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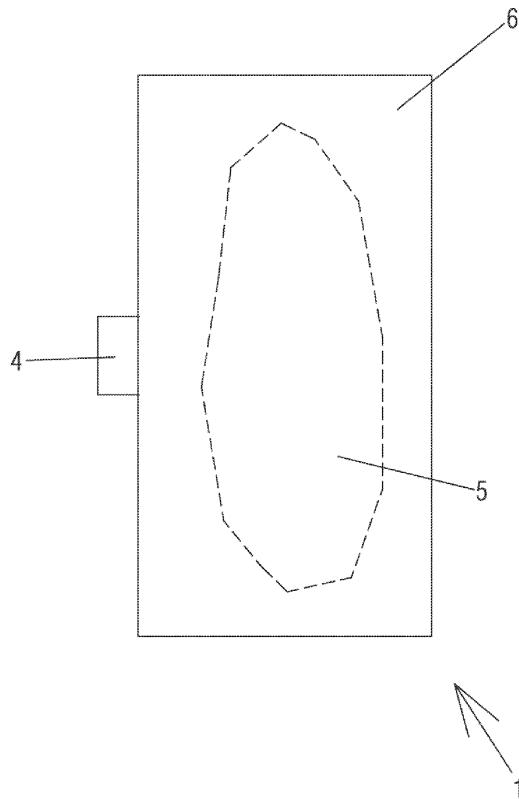
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(54) **PACKAGING FOR SLICES OF FOOD PRODUCTS**

(57) The invention relates to a packaging for slices of food products, comprising at least two long laminar bodies which are connected and arranged one on top of the other, each of the laminar bodies having at least one transverse folding line, the two folding lines being mutually coincident, said folding lines dividing the laminar bodies in respective folding portions on both sides of a folding line, such that in a folded condition, the folding portions are arranged one on top of the other, folded in a zigzag shape, at least one storage space between the two laminar bodies being defined in each folding portion, said storage space being used to receive at least one slice of a food product.

FIG. 1



Description**OBJECT OF THE INVENTION**

[0001] The present invention aims to register a packaging for slices of food products that incorporates notable innovations.

[0002] More specifically, the invention proposes the development of a packaging for slices of food products that enables the convenient and hygienic transportation and handling of a plurality of slices.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0003] Currently, the packaging of slices of food products in plastic packages is known, in which a specific number of slices is placed for the transportation and preservation thereof in optimal hygienic conditions, generally with vacuum packaging.

[0004] However, when one wants to package a relatively large number of slices in conventional packaging, it is necessary to have separators between each of the slices to prevent them from sticking to each other, and thus, the consumer can subsequently separate as many slices as needed. This solution implies a greater use of material resources, in addition to returning to the slower and more difficult packaging process, which leads to higher packaging costs and increased consumption of raw materials for packaging.

[0005] On the other hand, when the slices are grouped together to optimize the occupied space, the user is not able to see each and every one of the slices before selecting a specific slice.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0006] The present invention has been developed with the aim of providing a packaging for slices of food products that solves the disadvantages mentioned above while also contributing other additional advantages, which will become evident from the description provided below.

[0007] Therefore, an object of the present invention is a packaging for slices of food products, comprising at least two long laminar bodies which are connected and arranged one on top of the other, each of the laminar bodies having at least one transverse folding line, the two folding lines being mutually coincident, said folding lines dividing the laminar bodies in respective folding portions on both sides of a folding line, such that in a folded condition, the folding portions are arranged one on top of the other, folded in a zigzag shape, at least one storage space between the two laminar bodies being defined in each folding portion, said storage space being used to receive at least one slice of a food product.

[0008] By means of these characteristics hygienic manipulation is achieved, since the slices do not have to be touched to select a specific slice, the occupied space is

optimized since it is in a folded condition, the different folding portions are arranged one on top of the other in a zigzag shape, easily unfolding when the user wants a slice, raw materials are saved since separators are not needed between the slices, and simpler packaging methods are achieved since no separators have to be introduced between the slices.

[0009] According to a characteristic of the invention, the laminar bodies may have at least one gripping tab on a transverse end side. By means of this gripping tab it is possible to comfortably unfold the packaging from a folded condition in a zigzag shape.

[0010] Furthermore, the laminar bodies are preferably made of plastic film.

[0011] According to an embodiment of the invention, the laminar bodies can be made from a whole.

