



PACIFICBAG INC

1-800-562-2247

WHAT'S NEW AT PBi?

The Stand-Up Pouch: Installment 2 of 3.

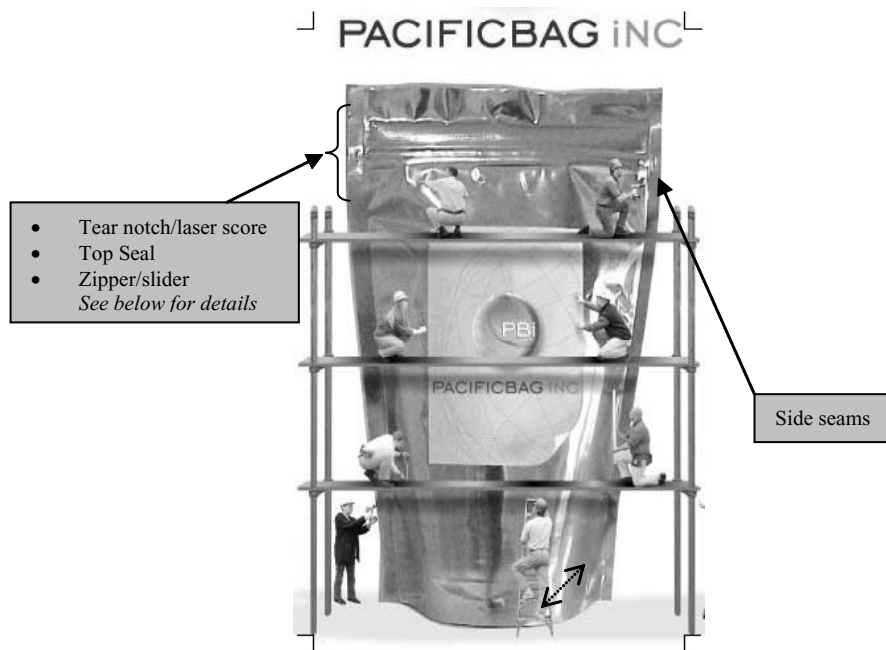
Robert Hepburn, Pet Food Product Manager, Pacific Bag, Inc.

This is the second letter in a three-part series on stand-up pouches. In this letter we will address a few more features that affect opening the pouches, closing the pouches, and making sure the pouch maintains integrity. In letter #1 of this series we focused on the face, height and gusset of the Stand-Up Pouch (SUP). If you would like a copy of that letter, please give us a call.

We hope you enjoy the newsletter and welcome your input and comments. If you would like to include an item in the newsletter please feel free to email me at roberth@pacificbag.com

THE STAND-UP POUCH *Opening, Closing and Integrity*

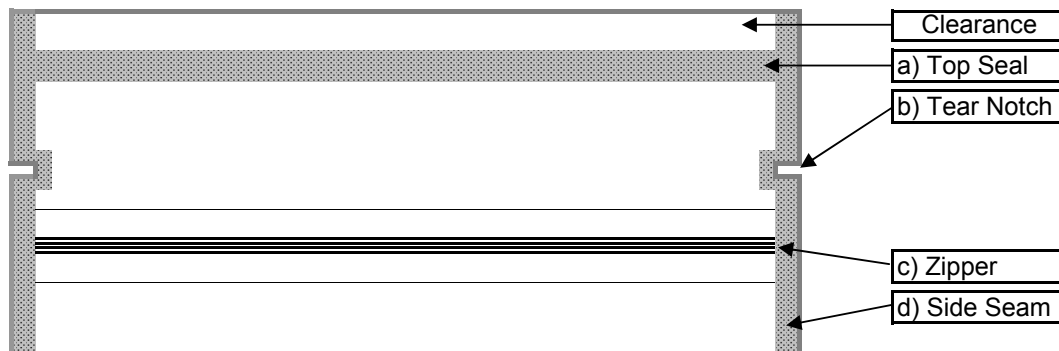
This section discusses the physical aspects of the stand-up pouch.



The top of pouch and the sides of the pouch are important to understand. These features of the pouch need to be specified and controlled to ensure:

- Pouches are attractive
- Pouches can be filled and emptied *conveniently*
- Pouch appearance is consistent
- Pouches can withstand transportation/abuse

In most cases, companies know if they want a zipper or a slider, or if they want a tear notch to help open the bag easily, but subtle changes make a difference. We suggest a close review of the features listed below.



- a) **Top Seal:** The top seal is placed on the SUP after filling (this is done by the customer's sealing equipment). The top seal is made above the tear notch, and approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " below the top of the bag. This seal, made by the customer, is critical. It must be hermetic, or air tight. A good seal can be put in this position by automatic machines or with a simple hand held or table top sealer.

Note: PBi can supply an easy opening film at the top of the pouch. Easy opening film makes pouch opening possible without a tear notch or knife; therefore consumers can "pull" the seal open. If the customer chooses easy opening film, PBi advises adequate clearance above the top seal for finger tips to "pull" open the pouch. This usually requires $\frac{1}{2}$ " clearance. If a tear notch (see item b) is used, the seal must be above the tear notch or laser score area.

- b) **Tear Notch (laser score, if included):** Consumers use the tear notch to rip the top of the pouch open. The tear notch is a small cut or notch in the side seam of the pouch. The tear notch usually looks like a v-shaped notch or simple slit. It is above the zipper, and approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ " to $\frac{3}{4}$ " below the top of the bag.

Since consumers need adequate room to place finger tips above the zipper, clearance is needed. This clearance allows consumers to pull the zipper open.

Note: Laser Score: PBi can include a laser score along the top of the pouch. The laser "scores" the film and makes it easier to tear the top of the pouch off.

- c) **Zipper (or Slider, if specified):** Most consumers and packers know about the zipper reclosure. It is safe to say consumers love the convenience of the zipper. And in some markets, it is a "must". There are many different styles of zippers designed for specific products, such as a powder proof zipper that stops fine powders from clogging the zipper, or zippers with two colors that help consumers see the zipper close. However, for this letter, we limit discussion to basic "tongue and groove" zippers made by companies like Mini-Grip and Presto. Additionally, numerous companies are installing "sliders" in the top of the pouches. In our opinion, sliders are great, but the cost is prohibitive.

Another key factor is zipper position. The zipper center position is placed typically 1-2" from the top of the pouch (different pouch size, and different applications call for different zipper placement). Zippers are made of polyethylene and include a thick plastic upper and lower flange. The flanges extend approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " - $\frac{1}{2}$ " (depending on the style of the zipper) above and below the zipper center position.

Note: It is important to know the zipper position and to make sure the tear notch is above the zipper flange. The tear notch must be above the flange so consumers can pull the top of the pouch.

- d) **Side Seams:** Side seams need to be consistent in width. Typically, seals are $\frac{1}{4}$ "- $\frac{3}{8}$ " (+/- $\frac{1}{16}$ "). PBi specifies and controls side seam width to eliminate problems with package fill height and appearance. Variations in the side seam width are important because the cubic area of the internal compartment changes if the seals are too thin or too wide. This will make the product fill height change.

Note: In some extreme cases, we have seen variation in side seams effect product height so much the pouch cannot hold the specified weight.

This concludes letter #2 in the three part stand-up pouch series. We welcome questions or comments. In the next letter we address graphics, new features and future developments with the Stand-Up Pouch.