

[54] CHRYSANTHEMUM PLANT NAMED FROLIC

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[57] ABSTRACT

A Chrysanthemum plant named Frolic particularly characterized by its flat capitulum form; decorative capitulum type; white ray floret color; diameter across face of capitulum of up to 5.5 cm at maturity; short plant height with spreading and prolific branching pattern; average natural season flower date of September 1 in Salinas, Calif. and September 26 in Hightstown, N.J. uniform seven week photoperiodic flowering response to short days in photoperiodic controlled flowering programs; and durable, uniform performance in outside fall flowerings and in spring small pot flowering programs.

3 Drawing Sheets

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The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of Chrysanthemum, botanically known as *Chrysanthemum morifolium*, Ramat., and referred to by the cultivar name Frolic.

Frolic, identified as 83MO5015, was originated from a cross made by Grace H. Mack in a controlled breeding program in New Canaan, Conn., in 1982.

The female parent of Frolic was the cultivar identified as Pearls, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 3,970. The male parent of Frolic was an unnamed seedling.

Frolic was discovered and selected as one flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross by Cornelis P. Vandenberg in September of 1983, in a controlled environment in Salinas, Calif.

The first act of asexual reproduction of Frolic was accomplished when vegetative cuttings were taken from the initial selection in December of 1983 in a controlled environment in Salinas, Calif., by technicians working under formulations established and supervised by Cornelis P. Vandenberg.

Horticultural examination of controlled flowerings of successive plantings has shown that the unique combination of characteristics as herein disclosed for Frolic are firmly fixed and are retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Frolic has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary significantly with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity, and daylength.

The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe plants grown in a controlled open area in Salinas, Calif. and in Hightstown, N.J. Rooted cuttings were established in soil and maintained outdoors under the natural temperature and daylength prevailing during July through September. Single pinching was practiced with all branches and buds retained.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be basic characteristics of Frolic, which, in combination, distinguish this Chrysanthemum as a new and distinct cultivar:

1. Flat capitulum form.
2. Decorative capitulum type.
3. White ray floret color.

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4. Diameter across face of capitulum up to 5.5 cm at maturity.

5. Short plant height.

6. Spreading and prolific branching pattern.

7. Average natural season flower date of September 1 in Salinas, Calif., and September 26 in Hightstown, N.J.

8. Uniform seven week photoperiodic flowering response to short days in photoperiodic controlled flowering programs.

9. Durable, uniform performance in outside fall flowerings and in spring small pot flowering programs.

The accompanying photographic drawings show typical inflorescence and leaf characteristics of Frolic, with the colors being as nearly true as possible with illustrations of this type. Sheet 1 is a color photograph of Frolic grown as a pinched spray pot mum. Sheet 2 is a black and white photograph of three views of the inflorescence of Frolic. Sheet 3 is a black and white photograph showing the upper and under sides of the leaves of Frolic at three stages of development (mature, intermediate and immature).

Of the commercial cultivars known to the inventors, the most similar in comparison to Frolic is Starfire, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 5,269. Reference is made to attached Chart A, which compares certain characteristics of Frolic to the same characteristics of Starfire.

Similar traits are ray floret color, capitulum form and type, and controlled flowering response. Frolic has a more prolific branching pattern, a slightly smaller diameter of capitulum, a shorter plant height, and an earlier natural season flower date than Starfire.

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart. The clear white ray floret color of Frolic is not represented in the R.H.S Colour Chart. The color values were determined on plant material grown in a controlled greenhouse environment in Salinas, Calif. on May 29, 1987.

Classification:

Botanical.—*Chrysanthemum morifolium*, Ramat., cv. Frolic.

Commercial.—Decorative spray pot mum and garden mum.

INFLORESCENCE

A. Capitulum:

Form.—Flat.

Type.—Decorative.

Diameter across face.—Up to 5.5 cm at maturity.

B. Corolla of ray florets:

Color (general tonality from a distance of three meters).—White.

Color (upper surface).—White.

Color (under surface).—White.

Shape.—Outer ray florets are quilled. Inner ray florets are spooned.

C. Corolla of disc florets:

Color (mature).—5A.

Color (immature).—1A. Flowers are fully double. Very few disc florets.

D. Reproductive organs:

Androecium.—Present on disc florets only; scant pollen.

Gynoecium.—Present on both ray and disc florets.

PLANT

A. General appearance:

Height.—Short.

Branching pattern.—Spreading and prolific.

B. Foliage:

Color (upper surface).—137A.

Color (under surface).—137B.

Shape.—Small, lobed.

CHART A

Comparison of Frolic and Starfire

CULTIVAR	RAY FLORET COLOR	CAPITULUM FORM & TYPE	BRANCHING PATTERN
	Frolic	White	Flat Decorative
Starfire	White	Flat Decorative	Spreading

CULTIVAR	DIAMETER ACROSS FACE OF CAPITULUM	PLANT HEIGHT	CONTROLLED RESPONSE
	Frolic	Up to 5.5 cm	Short
Starfire	60-75 mm	Tall	7 weeks

CULTIVAR	AVERAGE NATURAL SEASON FLOWER DATE	
	SALINAS	HIGHTSTOWN
Frolic	Sept. 1	Sept. 26
Starfire	Sept. 7	Sept. 28

COMPARISONS MADE OF PLANTS GROWN UNDER NATURAL SEASON OUTDOOR CONDITIONS IN SALINAS, CALIFORNIA AND IN HIGHTSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

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We claim:

1. A new and distinct Chrysanthemum plant named Frolic, as described and illustrated, and particularly characterized as to uniqueness by the combined characteristics of flat capitulum form; decorative capitulum type; white ray floret color; diameter across face of capitulum of up to 5.5 cm at maturity; short plant height with spreading and prolific branching pattern; average natural season flower date of September 1 in Salinas, Calif. and September 26 in Hightstown, N.J.; uniform seven week photoperiodic flowering response to short days in photoperiodic controlled flowering programs; and durable, uniform performance in outside fall flowerings and in spring small pot flowering programs.

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