



(12) **United States Plant Patent**  
**FitzGerald**

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(54) **VARIETY OF *PHORMIUM* PLANT NAMED  
'FIT01'**

(50) Latin Name: *Phormium cookianum*  
Varietal Denomination: **FIT01**

(76) Inventor: **Pat FitzGerald**, Oldtown, Storneyford,  
Co Kilkenny (IE)

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*Primary Examiner*—Wendy C. Haas

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Fulwider Patton LLP

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Phormium cookianum* plant  
named 'FIT01' characterized by shiny, deep blackish purple  
leaves, a tall and wide growth habit with wide leaves, and a  
robust appearance in adverse conditions.

**1 Drawing Sheet**

## 1

Latin name of the genus and species: The Latin name of the  
genus and species of the novel variety disclosed herein is  
*Phormium cookianum*.

Variety denomination: The inventive variety of the *Phor-*  
*mium* disclosed herein has been given the variety denomina-  
tion 'FIT01'.

### BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar  
of *Phormium* plant, botanically known as *Phormium cooki-*  
*anum*, and further known by the varietal name 'FIT01'. This  
new variety is also sold under the trade name Black Adder  
(Breeder's Ref. No. 'FIT01'). The new variety was created  
through tissue culture mutation in Enniscorthy, Ireland, from  
the variety *Phormium cookianum* 'Platts Black.' This variety  
was selected as a single plant from a number of different  
natural mutations in a tissue laboratory in March 2003. Five  
different mutations were isolated for possible development,  
from which the present invention was chosen for further  
multiplication production. In January 2005, the cultures of  
'FIT01' were further multiplied and the first crop began to  
develop. The variety was grown in both pots and one large  
original plant remains in situ outdoors. All plants were grown  
in Kilkenny, Ireland. For purposes of this application, the  
plants were evaluated outdoors and indoors in a plastic green  
house.

Following selection of the plantlet, the cultivar was propa-  
gated by tissue culture of multiplication from auxiliary grow-  
ing shoots in a laboratory in Enniscorthy, Ireland. Continued  
observation of future generations have confirmed that the  
distinguishing features of this new cultivar came true, remain  
stable and are retained through successive propagation.

The closest comparator to 'FIT01' known to applicant is  
*Phormium cookianum* 'Platts Black' (unpatented). The  
present cultivar is much more vigorous and resilient when  
compared with 'Platts Black', and remains a healthier plant  
in more adverse conditions than 'Platts Black'.

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the cultivar 'FIT01' have not been observed under  
all possible environmental and cultural conditions. The phe-

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notype of the new cultivar may vary somewhat with variations  
in environment such as temperature, light intensity, length of  
day, irrigation amount and frequency, and/or fertilizer rate  
without, however, any variance in genotype.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are  
determined to be among the unique characteristics of  
'FIT01'. These characteristics distinguish 'FIT01' as a new  
and distinct cultivar from its closest comparator *Phormium*  
*cookianum* 'Platts Black':

1. Leaves are deep blackish purple all year; and
2. The foliage is more glossy and wider than 'Platts Black';  
and
3. The growth habit is taller than 'Platts Black' and the leaf  
is wider. For two year old specimens of 'FIT01' and  
'Platts Black', the present cultivar demonstrated a 110  
cm length leaf as compared with a 65 cm length for  
'Platts Black' and the present cultivar had a 4.5 cm width  
leaf as compared with a 3 cm width for 'Platts Black'.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention is depicted in the accompanying colored  
photographs in which:

FIG. 1 shows a potted plant illustrating the characteristic  
foliage.

The photograph depicts the overall appearance of the new  
*Phormium*, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably  
possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type. Col-  
ors in the photograph may differ slightly from the color values  
cited in the Detailed Botanical Description which more accu-  
rately describe the actual colors of the new *Phormium*.

### DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW PLANT

The following detailed description sets forth characteris-  
tics of the new cultivar. The data which defines each charac-  
teristic was collected from reproductions of the plant grown  
in a plastic greenhouse and outdoors.

In the following table of plant characteristics, color refer-  
ences are made to The Royal Horticultural Society of London  
Colour Chart, 1995 Edition (hereafter "R.H.S.>").

THE PLANT

Classification:

*Botanical.*—*Phormium cookianum*.

*Varietal name.*—‘FIT01’.

*Parentage.*—Tissue Culture Mutation of *Phormium cookianum* ‘Platts Black’.

*Asexual propagation.*—Tissue culture mutation.

Form:

*Plant growth type.*—Upright with drooping tips.

*Mean plant height.*—1.5 M.

*Mean plant width.*—1.5 M.

Leaves:

*Leaf color.*—Young Upper — Gray-purple to brown; in between N186C and 200B, but slightly darker (RHS)

Young Under — Gray-purple to brown, in between N186C and 200A, but slightly darker (RHS) Mature

Upper — Brown, 200A but slightly darker (RHS)

Mature Under — Brown, 200A (RHS).

*Vein color.*—Upper — Gray-Orange 177A (RHS)

Under — Brown 200A (RHS) Leaf Shape — Wide

lanceolate strap-like leaves Leaf Length — 73 cm (1 year old plant) Leaf Width — 3.4 cm (1 year old plant)

Tip Shape — Acute Base Shape — Acuminate

Margin — Entire.

*Leaf texture (upper).*—Shiny, waxy surface.

*Venation pattern.*—Parallel.

Flower: Flower development has not been observed on plants of the new *Phormium*.

5 Lasting quality: The *Phormium* is outstanding in wind and sun, as the foliage remains shiny and vibrant throughout the year. Providing the plant is not exposed to temperatures below  $-7^{\circ}$  C., the plant will remain stable and colorful all year round.

10 Disease resistance: No known diseases have affected this plant to date.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

15 ‘FIT01’ is primarily distinguished from other cultivars of *Phormium* genus by its deep blackish purple leaves having a glossy shine. ‘FIT01’ is an upright forming plant with a wide and tall growth habit.

20 What is claimed is:

1. A new and distinct *Phormium cookianum* plant named ‘FIT01’ substantially as illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1