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(54) **GERANIUM PLANT NAMED 'FN WHITE EYE'**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of Geranium plant named 'FN White Eye', characterized by its upright, outwardly spreading and mounded growth habit; freely branching habit; dense and full plant habit; freely flowering habit; white and red purple bi-colored flowers; and no requirement for vernalization.

1 Drawing Sheet

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BOTANICAL CLASSIFICATION/CULTIVAR DESIGNATION

Pelargonium×*domesticum* cultivar FN White Eye.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of Geranium plant, commercially known as Regal Geranium, botanically known as *Pelargonium*×*domesticum*, and hereinafter referred to by the name 'FN White Eye'.

The new Regal Geranium is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Foxley, Norfolk, United Kingdom. The objective of the breeding program is to develop new Regal Geranium cultivars with compact growth habit, numerous flowers, and interesting flower and foliage colors that do not require vernalization for flowering.

The new Regal Geranium originated from a self-pollination made by the Inventor in May, 1997 of a proprietary *Pelargonium*×*domesticum* selection identified as RPOCZ, not patented. The cultivar FN White Eye was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a flowering plant within the progeny from this self-pollination in a controlled environment in Foxley, Norfolk, United Kingdom.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal cuttings taken at Foxley, Norfolk, United Kingdom, since January, 1998 has shown that the unique features of this new Regal Geranium are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'FN White Eye'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'FN White Eye' as a new and distinct Regal Geranium cultivar:

1. Upright, outwardly spreading and mounded growth habit.
2. Freely branching habit; dense and full plant habit.
3. Freely flowering habit.
4. White and red purple bi-colored flowers.
5. No requirement for vernalization.

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Plants of the new Regal Geranium differ primarily from plants of the parent selection in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new Regal Geranium are more freely flowering than plants of the selection RPOCZ.
2. Plants of the new Regal Geranium flower earlier than plants of the selection RPOCZ.

The new Regal Geranium can be compared to the cultivar, 'Jasmin', not patented. However, in side-by-side comparisons conducted in Foxley, Norfolk, United Kingdom, plants of the new Regal Geranium differed from plants of the cultivar Jasmin in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new Regal Geranium were more compact than plants of the cultivar Jasmin.
2. Plants of the new Regal Geranium were more freely branching than plants of the cultivar Jasmin.
3. Plants of the new Regal Geranium flowered earlier than plants of the cultivar Jasmin.
4. Plants of the new Regal Geranium and the cultivar Jasmin differed in flower coloration.
5. Plants of the new Regal Geranium did not require vernalization for flowering whereas plants of the cultivar Jasmin required vernalization for flowering.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new cultivar, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Flower and foliage colors in the photographs may differ slightly from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new Regal Geranium.

The photograph at the top of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'FN White Eye'.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet comprises a close-up view of a typical flower bud, the lower surface of a typical open flower, a typical flowering umbel, the upper surface of a typical leaf, and the lower surface of a typical leaf.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The cultivar FN White Eye has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature and light intensity, without, however, any variance in genotype. The aforementioned photographs and following observations and measurements describe plants grown in Lompoc, Calif., under commercial practice in a polycarbonate-covered greenhouse during the winter and spring with day temperatures ranging from 55 to 75° F., night temperatures ranging from 50 to 65° F. and light levels ranging from 4,000 to 8,000 foot-candles. Plants used for the photographs and description were about 22 weeks from planting rooted cuttings and were grown in gallon containers. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 1995 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Pelargonium* × *domesticum* cultivar FN White Eye.

Parentage: Self-pollination of a proprietary *Pelargonium* × *domesticum* selection identified as RPOCZ, not patented.

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—About 7 days at 70° F.

Time to develop roots.—About 21 days at 70° F.

Root description.—Fine, freely branching.

Plant description:

General appearance.—Upright and outwardly spreading; mounded growth habit. Appropriate for gallon containers.

