



(12) **EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION**

(43) Date of publication:
29.08.2018 Bulletin 2018/35

(51) Int Cl.:
B65D 75/30 (2006.01) **B65D 75/52 (2006.01)**
B65D 73/00 (2006.01)

(21) Application number: **18158987.0**

(22) Date of filing: **27.02.2018**

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AL 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 RS SE SI SK SM TR
 Designated Extension States:
BA ME
 Designated Validation States:
MA MD TN

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(30) Priority: **28.02.2017 IT 201700022612**
06.03.2017 IT 201700024748

(54) **A PACKAGE FOR FOODSTUFFS**

(57) A package for foodstuffs (A) comprising at least one sheet formed by at least one layer of paperboard divided into two parts of which the first is a base (2) adapted to have a foodstuff positioned thereon, the second is a cover (3) which can at least partly overlap such a base which may be joined thereto by means of a bending or

fixing line (4). At least on such a base, on its front surface, a film (22) is provided made of plastic material, suitable for contact with foods, which is superimposed on the paperboard layer (21) of the sheet. The foodstuff (A) is positioned on such a film which is covered by a wrap (23).

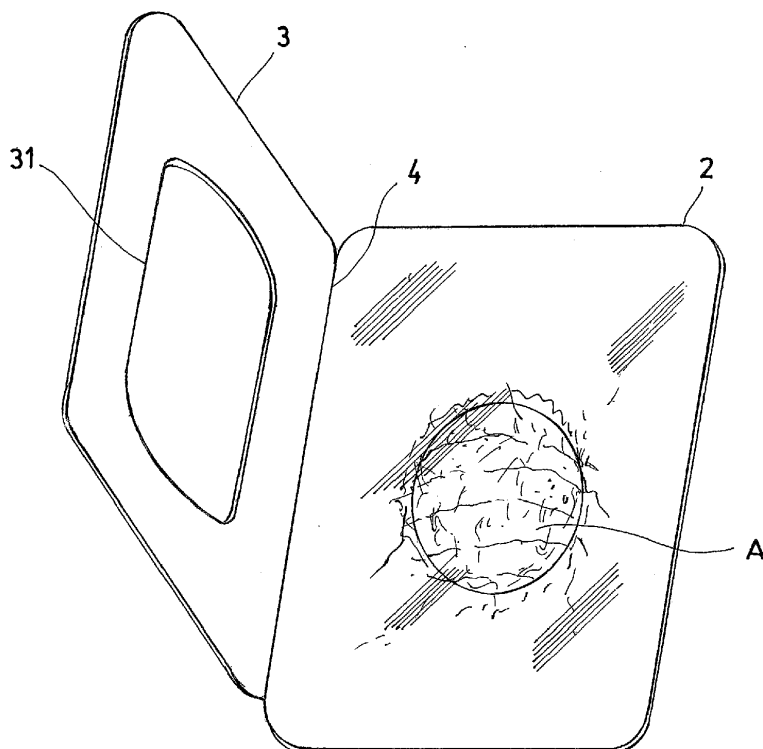


Fig. 1

Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a package for foodstuffs.

[0002] In particular, the present invention relates to a package for foodstuffs made through a base which may be made according to various shapes (square, rectangular, oval, round, etc...), but in all cases is adapted to have a foodstuff positioned thereon. Packages are currently available on the market wherein such a base is made of paperboard and is covered on the surface onto which the foodstuff is to be positioned with a plastic-based film, suitable for contact with foodstuffs.

[0003] Following the positioning of the foodstuff, which can take place manually, or through a loading system equipped with appropriate automatic feeding means, the foodstuff is covered with a film F according to the so-called "skin pack" technology, which is a type of vacuum packaging that makes the upper wrap or film adhere to the product as though it were a second "skin".

[0004] In the agri-food industry, the skin can be applied in the packaging of fresh or frozen or smoked meats, fish products, cheeses, fresh and frozen pasta, cold meats and delicatessen products in general, etc.

