

- [54] CHRYSANTHEMUM PLANT NAMED DARK AKIRA
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[57] ABSTRACT

A Chrysanthemum plant named Dark Akira particularly characterized by its flat capitulum form; spoon daisy capitulum type; red-purple ray floret color; diameter across face of capitulum of up to 15 cm at maturity when grown as a pinched disbudded pot mum; uniform eight week photoperiodic flowering response to short days; medium plant height when grown as a pinched pot mum; recommended both as disbudded and spray pot mum; and spreading and prolific branching pattern.

3 Drawing Sheets

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The present invention comprises a new and distinct cultivar of Chrysanthemum, botanically known as *Den-dranthema grandiflora*, and referred to by the cultivar name Dark Akira.

Dark Akira, identified as 82-349A04, is a product of a mutation induction program which had the objective of creating new Chrysanthemum cultivars that would expand the color range of an existing cultivar while retaining all other traits.

Dark Akira was discovered and selected by Cornelis P. VandenBerg on Mar. 23, 1987 in a controlled environment in Salinas, Calif. as one flowering plant within a flowering block established as rooted cuttings from stock plants which had been exposed as unrooted cuttings to an x-ray source of 2,000 rads. The irradiated parent was the cultivar Akira, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 6,498.

The first act of asexual reproduction of Dark Akira was accomplished when vegetative cuttings were taken from the initial selection in June of 1987 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 Dark Akira are firmly fixed and are retained through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

Dark Akira has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary

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significantly with variations in environment such as temperature, light intensity and daylength.

The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe plants grown in Salinas, Calif. and Leamington, Canada, under greenhouse conditions which approximate those generally used in commercial greenhouse practice.

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

1. Flat capitulum form.
2. Spoon daisy capitulum type.
3. Red-purple ray floret color.
4. Diameter across face of capitulum of up to 15 cm at maturity when grown as a pinched disbudded pot mum.
5. Uniform eight week photoperiodic flowering response to short days.
6. Medium plant height, requiring 0 to 7 long days after pinch prior to short days and 1 application of 2500 ppm B-9 SP to attain a flowered plant height of 25 to 35 cm for year-round flowerings when grown as a pinched pot mum.
7. Recommended both as disbudded and spray pot mum.
8. Spreading and prolific branching pattern.

The accompanying photographic drawings show typical inflorescence and leaf characteristics of Dark



Akira, with the colors being as nearly true as possible with illustrations of this type.

Sheet 1 is a color photograph of Dark Akira grown as a pinched disbudded pot mum.

Sheet 2 is a black and white photograph of three views of the inflorescence of Dark Akira.

Sheet 3 is a black and white photograph showing the upper and under sides of the leaves of Dark Akira at three stages of development (mature, intermediate and immature).

Of the commercial cultivars known to the inventor, the most similar in comparison to Dark Akira is the parent cultivar Akira. All traits of Dark Akira are similar to those of Akira, except the color of the ray florets and color retention. The color of the ray florets of Dark Akira is significantly darker, and Dark Akira has better color retention than Akira. Akira has a tendency to fade quite rapidly, while Dark Akira retains its dark red-purple ray floret color.

In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Color Chart. The color values were determined on plant material grown as a pinched disbudded pot mum in Salinas, Calif. on June 5, 1989.

#### Classification:

*Botanical.*—*Dendranthema grandiflora* cv Dark Akira.

*Commercial.*—Spoon daisy disbud and spray pot mum.

#### INFLORESCENCE

##### A. Capitulum:

*Form.*—Flat.

*Type.*—Spoon daisy.

*Diameter across face.*—Up to 15 cm at maturity.

##### B. Corolla of ray florets:

*Color (general tonality from a distance of three meters).*—Red-purple.

*Color (upper surface of spoon tips).*—71A to 71B.

*Color (tubes).*—Closest to 80C to 80D.

*Shape.*—Base tubular. Distal portion open, flattened and spoon-like. Ray florets in each capitulum range from completely tubular to approximately 50% of the length of the ray floret flattened and spoon-like.

##### C. Corolla of disc florets:

*Color (mature).*—9A to 9B.

*Color (immature).*—144B.

##### D. Reproductive organs:

*Androecium.*—Present on disc florets only; no pollen.

*Gynoecium.*—Present on both ray and disc florets.

#### PLANT

##### A. General appearance:

*Height.*—Medium; 25 to 35 cm as a pinched pot mum with 0 to 7 long days after pinch prior to short days and 1 application of 2500 ppm B-9 SP.

*Branching pattern.*—Spreading and prolific.

##### B. Foliage:

*Color (upper surface).*—147A.

*Color (under surface).*—147B.

*Shape.*—Deeply lobed and serrated.

#### I claim:

1. A new and distinct Chrysanthemum plant named Dark Akira, as described and illustrated.

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