[0012] Advantageously, the folding portion may comprise a hermetic container.

[0013] In the present invention, the term transverse should be understood as a direction essentially perpendicular to the length of the packaging. The end side should be understood as each of the outer sides of the packaging that defines the laminar bodies.

[0014] Other characteristics and advantages of the packaging for slices of food products, object of the present invention, will become clear in light of the description of a preferred, though non-exclusive, embodiment, which, by way of a non-limiting example, is illustrated in the accompanying drawings, wherein:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**[0015]**

35 Figure 1 is a schematic plan view of a packaging for slices of food products according to the invention in a folded condition;

40 Figure 2 is a schematic perspective view of the packaging of Figure 1 in an intermediate step in the unfolding process;

45 Figure 3 is a schematic plan view of the packaging of Figure 1 in an unfolded condition;

Figure 4 is a schematic view of a longitudinal cross section of a folding portion;

50 Figure 5 is a schematic view of the packaging of Figure 2 seen laterally while it is unfolded; and

Figure 6 is a schematic plan view of an alternative embodiment of a packaging for slices of food products according to the invention in a folded condition.

DESCRIPTION OF A PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0016] As seen in the attached figures, a preferred but non-exclusive embodiment of a packaging for slices of food products is shown designated in a general way with reference number 1.

[0017] In the attached figures, elements that cannot be seen have been represented with dashed lines.

[0018] In the attached figures, it can be seen that the packaging for slices of food products 1 comprises two long laminar bodies 21, 22, connected and arranged one on top of the other, as can be seen in Figures 3-5. In Figure 3, it can also be seen that each of the laminar bodies 21, 22 has a plurality of transverse folding lines 3 being mutually coincident, such that said folding lines 3 divide the laminar bodies 21, 22 in respective folding portions 6 on both sides of the folding line 3. The number of folding portions 6 will logically depend on the number of slices 5 to be packaged.

[0019] In the folded condition shown in Figure 1, the plurality of folding portions 6 are arranged one on top of the other in a zigzag shape as shown in Figure 5; this folded condition in a zigzag shape will be explained in greater detail below. In each folding portion 6 a storage space 7 is preferably defined between both laminar bodies 21, 22, said storage space 7 being susceptible to receiving at least one slice 5 of food product.

[0020] In Figure 4, an arrangement of the two laminar bodies 21, 22, the packaged slice 5 and the storage space 7 generated between the folding lines 3 and the longitudinal end sides 13, 14 and/or transverse end sides 11, 12 is shown schematically. It is worth mentioning that said arrangement is shown in an exaggerated way since the different elements have been separated from each other for the purposes of clarity.

[0021] The laminar bodies 21, 22 have respective gripping tabs 4, preferably on the transverse end sides 11, 13 to facilitate the unfolding operation as explained below. Instead of a pair of gripping tabs 4, the invention may have a single gripping tab 4 or even more, depending on the particular needs.

[0022] In Figure 3, it is seen that the gripping tabs 4 of each laminar body 21, 22 are also arranged one under the other in elevation views, like the rest of each laminar body 21, 22.

[0023] With regard to the manufacture of the laminar bodies 21, 22, it is preferred that they are plastic films. This plastic material can be any within the reach of a person skilled in the art that fulfills the requirements set forth, for example, food requirements.

[0024] In an alternative embodiment that is not shown, the laminar bodies 21, 22 can be made from a whole, in other words, instead of having two laminar bodies 21, 22 completely independent from each other and subsequently proceeding to join them, they may come from a single sheet or from laminar bodies 21, 22 connected to each other at least partially.

[0025] An alternative example may be a single sheet that is folded in a U-shape and thus creates two limbs similar to laminar bodies 21, 22.

[0026] Figure 6, illustrates an alternative embodiment in which a folding portion 6 comprises a hermetic container 8. This hermetic container 8 may contain oil, diced tomatoes, etc. or other single-dose food condiments for the consumption thereof along with the slices 5. The hermetic container 8 may be manufactured from a whole

with the laminar bodies 21, 22 having a separation line 81 to distinguish it from the storage space 7; the separation line 81 may be created by heat, pressure, gluing, etc. although it will be obvious for a person skilled in the art to independently produce the hermetic container and join it to the folding portion 6. In any case, the separation line 81 will not interfere in the zigzag configuration of the present invention. The number of hermetic containers 8 may vary according to the particular needs.