[0005] This packaging technology offers undisputed advantages in terms of better product shelf life, packaging safety and integrity, high flexibility for products of different shapes and sizes, applicability to small-, mono- or double- portions, practicality and ease of movement and reduction of space during transport.

[0006] The paperboard processed as described above is provided both on the front and on the back with instructions relative to the packaged product (brand(s), weight, organoleptic features, product codes, bar codes, instructions for the consumer) but also characteristics of the packaging itself.

[0007] In a second embodiment, the base is made of paperboard or plastic material, the foodstuff is covered with a film F still according to the so-called "skin pack" technology, but the package and the covering that we will call "primary" also envisages a "secondary" covering made of paperboard, e.g. conformed like an envelope, inside which the primary covering is inserted. The instructions on the product are placed on this secondary covering. Furthermore, such secondary covering may be provided with an opening adapted to make the foodstuff positioned on the primary covering visible.

[0008] Finally, in both shapes of packages, a hole can be made (usually called a "sombbrero" or Euro hang hole) to allow the package to be hung vertically on a display rack.

[0009] Such packaging systems according to the prior art have various drawbacks.

[0010] In the first type, in which the foodstuff is positioned on the paperboard base, the product instructions must be printed both on the back and on the front of the base, before the foodstuff can be positioned. This is in order to guarantee that during the positioning there is no

interaction between the substances that compose such product instructions and the foodstuff. Furthermore, on the front only a small portion of information can be visible, while most of the information is on the back, therefore not visible when the product is positioned on the display rack.

[0011] In the second type of package instead the product instructions are positioned on the secondary covering and therefore do not interact with the foodstuff, but such package envisages two parts being created (primary and secondary covering) which must then be assembled manually or through a machine, making the packaging process more complex, slow and expensive.

[0012] The present invention sets out to obviate the aforementioned drawbacks, providing a package having the characteristics of the appended claim 1.

[0013] The characteristics and advantages of the present invention will be clearer and evident from the following illustrative and nonlimiting description, of an embodiment, with reference to the attached figures wherein:

- figure 1 is a perspective view of the package in a semi-open position according to the present invention;
- figure 2 is a longitudinal section of the package in the open position;
- figure 3 is a front view of the closed package, positioned vertically, such as on a display rack;
- figure 4 is a view from above of the package in the open position according to the present invention;
- figure 5 is an enlarged detail of figure 4.

[0014] With reference to the mentioned figures the package according to the present invention comprises at least one sheet formed by at least one layer of paperboard, divided into two parts, the first of which is a base 2 which may be made according to various shapes (square, rectangular, oval, round, etc.), but in all cases is adapted to have a foodstuff positioned thereon, the second part of the sheet is a cover 3 which can at least partly overlap such a base. The base and the cover in one embodiment may be parts of the same sheet, which can be bent on itself by means of a bending line 4 formed by a yielding or scoring, or by die-cutting the sheet. Preferably the two parts of the sheet, base and cover, have the same dimensions, so that the cover substantially covers the base completely.

[0015] According to a further embodiment, the base and the cover are made from two parts of sheet separated from each other and joined along the line 4 by means of appropriate fixing means (adhesives, glue, clips etc...).

[0016] On its front surface, such a base has a film 22 made of plastic material, suitable for contact with foods, which is superimposed on the at least one paperboard layer 21 of the sheet. The foodstuff A is positioned on such film and then covered by a wrap 23 according to the so-called "skin pack" technology or may be vacuum-

wrapped or wrapped in a controlled atmosphere still by means of such wrap. The film can be realised on the base only, or it can be realised on the entire sheet and therefore on the cover 3 as well.

[0017] The cover can be provided with at least one opening 31 which when the cover itself is bent on the base, allows the foodstuff to project out of the cover and also allows the foodstuff to be seen through it. Such opening may be of any shape and size.

[0018] The package is also provided with a seal 5, arranged on a portion of the joining edge between the base and the cover.

