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(54) **POINSETTIA PLANT NAMED 'PER2804'**

(50) Latin Name: *Euphorbia pulcherrima*
Varietal Denomination: **PER2804**

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(52) **U.S. Cl.** **Plt./307; Plt./303**

(58) **Field of Classification Search** **Plt./307, Plt./303**

See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of Poinsettia plant named 'PER2804', characterized by its upright, outwardly spreading and mounded plant habit; vigorous growth habit; freely branching habit; dark green-colored leaves; very early season flowering response; inflorescences with bright red-colored flower bracts; and excellent post-production longevity.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Botanical designation: *Euphorbia pulcherrima*.
Cultivar denomination: 'PER2804'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of Poinsettia plant, botanically known as *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd., and hereinafter referred to by the name 'PER2804'.

The new Poinsettia a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Encinitas, Calif. The objective of the breeding program is to create new Poinsettia cultivars having flower bracts with desirable colors, uniform plant habit and excellent post-production longevity.

The new Poinsettia is a naturally-occurring whole plant mutation of the *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. cultivar PER1055, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,882. The cultivar PER2804 was discovered and selected by the Inventor from within a population of plants of 'PER1055' in a controlled greenhouse environment in Encinitas, Calif. on Dec. 5, 2003.

Asexual reproduction of the new Poinsettia by terminal vegetative cuttings in a controlled environment in Encinitas, Calif. since January, 2004, has shown that the unique features of this new Poinsettia are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The cultivar PER2804 has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature, daylength and light intensity, without, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'PER2804'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'PER2804' as a new and distinct cultivar of Poinsettia:

1. Upright, outwardly spreading and mounded plant habit.
2. Vigorous growth habit.

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3. Freely branching habit.
4. Dark green-colored leaves.
5. Very early season flowering response; under natural season conditions, plants flower in about 6.5 weeks in Encinitas, Calif.
6. Inflorescences with bright red-colored flowers bracts.
7. Excellent post-production longevity.

In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Encinitas, Calif., plants of the new Poinsettia differed from plants of the parent, the cultivar PER1055, primarily in time to flower as plants of the cultivar PER1055 flower about three weeks later than plants of the new Poinsettia.

Plants of the new Poinsettia can be compared to plants of the Poinsettia cultivar 490, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 7,825. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Encinitas, Calif., plants of the new Poinsettia differed from plants of the cultivar 490 in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new Poinsettia had lighter green-colored leaves than plants of the cultivar 490.
2. Plants of the new Poinsettia and cultivar 490 differed in flower bract color.
3. Plants of the new Poinsettia flowered about 16 days earlier than plants of the cultivar 490.
4. Plants of the new Poinsettia had more cyathia per inflorescence than plants of the cultivar 490.

Plants of the new Poinsettia can be compared to plants of the Poinsettia cultivar Peterstar, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 8,259. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Encinitas, Calif., plants of the new Poinsettia differed from plants of the cultivar Peterstar in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new Poinsettia and the cultivar Peterstar differed in flower bract shape.
2. Plants of the new Poinsettia and cultivar Peterstar differed in flower bract color.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new Poinsettia. These photographs show

the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. 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 Poinsettia.

The photograph at the bottom of sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'PER2804' grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the sheet is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of 'PER2804'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

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. Plants used in the aforementioned photographs and the following observations and measurements describe plants grown in Encinitas, Calif. during the winter in a polyethylene-covered greenhouse and under conditions and practices which approximate those generally used in commercial Poinsettia production. During the production of the plants, day temperatures averaged 24° C., night averaged 19° C. and light levels were about 4,000 foot-candles. Measurements and numerical values represent averages for typical flowering plants. Single plants were grown in 16.5-cm pots and pinched one time. Plants were about 16 weeks old when the photographs and the detailed description were taken.

Botanical classification: *Euphorbia pulcherrima* cultivar PER2804.

Parentage: Naturally-occurring whole plant mutation of the *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. cultivar PER1055, disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,822.

Propagation:

Type.—Terminal vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—About ten days at 20° C. to 22° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant.—About four weeks at 20° C. to 22° C.

Root description.—Fibrous; white in color.

Plant description:

Plant habit and form.—Upright, outwardly spreading and mounded plant habit; inverted triangle. Inflorescences positioned above the foliage plane. Vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 30 cm.

Plant diameter or spread.—About 48 cm.

Lateral branch description.—Quantity: Freely branching habit, about five lateral branches develop after pinching. Length: About 25 cm. Diameter: About 6 mm. Internode length: About 2.6 cm. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 146A.

Foliage description.—Arrangement: Alternate, simple. Length: About 12.3 cm. Width: About 8.5 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Obtuse with cordate tendencies. Margin: Entire; slightly sinuate. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Texture, upper surface: Smooth, glabrous. Texture, lower surface: Minute pubescence. Surface: Rugose. Color: Developing foliage, upper surface: 146A. Developing foliage, lower surface: 146B. Fully expanded foliage, upper surface: Darker than 147A; venation, 147C. Fully expanded foliage, lower surface: Darker than 147B; venation,

147C. Petiole: Length: About 5.5 cm. Diameter: About 3 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 183B.

Inflorescence description:

Inflorescence type and habit.—Inflorescences are compound corymbs of cyathia with colored flower bracts subtending the cyathia. One inflorescence per lateral branch. Flowers are not fragrant. Flowers persistent. Inflorescences positioned above the foliage.

Natural flowering season.—Autumn/winter; inflorescence initiation and development is induced under long nyctoperiod conditions. Very early season flowering; response time, about 6.5 weeks under natural season conditions in Encinitas, Calif.

Post-production longevity.—Excellent post-production longevity; plants of the new Poinsettia maintain good substance and bract color for about four weeks under interior conditions.

Inflorescence size.—Diameter: About 33 cm. Height (depth): About 5.5 cm.

Flower bracts.—Quantity per inflorescence: About 22. Length, largest bracts: About 14 cm. Width, largest bracts: About 9.2 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Attenuate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Aspect: Mostly horizontal. Venation pattern: Pinnate. Color: Developing or transitional bracts, upper surface: 46A. Developing or transitional bracts, lower surface: 46B. Fully developed bracts, upper surface: Slightly lighter than 46A. Fully developed bracts, lower surface: 47A. Venation, upper and lower surfaces: Similar to flower bract color. Bract petiole: Length: About 2.6 cm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: 46A.

Cyathia.—Quantity per corymb: About 15. Diameter of cyathia cluster: About 3.5 cm by 3.8 cm. Length: About 1.1 cm. Width: About 6 mm. Shape: Ovoid. Color, immature: 146B. Color, mature: 146A. Nectaries: Quantity per cyathium: About one or two. Size: About 3 mm by 7 mm. Color: 15A.

Peduncles.—Length: About 2 mm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Strength: Strong. Aspect: Upright. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: 146C.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity per cyathium: About 20. Anther shape: Oval; bi-lobed. Anther length: Less than 1 mm. Anther color: 6D. Amount of pollen: Scarce. Pollen color: 12A. Pistils: Quantity per cyathium: About four to five. Pistil length: About 1 cm. Style length: About 2 mm. Style color: 60C. Stigma shape: Three-parted. Stigma color: 46B. Ovary color: 146B. Seed/fruit: Seed and fruit production has not been observed.

Disease/pest resistance: Plants of the new Poinsettia have not been shown to be resistant to pathogens and pests common to Poinsettias.

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new Poinsettia have been observed to tolerate temperatures ranging from about 15° C. to about 30° C.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct Poinsettia plant named 'PER2804' as illustrated and described.