[0027] With regard to the food product, it may be, for example, ham, chorizo, salami, cheese, etc. and similar, although the present invention will be obvious for a person skilled in the art for any other food that can be packaged as described. Furthermore, the distribution of said food products may be chosen based on the particular needs or tastes.

[0028] When packaging the slices 5, two laminar bodies 21, 22 will be positioned as shown in Figure 3 with folding lines 3. Preferably, these two laminar bodies 21, 22 will be identical and therefore, when seeing them in a plan view, said difference is not seen. Next, the different slices 5 are placed in the respective storage spaces 7 and they are then the different slices 5 are vacuum sealed, for example, wherein the end sides 11-14 of the laminar bodies 21, 22 will be securely sealed together.

[0029] Continuing with the folding process, from the unfolded condition of Figure 3, the folding lines 3 are then folded, overlapping the different folded portions 6 on each other, following a zigzag distribution (seen laterally) as shown in Figures 2 and 5.

[0030] Subsequently, a folded condition of the packaging is achieved for the slices of food products 1 as shown in Figure 1. All the folded portions 6 are stacked one on top of the other and connected to each other due to the folding lines 3.

[0031] When the consumer wishes to access some of the packaged slices 5, they will proceed to inversely follow the aforementioned steps, using the gripping tabs 4 to stretch the packaging for slices of food products 1 from the folded condition of Figure 1 to the unfolded condition of Figure 3.

[0032] When the content of the hermetic container 8 is needed, the user may tear it and serve the content thereof on the slices 5.

[0033] The details, shapes, dimensions and other accessory elements used in the manufacture of packaging for slices of food products 1 of the invention may be conveniently replaced with others which do not depart from the scope defined by the claims which are included below.

Claims

1. A packaging for slices of food products, comprising at least two long laminar bodies which are connected and arranged one on top of the other, each of the laminar bodies having at least one transverse folding

line, the two folding lines being mutually coincident,
said folding lines dividing the laminar bodies in re-
spective folding portions on both sides of a folding
line, such that in a folded condition, the folding por-
tions are arranged one on top of the other, folded in 5
a zigzag shape, at least one storage space between
the two laminar bodies being defined in each folding
portion, said storage space being used to receive at
least one slice of a food product.

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2. The packaging for slices of food products according to claim 1, wherein the laminar bodies have at least one gripping tab on a transverse end side.
3. The packaging for slices of food products according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the laminar bodies are made of plastic film. 15
4. The packaging for slices of food products according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the laminar bodies are made from a whole. 20
5. The packaging for slices of food products according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the folding portion comprises a hermetic container. 25