[0019] The sheet may be provided both on the front and on the back with instructions relative to the packaged product (brand(s), weight, organoleptic features, product codes, bar codes etc. and information for the consumer), but also characteristics of the packaging itself.

[0020] In particular, it is advantageous that such indications are only present on the cover (also on both surfaces), leaving the base dedicated to the storage of the food only.

[0021] Furthermore, all of the rear surface of the sheet can display instructions.

[0022] Clearly a package of this type makes the process for the packaging of the product simpler, since a single package is realised rather than a double package made with two separate systems, as indicated in packages of the prior art. There are no manual treatment steps for the package and the instructions on the cover can also be realised after the packaging of the foodstuff on the base.

[0023] Furthermore, in a suitable peripheral position on the package, in particular on the base and/or on the cover, a hole can be made that allows the closed package to be positioned on a display rack vertically. Alternatively, the hole can be made on a support that is in turn then fixed to the package vertically. Such hole can have a "sombbrero" conformation. When the package is displayed vertically the skin covering of the foodstuff does not allow it to move due to the effect of gravity, keeping it blocked in such position.

[0024] The packaging process of the foodstuff in a first embodiment according to the present invention envisages the package being made starting from a pre-scored paperboard sheet, that is a sheet on which the required outlines have already been performed (i.e. bending line 4, opening 31, sombrero hole) and the film 22 has already been positioned. Subsequently, the cover 3 is bent underneath the base 2 so that only the top surface of the base remains exposed with the film covering. The foodstuff is positioned on such film which is covered by the skin-pack technology wrap. Finally, the cover is bent until it is superimposed on the base and closed.

[0025] Alternatively, the step of bending the cover under the base can be omitted and the pre-scored sheet can be positioned open in the machine which performs the skin-pack technology wrap.

[0026] In this case, two possibilities may be provided:

either the skin-pack technology wrap is positioned only on the base 2 or on the whole sheet, including the cover. In this second case, the transparent wrap also covers the opening 31 when provided and is not removed in that zone. The visibility of the product is however allowed, as the wrap 23 is transparent.

[0027] According to a further embodiment of the process, first a reel of paperboard is provided with a surface film, which may be unrolled onto the machine that packages the food.

[0028] The foodstuff is positioned therein on the unrolled reel which is covered by a skin-pack technology wrap. Subsequently the paperboard is die-cut and the required outlines are performed (i.e. bending line 4, opening 31, sombrero hole etc...).

Claims

1. A package for foodstuffs (A), comprising at least one sheet formed by at least one layer of paperboard divided into two parts, the first of which is a base (2) adapted to have a foodstuff positioned thereon, the second of which is a cover (3) which can at least partly overlap such a base, which may be joined thereto by means of a bending or fixing line (4), there being at least on such a base a film (22) made of plastic material suitable for contact with foods, which is superimposed on the paperboard layer (21) of the sheet, there being positioned on such a film the foodstuff (A), which is covered by a plastic wrap (23).
2. A package according to claim 1, wherein the cover is provided with at least one opening (31) which when the cover itself is superimposed on the base, allows the foodstuff to be seen through it.
3. A package according to claim 1, wherein the base and the cover are part of the same sheet which may be folded on itself by means of such a bending line (4) formed by stressing or by creasing or by scoring the sheet.
4. A package according to claim 1, wherein the base and the cover are made from two parts of sheet detached from each other and joined along the fixing line (4) by means of suitable fixing means such as adhesives, glue, staples, etc.
5. A package according to claim 1, wherein the package is provided with a seal (5) arranged on a portion of the joining edge between the base and the cover.
6. A package according to claim 1, wherein the sheet is provided both on the front and on the back with instructions relative to the packaged product such as for example brand(s), weight, organoleptic features, product codes, bar codes, instructions for the

consumer and characteristics of the packaging itself.

