CLAIMS

1. A container for food items, comprising:

a) a base formed of transparent or translucent plastic and including a reservoir bottom panel and a peripheral bead, the peripheral bead having a bead inner sidewall extending about and upward from a perimeter of the reservoir bottom panel, a bead top wall extending laterally outward from an upper end of the bead inner sidewall, and a bead outer sidewall extending downward from a laterally outer edge of the bead top wall, at least a lower portion of the bead inner sidewall and the reservoir bottom panel enclosing, laterally and from below, a liquid collection reservoir, and the base including a base lower peripheral engagement surface extending about the liquid collection reservoir;

b) an insert formed of plastic and including a support panel having an insert lower peripheral engagement surface, the insert lower peripheral engagement surface releasably inter-lockable with the base lower peripheral engagement surface to assemble the insert to the base with the support panel overlying the liquid collection reservoir, the support panel having at least one drain aperture for draining liquid from above into the liquid collection reservoir;

wherein at least a portion of the bead outer sidewall is at equal elevation with, and spaced laterally outward from, the lower portion of the bead inner sidewall to impede visual access to liquid in the liquid collection reservoir.

2. The container of claim 1, wherein the base lower peripheral engagement surface comprises at least one of: (i) a portion of the bead inner sidewall; and (ii) at least a portion of the bead top wall.

3. The container of claim 1 or 2, wherein the insert further comprises an insert lower sidewall extending upward from a panel perimeter of the support panel, and further comprises an insert lower flange extending laterally outward from an upper end of the insert lower sidewall.

4. The container of claim 3, wherein the insert lower flange bears against the bead top wall when the insert and the base are assembled together.

5. The container of claim 3, wherein the insert lower engagement surface comprises at least a portion of the insert lower sidewall.

6. The container of any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein at least one of the insert lower engagement surface and the base lower engagement surface is resiliently deformable to provide snap-fit, interlocking sealed engagement therebetween when the insert is assembled to the base.

7. The container of any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the base further includes a flow regulator for each drain aperture of the insert, the flow regulator projecting upward from the reservoir bottom panel and aligned with the drain aperture when the insert is assembled to the base, the flow regulator occluding a central portion of the drain aperture to regulate liquid flow through the drain aperture and to inhibit reverse flow of liquid from the liquid collection reservoir back through the drain aperture when the container is tilted or inverted.

8. The container of any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the support panel includes a panel upper surface and a plurality of spaced apart risers projecting upward from the panel upper surface, the risers each having a riser top surface spaced above the panel upper surface for holding food items in the container above the panel upper surface and facilitating flow of liquid from the food items along the panel upper surface between the risers and to the drain aperture.

9. The container of any one of claims 3-5, wherein the insert includes an insert upper sidewall having an insert upper sidewall first end joined to an outer edge of the flange and an insert upper sidewall second end spaced above the insert upper sidewall first end.

10. The container of any one of claims 1 to 9, wherein the base includes a base sidewall having a base sidewall first end joined to a lower end of the bead outer sidewall, and a base sidewall second end spaced vertically above the base sidewall first end.

11. The container of claim 10, wherein the base sidewall second end includes a base rim, wherein the base rim is rounded to facilitate tear-free engagement with a film wrapped over the container to preserve freshness of the food items.

12. The container of any one of claims 1 to 11, wherein the base and the insert are formed from a single sheet of plastic and connected together along respective first edges of the base and the insert by a first living hinge, wherein assembly of the insert onto the base includes pivoting the insert relative to the base about the living hinge.

13. The container of claim 12, further comprising a lid that is releasably engageable with a rim of at least one of the base and the insert, wherein the lid is formed from the single sheet of plastic together with the base and the insert, and wherein the lid is connected to the base along a second edge of the base by a second living hinge.

14. A container for food items, comprising:

a) a base formed of plastic and including a reservoir bottom panel and a peripheral bead, the peripheral bead having a bead inner sidewall extending about and upward from a perimeter of the reservoir bottom panel, a bead top wall extending laterally outward from an upper end of the bead inner sidewall, and a bead outer sidewall extending downward from a laterally outer edge of the bead top wall, at least a lower portion of the bead inner sidewall and the reservoir bottom panel enclosing, laterally and from below, a liquid collection reservoir, the base further including a base lower peripheral engagement surface extending about the liquid collection reservoir, wherein the base lower peripheral engagement surface comprises at least a portion of the bead top wall; and

b) an insert formed of plastic and including a support panel, an insert lower sidewall extending upward from a periphery of the support panel, and an insert lower flange extending laterally outward from an upper end of the insert lower sidewall, the insert having an insert lower peripheral engagement surface comprising at least a portion of the insert lower flange, wherein the insert lower peripheral engagement surface is releasably interlockable with the base lower peripheral engagement surface to assemble the insert to the base with the insert lower flange bearing against the bead top wall and

the support panel overlying the liquid collection reservoir, the support panel having a plurality of drain apertures for draining liquid from above into the liquid collection reservoir.

15. The container of claim 14, wherein at least one of the insert lower peripheral engagement surface and the base lower peripheral engagement surface is resiliently deformable to provide snap-fit, interlocking sealed engagement therebetween when the insert is assembled to the base.

16. The container of claim 14 or 15, wherein the base includes a plurality of spaced apart panel braces, each of the panel braces projecting upwardly from the reservoir bottom panel and abutting an underside surface of the support panel when the insert is assembled to the base to maintain a vertical separation between the support panel and the reservoir bottom panel when in use.

17. The container of any one of claims 14 to 16, wherein the base includes a base sidewall having a base sidewall first end joined to a lower end of the bead outer sidewall, and a base sidewall second end spaced vertically above the base sidewall first end.

18. The container of claim 17, wherein the base sidewall first end is joined to the lower end of the bead outer sidewall via a base bottom wall extending laterally between the peripheral bead and the and base sidewall.

19. The container of claim 17 or 18, wherein the base sidewall includes a sidewall lower portion disposed at an equal elevation with, and spaced laterally outward from, the lower portion of the bead inner sidewall.

20. The container of any one of claims 17 to 19, wherein the base sidewall second end includes a base rim, wherein the base rim is rounded to facilitate tear-free engagement with a film wrapped over the container to preserve freshness of the food items.

21. The container of any one of claims 17 to 20, wherein the insert includes an insert upper sidewall having an insert upper sidewall first end joined to an outer edge of the insert lower flange and an insert upper sidewall second end spaced above the insert upper sidewall first end.

22. The container of any one of claims 14 to 21, wherein the base is formed of transparent or translucent plastic, and at least a portion of the bead outer sidewall is at equal elevation with, and spaced laterally outward from, the lower portion of the bead inner sidewall to impede visual access to liquid in the liquid collection reservoir.