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FIG. 1

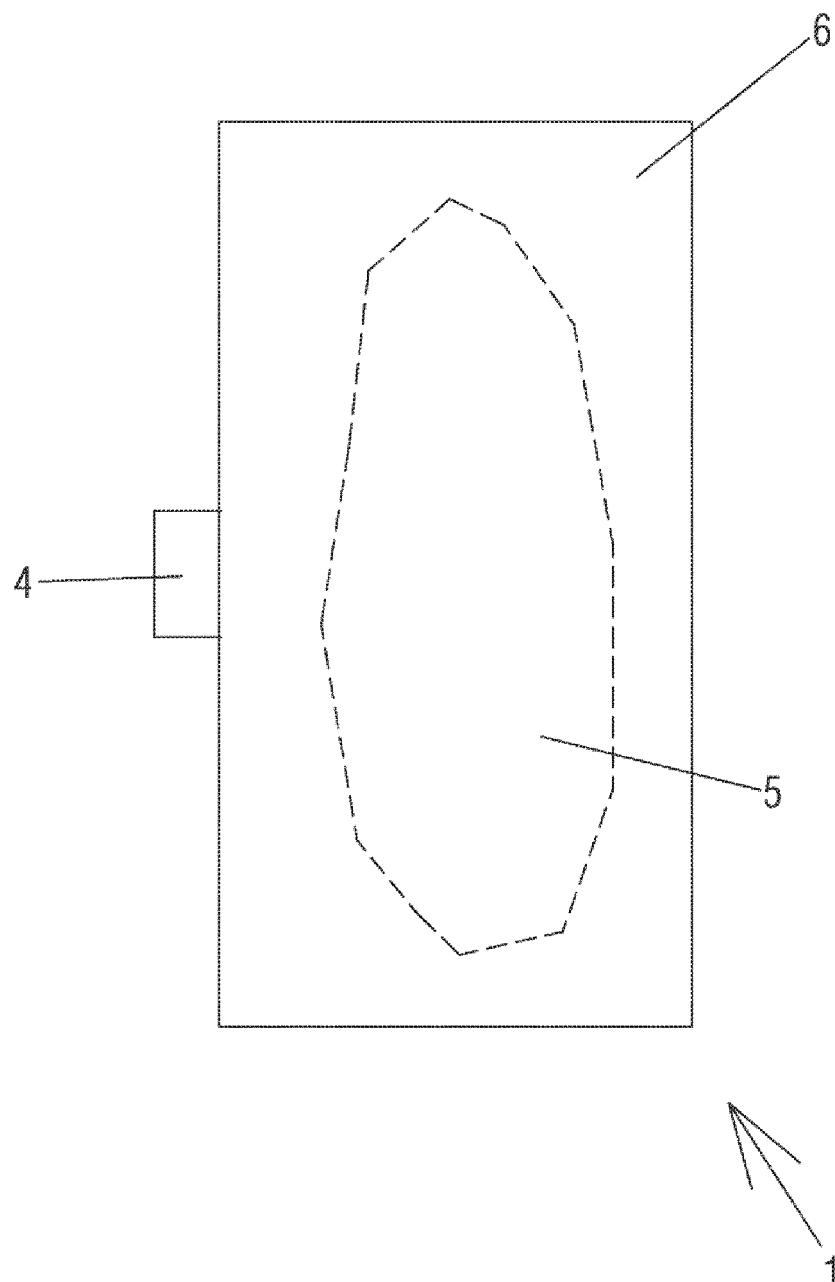


FIG. 2

