Claims:

1. A food packaging film comprising a flexible film substrate made from a material exhibiting a better resistance to penetration by oxygen and water vapor than paper, the flexible film substrate having a pair of opposed major faces, a printed image on at least one major face, and a barrier coating covering the printed image, the barrier coating comprising a water vapor-impermeable, organic-origin, food compatible film forming material.

2. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein substrate is formed from a synthetic resin, a naturally occurring resin, a metal, or a combination thereof.

3. The food packaging film of claim 2, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

4. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

5. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the barrier coating includes a co-film former

6. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the substrate is a multilayer article, and further wherein at least two of the layers in this multilayer article are different from one another.

7. The food packaging film of claim 2, wherein substrate is formed from a synthetic resin, a naturally occurring resin, or a combination thereof.

8. The food packaging film of claim 7, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

9. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

10. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the barrier coating includes a co-film former

11. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the substrate is a multilayer article, and further wherein at least two of the layers in this multilayer article are different from one another.

12. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the barrier coating has a resistance to permeation by water vapor at room temperature of at least 75% of that of refined bleach shellac and an oxygen permeability of at least 75% of that of refined bleached shellac.

13. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the barrier coating is lipid insoluble.

14. The food packaging film of claim 13, wherein the barrier coating has a resistance to permeation by water vapor at room temperature of at least 75% of that of refined bleach shellac and an oxygen permeability of at least 75% of that of refined bleached shellac.

15. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the flexible film substrate is biodegradable and further wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

16. The food packaging film of claim 15, wherein the flexible film substrate is compostable.

17. The food packaging film of claim 16, wherein the flexible film substrate is a multi-layer film composed of at least two layers of different materials.

18. The combination comprising a food or pharmaceutical item and a wrapper fully enclosing the food or pharmaceutical item, wherein the wrapper comprises the food packaging film of claim 1.

19. The combination of claim 18, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

20. The combination of claim 19, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

21. The combination of claim 19, wherein the flexible film substrate is biodegradable

22. The combination of claim 19, wherein the flexible film substrate is compostable.

Claims:

1. A food packaging film having sufficient flexibility so that it can be supplied in the form of a long continuous sheet rolled up upon itself and then unwounded from the roll for wrapping different food items by hand, the food packaging film comprising

a flexible film substrate made from a material exhibiting a better resistance to penetration by oxygen and water vapor than paper selected from the group consisting of synthetic resins, metal foils, and naturally occurring film forming resins which are at least one of degradable, biodegradable and compostable, the flexible film substrate having a pair of opposed major faces, and a printed image on at least one major face, and

a barrier coating covering the printed image, the barrier coating comprising a water vapor-impermeable, organic-origin, food compatible film forming material.

2. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the substrate is formed from a synthetic resin, a naturally occurring resin, a metal, or a combination thereof.

3. The food packaging film of claim 2, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

4. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

5. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the barrier coating includes a co-film former

6. The food packaging film of claim 3, wherein the substrate is a multilayer article, and further wherein at least two of the layers in this multilayer article are different from one another.

7. The food packaging film of claim 2, wherein substrate is formed from a synthetic resin, a naturally occurring resin, or a combination thereof.

8. The food packaging film of claim 7, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

9. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

10. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the barrier coating includes a co-film former.

11. The food packaging film of claim 8, wherein the substrate is a multilayer article, and further wherein at least two of the layers in this multilayer article are different from one another.

12. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the barrier coating has a resistance to permeation by water vapor at room temperature of at least 75% of that of refined bleach shellac and an oxygen permeability of at least 75% of that of refined bleached shellac.

13. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the barrier coating is lipid insoluble.

14. The food packaging film of claim 13, wherein the barrier coating has a resistance to permeation by water vapor at room temperature of at least 75% of that of refined bleach shellac and an oxygen permeability of at least 75% of that of refined bleached shellac.

15. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the flexible film substrate is biodegradable and further wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

16. The food packaging film of claim 15, wherein the flexible film substrate is compostable.

17. The food packaging film of claim 16, wherein the flexible film substrate is a multi-layer film composed of at least two layers of different materials.

18. The combination comprising a food or pharmaceutical item and a wrapper fully enclosing the food or pharmaceutical item, wherein the wrapper comprises the food packaging film of claim 1.

19. The combination of claim 18, wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

20. The combination of claim 19, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.

21. The combination of claim 19, wherein the flexible film substrate is biodegradable.

22. The combination of claim 19, wherein the flexible film substrate is compostable.

23. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the flexible film substrate is made from coextruded polyethylene/polypropylene laminated to polyethylene terephalate, polyethylene terephalate laminated to low density polyethylene) or metalized polyethylene terephalate laminated to coextruded polyethylene/polypropylene.

24. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the flexible film substrate is made from a multi-layer film in which at least one of the layers is selected from the group consisting of nylon, metal foil, and ethylene vinyl acetate polymers and copolymers.

25. The food packaging film of claim 1, wherein the substrate is formed from a naturally occurring film forming resins which are at least one of degradable, biodegradable and compostable, and further wherein the barrier coating comprises shellac.

26. The food packaging film of claim 25, wherein the barrier coating comprises at least one of dewaxed orange shellac and refined bleach shellac.