

PATENT SPECIFICATION (11)

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DRAWINGS ATTACHED

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(54) FOODSTUFF CONTAINER OR THE LIKE

(71) We, DART INDUSTRIES INC., a Corporation organized and existing under the Laws of the State of Delaware, United States of America, of 8480 Beverly Boulevard, Los Angeles, State of California, 90054, United States of America, do hereby declare the invention, for which we pray that a patent may be granted to us, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—

The invention relates to a container for storing and serving butter or the like. More particularly, the invention is directed to a container which, by its construction, retains the contents a substantial distance from its sealing surfaces and additionally provides an area upon which serving implements may be cleaned also without contacting those sealing surfaces.

The invention provides a storage container capable of holding consumable foodstuff and the like and comprising: a base having an inner surface integral with an upwardly extending side wall, said side wall being further characterized by an outwardly extending ledge having a sealing wall projecting downwardly therefrom and terminating in an upwardly curved flange; a cover having a top wall and side wall, said side wall including an interior contact area that sealably engages the exterior surface of said sealing wall and which is supported by an outwardly extending peripheral flange positioned proximate the uppermost portion of said contact area.

Preferably the upwardly curved flange of the sealing wall constitutes a handle.

A specific embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:—

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of a butter container or the like including the supporting container and its associated cover.

Figure 2 is a side elevation view of these same two components, and,

Figure 3 is a sectional and elevation view taken along line 3—3 in Figure 2.

The present invention includes a base and a cover. The base has a recessed, pebbled, inner surface, an upwardly extending integral side wall that terminates in an outwardly extending ledge and a downwardly extending surface and an outwardly and upwardly curved flange also integral with the side wall. The cover for the base is a hollow box-shaped member having a top wall and a continuous integral side wall extending downwardly from the top wall. The bottom of the cover is open, and a continuous outwardly extending peripheral flange is positioned just above the lower edge of the cover side wall. The cover fits over the base with a locking engagement, since in the area of contact between the base and the cover a locking taper is provided.

Referring specifically to the drawing, a base 8 includes a recessed surface 10 having a textured or pebbled effect that is produced by hemispherical extensions protruding slightly above the flat surface and in random orientation. The surface 10 has an integral upwardly projecting peripheral side wall 12, the upper edge of which is affixed to an outwardly extending peripheral ledge 14. This ledge in turn is integral with and supports a downwardly directed sealing wall surface 16 that terminates in an upwardly curved flange 18. This particular base construction provides a rigid configuration and also maintains any contained foodstuff in a position out of close proximity to sealing wall surface 16.

As can be readily seen upon continued reference to the drawings, isolation of foodstuff within the container from the sealing wall surface is effected by the ledge 14. A portion of this ledge is also textured in a fashion similar to the recessed surface 10. The textured portion terminates in a rebated portion 20 immediately adjacent the sealing wall surface 16. The ledge and side wall thereby further provide a convenient structural arrangement upon which a user may readily clean any implement employed in dispensing the food stuff without inadvert-

[Price 25p]

ently or otherwise contacting the sealing wall surface.

5 The flange 18 is peripherally positioned around the base and is preferably integral with the sealing wall surface 16. The flange 18 curves upwardly and outwardly to permit insertion of the finger tips enabling a user to easily grasp the container both in its covered and uncovered condition. Additionally, such a flange tends to stiffen the base structure and maintains the sealing wall surface in a generally stable position so that an effective seal may be retained between the base and cover.

15 A cover 21 is a hollow, box-shaped member having a top wall 22, end walls 24 and side walls 26. Junctures between these walls are preferably rounded to permit easy cleaning. A continuous, outwardly extending flange 28 is at a position intermediate the top wall and a terminal edge 30 of the end and side walls 24 and 26 respectively. Flange 28, however, is more closely positioned to the terminal edge and lends support thereto. The flange extension is somewhat narrower than that of the handle-like flange 18 and therefore the user can place his fingers between the two when removing the cover while at the same time grasping flange 28.

30 The cover is preferably fabricated from low density polyethylene, thus providing the cover with a flexible resiliency that enables it to be slipped over the base 8. In this relationship, the lower inside surfaces of walls 24 and 26 sealably engage against the continuous peripheral sealing wall surface 16 of the base. Due to cantilevered effect of the downwardly extending sealing wall surface 16, additional flexibility is achieved for this portion of the base despite the presence of flange 18. It should be particularly noted that the contact area 32 between walls 24 and 26, and wall 16 is large and that each is tapered at approximately 2°. This is a locking taper that insures a tight seal between the base and the top. Preferably, the base is made from polypropylene but other materials may be employed with equally good effects.

50 The pressure contact points for the cover on the base are at the four corners of the base. The side walls and end walls 24

and 26 respectively are tightly stretched between the four corners to maintain the inside surfaces of wall 24 and 26 in taut engagement with base wall 16 between the corners, thereby providing an effective seal along the entire peripheral wall 12.

The textured or pebbled surface shown in Figures 1 and 3 effectively resists marring resulting from using the base as a cutting board for the contents of the container. This surface also aids in minimizing sliding of the contacts on the base. When items such as butter or cheese are placed on the base, small regions of reduced pressure are formed between a flat surface on the item and many of the recessed areas between the "pebbles". This "vacuum effect" also aids in minimizing movement of the item on the base.

The container is particularly directed to the storage of perishables such as elongated pieces of butter, cheese, meat loaf or the like, but it obviously can be used for other consumables.

WHAT WE CLAIM IS:—

1. A storage container capable of holding consumable foodstuff and the like and comprising: a base having an inner surface integral with an upwardly extending side wall, said side wall being further characterized by an outwardly extending ledge having a sealing wall projecting downwardly therefrom and terminating in an upwardly curved flange; a cover having a top wall and side wall, said side wall including an interior contact area that sealably engages the exterior surface of said sealing wall and which is supported by an outwardly extending peripheral flange positioned proximate the uppermost portion of said contact area.

2. A storage container as claimed in claim 1 in which the upwardly curved flange of the sealing wall constitutes a handle.

3. A storage container substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.

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