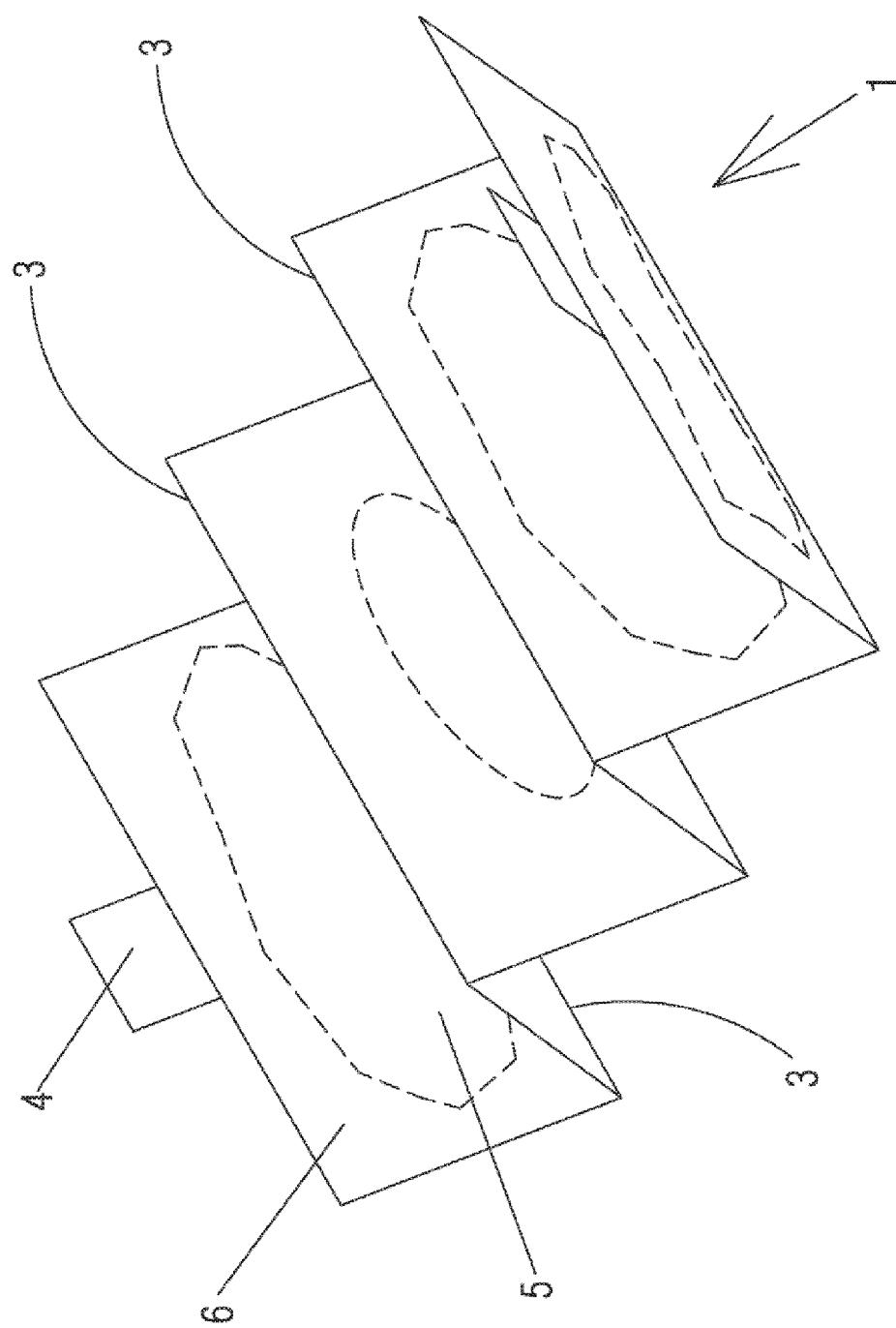


FIG. 3

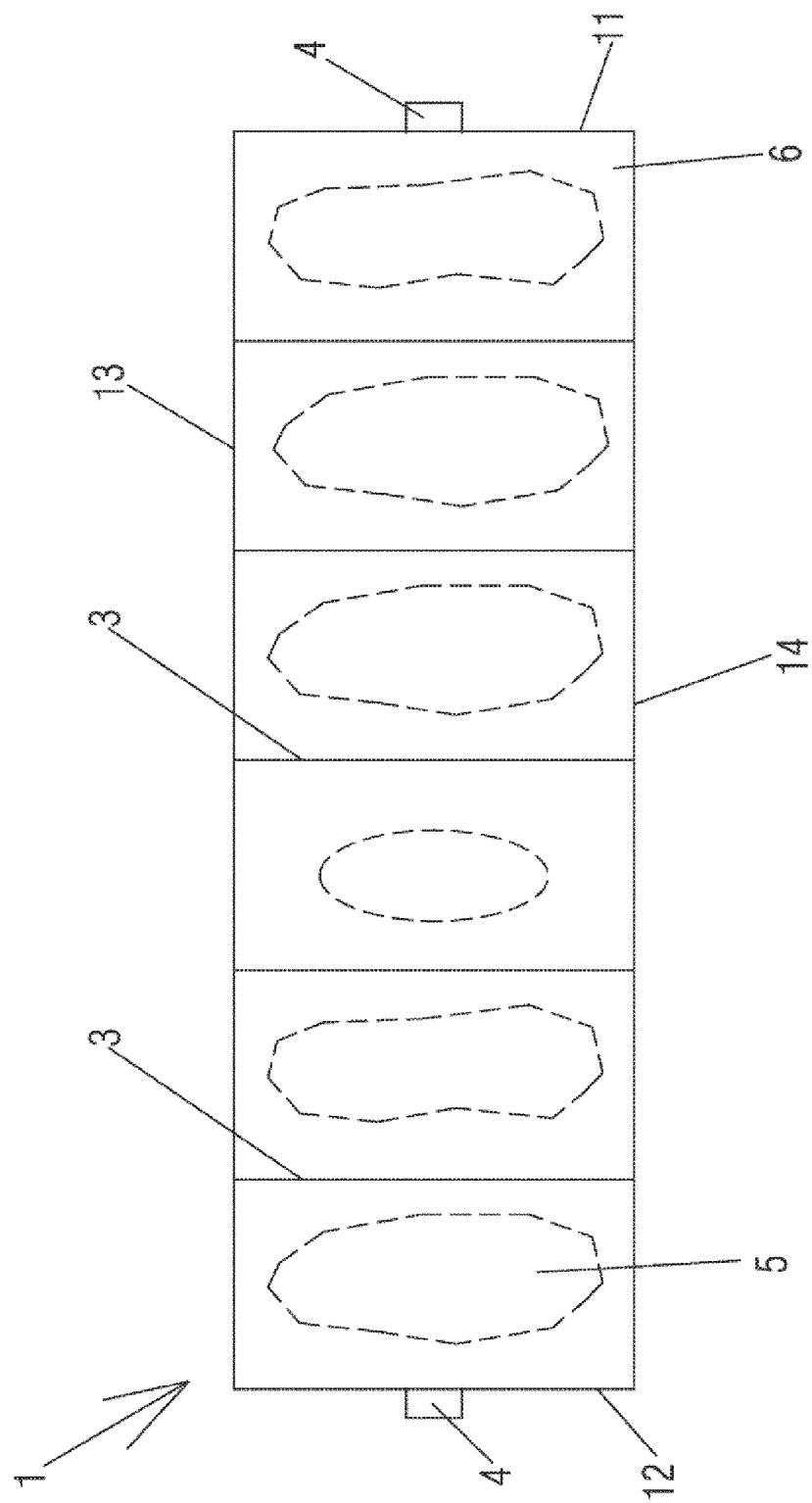


FIG.4