Growth and branching habit.—Vigorous and freely branching with about 14 lateral branches per plant; dense and full plant habit. Pinching is typically not required.

Plant height (to top of foliage).—About 23 cm.

Plant height (to top of flowering umbels).—About 30 cm.

Plant width.—About 47.5 cm.

Lateral branches.—Length: About 20 cm. Diameter: About 5 mm. Internode length: About 1.5 cm. Texture: Pubescent. Color: 144B.

Foliage description.—Arrangement: Before flowering, alternate; after flowering, opposite, simple. Length: About 5.8 cm. Width: About 8.5 cm. Shape: Roughly hemispherical, three-lobed. Apex: Broadly acute. Base: Truncate. Margin: Serrate; undulate. Venation: Palmate. Texture, upper surface: Slightly pubescent. Texture, lower surface: Glabrous. Color: Young and mature foliage, upper surface: 146A. Young and mature foliage, lower surface: 146B. Venation, upper surface: 146B. Venation, lower surface: 146C. Petiole: Length: About 3 cm. Diameter: About 3 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 146A.

Flower description:

Flower arrangement and type.—Single rounded flowers arranged in hemispherical umbels arising from apical leaf axils. Umbels displayed above and

beyond the foliage. At full flowering, usually about 44 open and developing umbels per plant. Umbels persistent. Flowers not fragrant.

Flowering season.—Year-round under greenhouse conditions; vernalization is not required for flowering. In the garden, flowering is continuous from spring until fall. Plants start flowering about 20 weeks after planting.

Flower longevity.—Flowers last about 5 to 7 days on the plant.

Umbels/flowers.—Height: About 5 cm. Diameter: About 7.5 cm. Number of flowers per umbel: About five. Flower diameter: About 4.9 cm. Flower depth (height): About 3.2 cm.

Flower buds.—Length: About 1.8 cm. Diameter: About 6 mm. Shape: Elongated ovoid. Color: 55D.

Petals.—Quantity: About five per flower arranged in a single whorl. Length, upper two petals: About 3.6 cm. Length, lower three petals: About 3.4 cm. Width, upper two petals: About 2.4 cm. Width, lower three petals: About 1.5 cm. Shape: Obovate. Apex: Rounded. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth; velvety. Color: When opening, upper and lower surfaces: More white than 155D. Fully opened, upper surface: Center spot, 60A to 60B; surrounded by more white than 155D extending to the margin; at base, more white than 155D; venation, 59A. Fully opened, lower surface: Center spot, 65B; surrounded by more white than 155D extending to the margin; at base, more white than 155D; venation, 59A to 59B.

Sepals.—Quantity: Five per flower arranged in a single whorl. Length, upper and lower sepals: About 1.7 cm. Width, upper two sepals: About 7 mm. Width, lower three sepals: About 5 mm. Shape: Elliptic. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Glabrous. Color, upper surface: 144C. Color, lower surface: 144B.

Peduncle (umbel stem).—Length: About 3 cm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Angle: About 45° from lateral branch. Strength: Strong. Texture: Slightly pubescent. Color: 144B.

Pedicle (individual flower stem).—Length: About 1.7 cm. Diameter: About 1 mm. Angle: About 30° from vertical. Strength: Strong. Texture: Slightly pubescent. Color: 144B.

Reproductive organs.—Androecium: Anther quantity: Six per flower. Anther shape: Elongated oblong. Anther size: About 1 mm by 2 mm. Anther color: 55A. Pollen amount: Scarce. Pollen color: 28C. Gynoecium: Pistil quantity: One per flower. Pistil length: About 2 cm. Stigma shape: Five-parted, star-shaped. Stigma color: 60A. Style length: About 1.7 cm. Style color: 60D. Ovary color: 144B.

Seed/fruit.—None observed.

Disease/pest resistance: Resistance to pathogens and pests common to Regal Geraniums has not been observed.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of Geranium plant named 'FN White Eye', as herein illustrated and described.

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