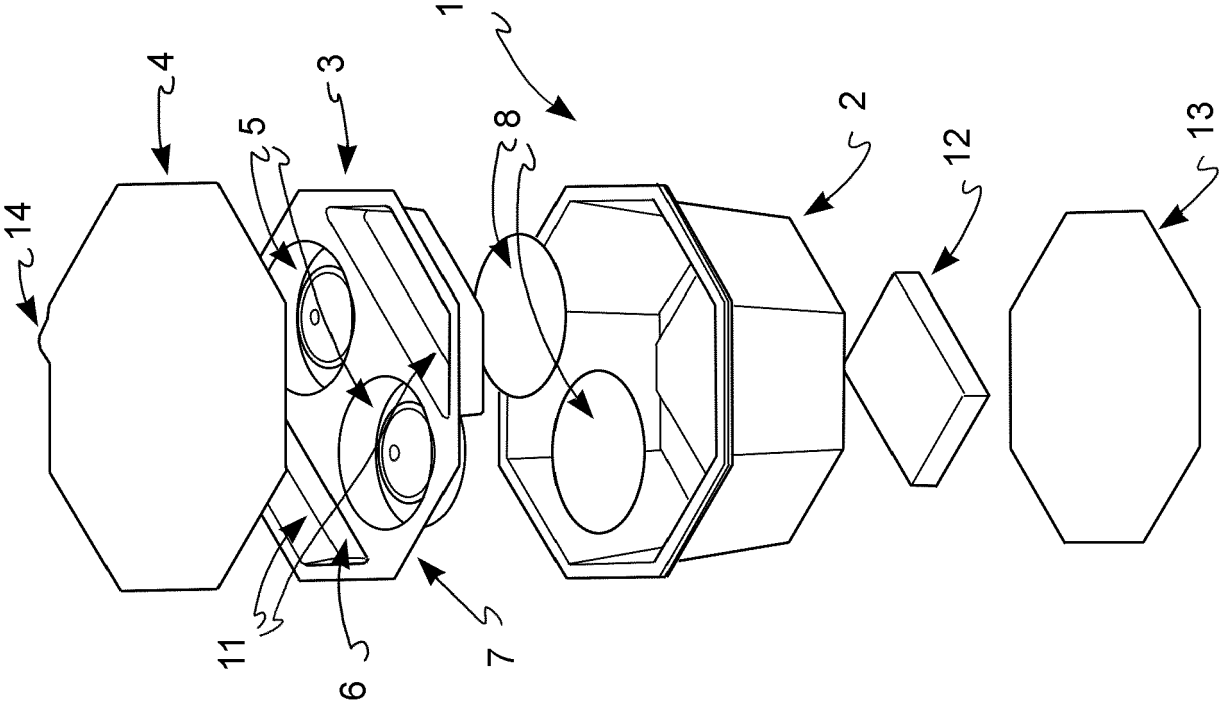


FIG. 2

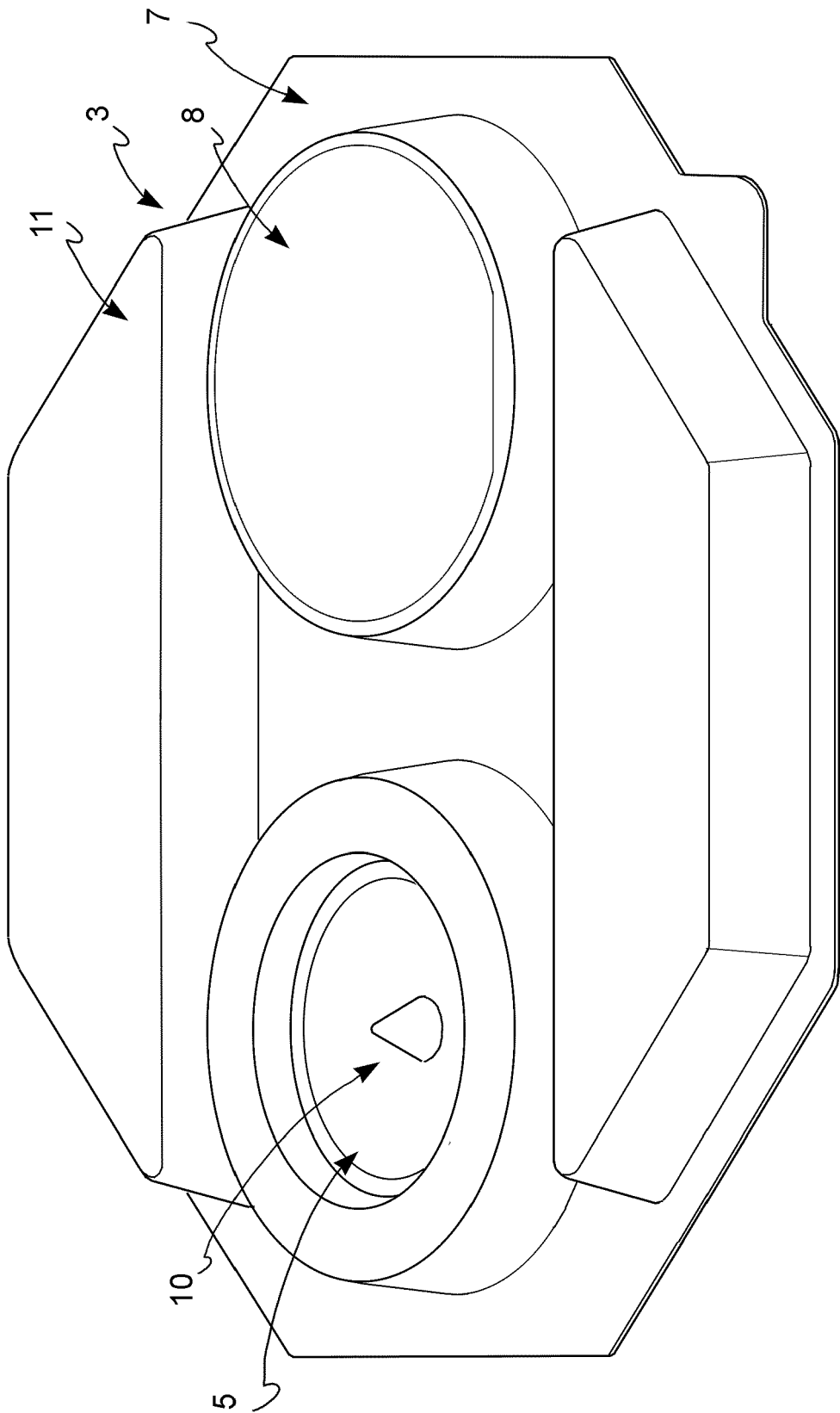


FIG. 3



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