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Fruehwirth

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[54] POINSETTIA PLANT NAMED ‘702’

[75] Inventor: Franz Fruehwirth, Encinitas, Calif.

[73] Assignee: Paul Ecke Ranch, Inc., Encinitas, Calif.

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[56] References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

P.P. 9,951 7/1997 Fruenwirth Plt./307

Primary Examiner—Howard J. Locker

Assistant Examiner—Kent L. Bell

Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Arnold White & Durkee

[57] ABSTRACT

Poinsettia ‘702’ is a new cultivar, distinguished by dark red flower bracts, dark green foliage, self-branching characteristics and 9-week flowering response time. The new plant produces a very desirable branched flowering pot plant for the mid-season holiday market. Poinsettia ‘702’ is resistant to epinasty after being confined to shipping containers. The post-production foliage and bract retention is excellent even under low light intensities in the consumer’s home.

1 Drawing Sheet

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BACKGROUND OF THE PLANT

This new poinsettia cultivar, ‘702’, originated as an induced self-branching sport of a seedling known as “K-06” (not patented) in my greenhouse in Encinitas, Calif. It was selected because of its dark red flower bracts, dark green foliage, self branching characteristics, and mid-season flowering response; traits that distinguish it from other poinsettia cultivars, and seem to make it a desirable plant for commercial greenhouse production. After selection, ‘702’ was vegetatively reproduced from stem cuttings for test purposes in Encinitas, Calif. “K-06” is a proprietary plant and there are no specimens in the public domain. Poinsettia “K-06” is not self-branching in that no axillary branches develop as long as the apical bud is not removed (pinched). ‘702’ is self-branching in that during development axillary branches elongate without removal of the apical bud. If under short day conditions, the axillary branches will develop inflorescences. Poinsettia ‘702’ most closely resembles poinsettia ‘725’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,951), but differs in these aspects: ‘702’ has darker red bracts, darker green foliage, more flower bracts and cyathia and a more open center to the bract presentation than ‘725’ under the same cultural conditions. By subjecting clones of this plant to successive generations of vegetative propagation, it was demonstrated that the distinctive characteristics of ‘702’ held true from generation to generation.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

Poinsettia ‘702’ is illustrated in the accompanying color photographs.

The upper photograph is a side view of a branched plant.

The lower photograph is a top view of the same ‘702’ plant showing flower and bract formation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following is a detailed description of this new poinsettia as observed in Encinitas, Calif., USA during December 1996. Observations were recorded from flowering plants, grown as one branched plant per pot. The pot was 14 cm in diameter and 11 cm in height. Color designations are compared to the 1986 edition of R.H.S. Colour Chart, first

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published in 1966 by The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England.

THE PLANT

The following chart summarizes some of the differences between Poinsettia ‘702’ and the plant it most closely resembles, Poinsettia ‘725’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 9,951) under the same cultural conditions.

Plant	‘702’	‘725’
No. of Bracts	22–24	16–18
Bract color	RHS 46A-B	RHS 45A-B
No. of cyathia	20–22	8–10
Bract margins	Entire	Sometimes lobed
Bract petioles length	4–5 cm	2–3 cm

Origin: Sport of a seedling. The sport was induced by application of the procedures set forth in U.S. Pat. No. 4,724,276 to the seedling parent plant. Rootstock used was ‘Angelika’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 5,492).

Classification:

Botanical.—*Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd.

Common name.—Poinsettia.

Cultivar name.—‘702’.

Form: Shrub.

Height: Short — medium.

Growth habit: As a single stemmed plant, upright and vigorous with self-branching side shoots. The application of a chemical growth retardant may be needed to restrict height for commercial pot plant production. I observed a branched plant in a pot with an overall height of 41 cm and an overall width of 51 cm. The diameter of individual inflorescences is 26 cm.

Branching: Axillary branches will develop and terminate in an inflorescence without pinching. However, it is usually desirable to pinch ‘702’ before flower induction and remove all terminal dominance. Then, all axillary branches will develop uniformly and at a faster rate.

Growth rate: Rooting of stem cutting occurs in 12–18 days under intermittent mist. The plant will flower in about nine weeks under continuous long night conditions and night temperatures of about 16–18° C.

Foliage: The foliage is clean and uniformly dark green from bottom to top of the plant. The leaves are of medium size, leaf blades typically 13–15 cm long and 8–9 cm wide with leaf petioles 6 cm long and deep red. The upper leaf surface is glabrous and the under surface is finely pubescent.

Leaf shape.—Typical leaves are generally ovate with obtuse to acute bases and acuminate tips. Leaf margins are mostly entire but some with 1 or 2 indentations on each side of the leaf blade.

Color.—Upper side — Dark green, darker than R.H.S. 147A. Under side — Green, R.H.S. 147A–B.

Retention.—The foliage lasts extremely well even under low light intensities in the consumers home.

Bracts: Generally there are 22–24 dark red bracts of various sizes subtending the cyathia. The primary bracts have blades typically 11 cm long and 6–7 cm wide with petioles 4–5 cm long.

Shape.—Primary bracts are ovate with acute bases and acuminate tips. Primary bract margins are entire. Secondary bracts are of various sizes, obovate to broadly elliptical, and have entire margins.

Color.—Upper side — Dark red, R.H.S. 46A–B. Under side — Red, R.H.S. 53B–C.

Flowers: Generally, 20–22 cyathia (flowers) per inflorescence are present when the plant is in full bloom. Each cyathium is about 7 mm long and 6 mm wide, green in color, and fringed with red at the distal end. A small yellow nectar cup tinged orange, protrudes from the side of each cyathium. The flower pedicel is also green and about 4 mm in length. The stamens protruding from the cyathia are dark red. The anthers are bifurcate; the pollen is yellow and copious. The stigmas are dark red and trifurcate.

Nectar exudate.—Very little.

Seeds.—Self-incompatible.

Fertility.—Not observed.

Post production: Poinsettia '702' is resistant to epinasty after being confined to shipping containers and retains its leaves and flower bracts for several weeks in the consumer's home environment.

Disease resistance: Typical of the species.

What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct Poinsettia plant, substantially as herein shown and described, distinguished by its dark red flower bracts, dark green foliage, self-branching characteristics and mid-season flowering response.

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