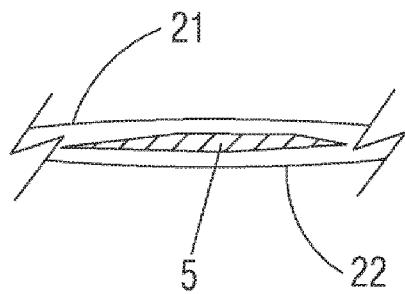


FIG.5

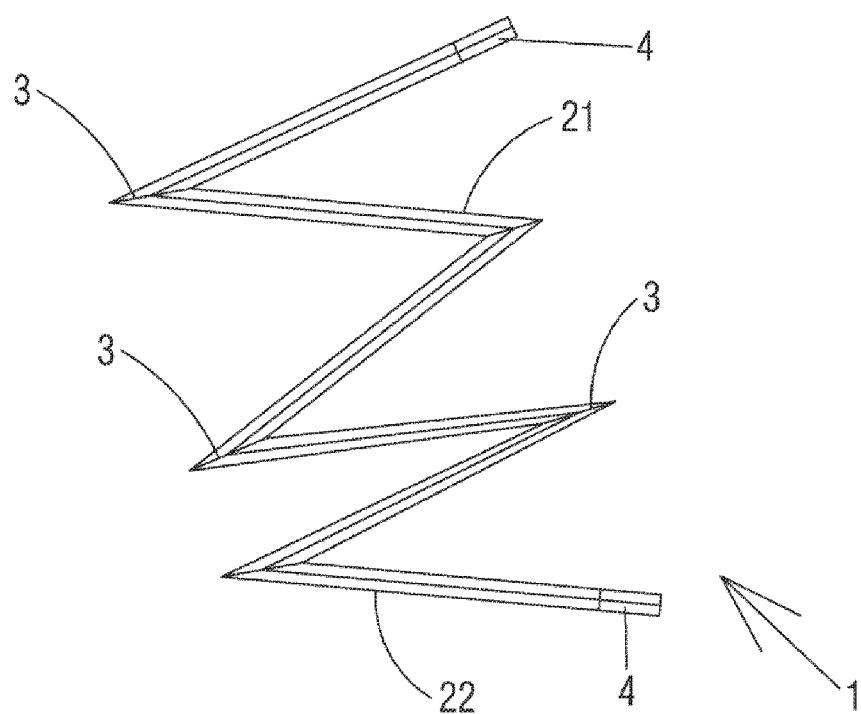
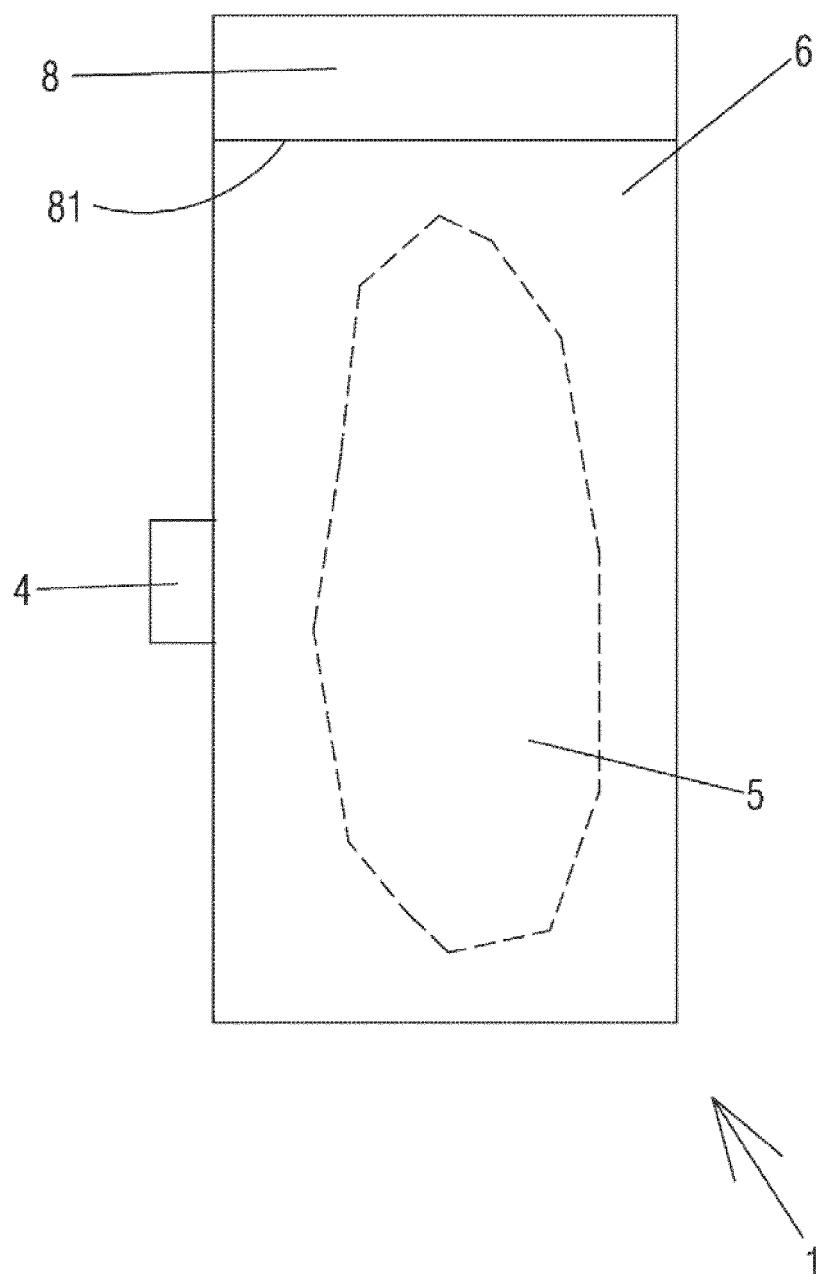