7. A package according to claim 6, wherein such instructions are present only on the cover, leaving the base dedicated only to the preservation of the food.
8. A package according to claim 1, wherein the base and the cover may be square, rectangular, oval or round.
9. A package according to claim 1, wherein the two parts of the sheet, base and cover, have the same dimensions so that the cover substantially completely covers the base.
10. A package according to claim 1, wherein such a film (22) may be made only on the base, or may be made on the whole sheet and therefore also on the cover (3).
11. A package according to claim 1, wherein such a plastic wrap (22) is positioned on the food according to the so-called "skin pack" technology or may vacuum-wrap the food or wrap it in a controlled atmosphere.
12. A process for packaging foodstuffs, comprising the following steps:

- a) providing at least one pre-scored paperboard sheet, that is a sheet on which outlines have been made which define a base (2) and a cover (3) joined by a bending line (4), such a cover being at least partly superimposable on such a base, a plastic film (22) suitable for contact with foods being present at least on such a base;
- b) bending the cover (3) under the base (2) so that only the upper surface of the base remains exposed;
- c) positioning the foodstuff (A) on such a base;
- d) covering at least such a base and the foodstuff with a plastic wrap (23);
- e) bending the cover up to superimposing it on the base to close the package.

13. A process for packaging foodstuffs, comprising the following steps:

- a) providing at least one pre-scored paperboard sheet, that is a sheet on which outlines have been made which define a base (2) and a cover (3) joined by a bending line (4), such a cover being at least partly superimposable on such a base, a plastic film (22) suitable for contact with foods being present at least on such a base;
- b) positioning the sheet in open position with the surfaces of the base and the cover exposed and positioning the foodstuff (A) on such a base;
- c) covering the base with the foodstuff and the

cover with a plastic wrap (23);

d) bending the cover up to superimposing it on the base to close the package.

14. A process according to claims 11 and 12, wherein step a) provides making an opening (31) in the cover.

15. A process for packaging foodstuffs, comprising the following steps:

- a) providing a reel of paperboard provided with surface film, which may be unrolled onto a machine that packages the food,
- b) positioning the foodstuff (A) on the unrolled reel,
- c) covering such a foodstuff with a plastic wrap,
- d) outline cutting the paperboard so as to form a base (2) at the positioned foodstuff and a cover (3), which are joined by a bending line (4), such a cover being at least partly superimposable on such a base,
- e) bending the cover up to superimposing it on the base to close the package.