FIG.6



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT		International application No. PCT/ES2016/070180	
5	A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER		
	B65B25/08 (2006.01)		
	According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
10	B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
	Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)		
	B65B		
	Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched		
15	Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
	EPODOC, INVENES, WPI		
	C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
20	Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	X	US 2555033 A (EDMONDS HARRIS EULA) 29/05/1951, description; figures 1 - 4.	1-4
25	A	US 2003148002 A1 (MERCIER ADELE) 07/08/2003, description; figures 1 - 7.	1-4
	A	US 2830910 A (SWANSON FRED W) 15/04/1958, description; figures 1 - 5.	1-4
30	A	US 2014312104 A1 (KIM CHUN PIL ET AL.) 23/10/2014, description; figures 1 - 17.	1-4
	A	US 2003862 A (MCKEE HARRY H) 04/06/1935, description; figures 1 - 2.	1-4
35			
40	<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.
	<p>* Special categories of cited documents:</p> <p>"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance.</p> <p>"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date</p> <p>"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)</p> <p>"O" document referring to an oral disclosure use, exhibition, or other means.</p> <p>"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed</p> <p>"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention</p> <p>"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone</p> <p>"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art</p> <p>"&" document member of the same patent family</p>		
45	Date of the actual completion of the international search 25/05/2016		Date of mailing of the international search report (26/05/2016)
50	Name and mailing address of the ISA/ OFICINA ESPAÑOLA DE PATENTES Y MARCAS Paseo de la Castellana, 75 - 28071 Madrid (España) Facsimile No.: 91 349 53 04		Authorized officer J. Moreno Rodriguez
55			Telephone No. 91 3495556

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (January 2015)

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT		International application No.	
Information on patent family members		PCT/ES2016/070180	
5	Patent document cited in the search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)
10	US2555033 A	29.05.1951	NONE
15	US2003148002 A1	07.08.2003	NONE
20	US2830910 A	15.04.1958	NONE
25	US2014312104 A1	23.10.2014	WO2015183682 A1 US9180989 B2
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