16. A process according to claim 14, wherein step d) provides making an opening (31) in the cover.

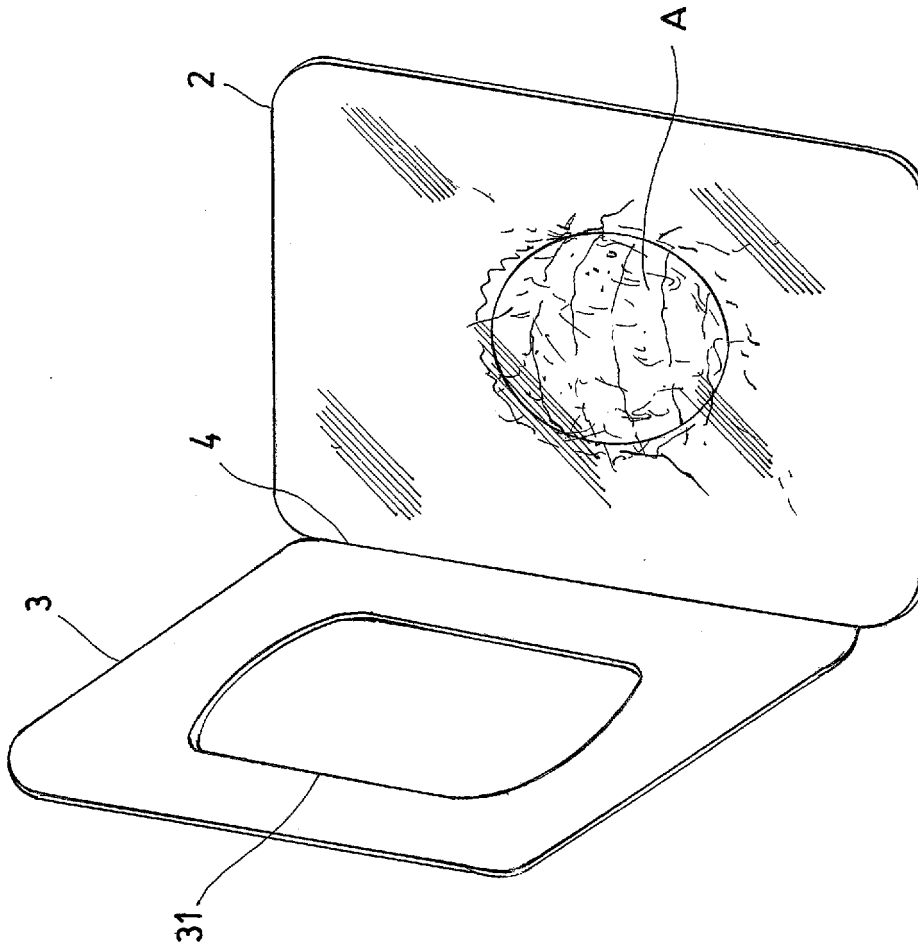


Fig. 1

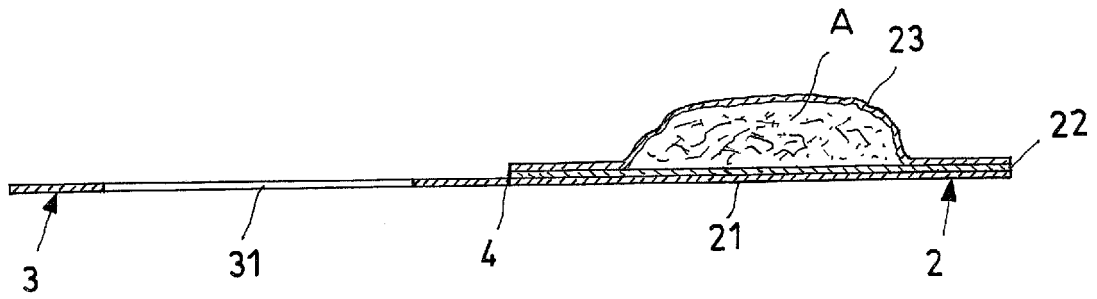


Fig. 2

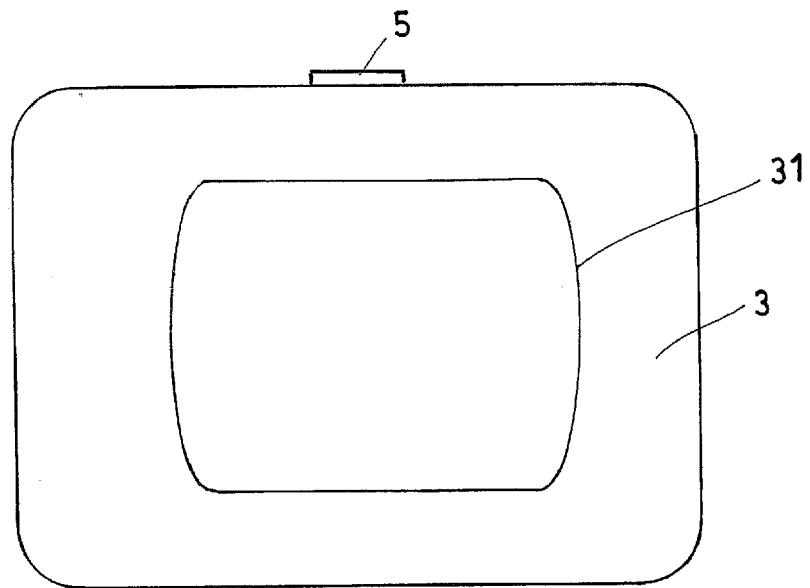


Fig. 3

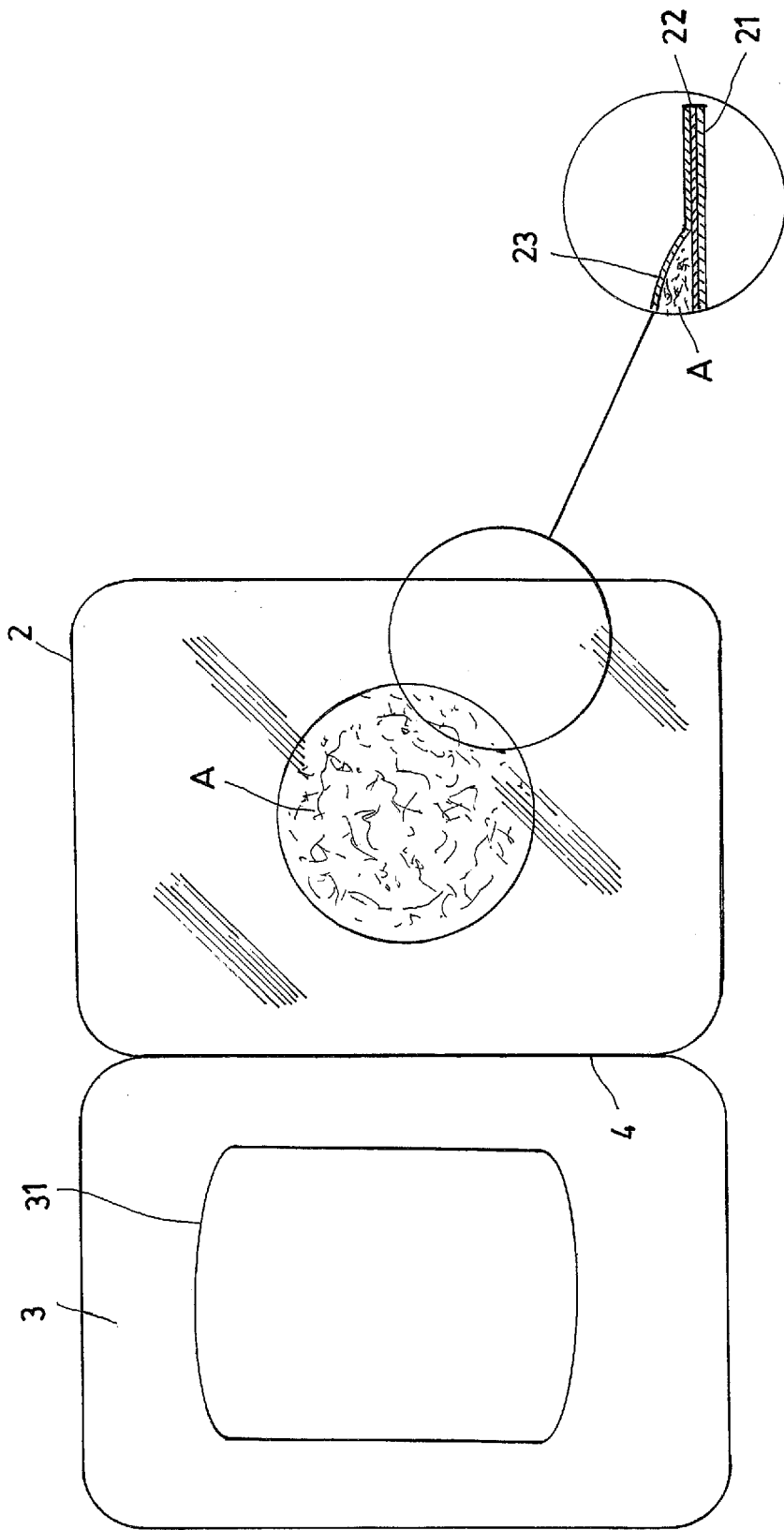


Fig. 5

Fig. 4



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Application Number
EP 18 15 8987

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| The present search report has been drawn up for all claims | | | |
| Place of search Munich | | Date of completion of the search 14 May 2018 | Examiner Derrien, Yannick |
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EPO FORM 1503 03/82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
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