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(54) **POINSETTIA PLANT NAMED 'PER1303'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Euphorbia pulcherrima Willd.***
Varietal Denomination: **PER1303**

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See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of Poinsettia plant named 'PER1303', characterized by its uniform, upright and mounded plant habit; moderately vigorous growth habit; freely and upright branching habit; dark green-colored leaves; mid-season flowering response; large inflorescences with dark red-colored flower bracts; and good post-production longevity.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Botanical designation: *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd.
Cultivar denomination: 'PER1303'.

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 'PER1303'.

The new Poinsettia plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Encinitas, Calif. The objective of the breeding program is to create new upright branching Poinsettia plants having large inflorescences with red-colored flower bracts, mid-season flowering response and excellent post-production longevity.

The new Poinsettia plant originated from a cross-pollination made by the Inventor in December, 2006 of a proprietary selection of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. identified as code number 05-447, not patented, as the female, or seed, parent, with a proprietary selection of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. identified as code number 80-02, not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new Poinsettia plant was discovered and selected by the Inventor as a single flowering plant from within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled greenhouse environment in Encinitas, Calif. in December, 2007.

Asexual reproduction of the new Poinsettia plant by terminal vegetative cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in Encinitas, Calif. since January, 2008 has shown that the unique features of this new Poinsettia plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new Poinsettia have not been observed under all possible environmental conditions and cultural practices. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environmental conditions such as temperature, daylength and light intensity, without, however, any variance in genotype.

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The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'PER1303'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'PER1303' as a new and distinct Poinsettia plant:

1. Uniform, upright and mounded plant habit.
2. Moderately vigorous growth habit.
3. Freely and upright branching habit.
4. Dark green-colored leaves.
5. Mid-season flowering response; under natural season conditions, plants flower in late November in Southern California.
6. Large inflorescences with dark red-colored flower bracts.
7. Good post-production longevity.

In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Encinitas, Calif., plants of the new Poinsettia differ primarily from plants of the female parent selection in flower bract color as plants of the new Poinsettia have darker red-colored flower bracts than plants of the female parent selection.

In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Encinitas, Calif., plants of the new Poinsettia differ primarily from plants of the male parent selection in flowering response as plants of the new Poinsettia flower about ten days later than plants of the male parent selection. In addition, plants of the new Poinsettia and the male parent selection differ slightly in flower bract color.

Plants of the new Poinsettia can be compared to plants of the *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. '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 primarily from plants of 'Peterstar' in the following characteristics:

1. Branching habit of plants of the new Poinsettia was more upright than branching habit of plants of 'Peterstar'.
2. Plants of the new Poinsettia had darker green-colored leaves than plants of 'Peterstar'.
3. Plants of the new Poinsettia had darker red-colored flower bracts than plants of 'Peterstar'.

Plants of the new Poinsettia can also be compared to plants of the *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. '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 primarily from plants of '490' in response time as plants of the new Poinsettia flowered about one week later than plants of '490' when grown under natural season conditions. In addition, plants of the new Poinsettia had a more upright branching habit than plants of '490'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new Poinsettia plant showing 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 plant.

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of 'PER1303' grown in a container.

The photograph at the top of the sheet is a close-up view of a typical flowering plant of 'PER1303'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

Plants used in the aforementioned photographs and in the following detailed description were grown during the late autumn/early winter in 16.5-cm containers in a polyethylene-covered greenhouse in Encinitas, Calif. and under natural season conditions and cultural practices typical of commercial Poinsettia production. During the production of the plants, day temperatures averaged 24° C., night temperatures averaged 18° C. and light levels averaged 5,000 foot-candles. Measurements and numerical values represent averages for typical flowering plants. Plants were pinched one time and were 17 weeks old when the photographs and the description were taken. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2007 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. 'PER1303'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. identified as code number 05-447, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Euphorbia pulcherrima* Willd. identified as code number 80-02, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—Terminal vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—About seven to ten days at 20° C. night temperature and 27° C. day temperature.

Time to produce a rooted young plant.—About four weeks at 20° C. night temperature and 27° C. day temperature.

Root description.—Fibrous; white in color.

Plant description:

Plant habit and form.—Uniform, upright and mounded plant habit; inverted triangle; large inflorescences positioned above the foliar plane; moderately vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 42 cm.

Plant diameter or spread.—About 58 cm.

Lateral branch description.—Quantity: Freely branching habit, about eight lateral branches develop after pinching. Length: About 35 cm. Diameter: About 8 mm. Internode length: About 2.2 cm. Strength: Strong. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 146A.

Leaf description.—Arrangement: Alternate, simple. Length: About 14.6 cm. Width: About 12.2 cm. Shape: Broadly lanceolate, lobed. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Rounded to nearly truncate. Margin: Entire with four to five pointed lobes. Aspect: Flat. Venation pattern: Pinnate, arcuate. Texture, upper surface: Sparsely pubescent. Texture, lower surface: Pubescent. Color: Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to N137A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Close to 137B. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Darker than 139A; venation, close to 146B. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 137A; venation, close to 147B. Petiole: Length: About 9.5 cm. Diameter: About 4 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper surface: Close to 187B. Color, lower surface: Close to 183C.

Inflorescence description:

Inflorescence type and habit.—Terminal inflorescences are compound corymbs of cyathia with colored flower bracts subtending the cyathia; inflorescences uniformly positioned above the foliar plane.

Fragrance.—None detected.

Flowering response.—Mid-season flowering response; under natural season conditions, plants typically flower on November 25th in Southern California; under artificial long nyctoperiod/short photoperiod conditions, plants flower about 8 to 8.5 weeks later. Post-production longevity: Good post-production longevity; plants of the new Poinsettia maintain good substance and flower bract color for about four weeks under interior conditions; inflorescences persistent.

Inflorescence diameter.—About 38.5 cm.

Inflorescence height (*depth*).—About 8 cm.

Flower bracts.—Quantity per inflorescence: About 22. Length, largest bracts: About 17 cm. Width, largest bracts: About 10.4 cm. Shape: Broadly lanceolate; occasionally lobed. Apex: Acuminate. Base: Obtuse. Margin: Entire or occasionally with three to five shallow pointed lobes. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous; veins prominent on lower surface. Aspect: Mostly horizontal. Venation pattern: Pinnate, arcuate. Color: Developing or transitional bracts, upper surface: Close to 46A; along midvein, close to 139A. Developing or transitional bracts, lower surface: Close to 146B tinted with close to 180C. Fully expanded bracts, upper surface: Close to 46A; venation, close to 46A; color does not change with development. Fully expanded bracts, lower surface: Close to 46B; venation, close to 46B. Bract petiole: Length: About 5.4 cm. Diameter: About 3 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 183A.

Cyathia.—Quantity per corymb: About 18. Length: About 1.4 cm. Width: About 6 mm. Shape: Ovoid. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color, immature: Close to 146A. Color, mature: Close to 146B.

Nectaries.—Quantity per cyathium: One, occasionally two. Length: About 5 mm. Width: About 2.5 mm. Shape: Elliptical. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 9A.

Peduncles.—Length: About 3 mm. Diameter: About 2 mm. Strength: Strong. Aspect: Mostly upright to slightly outwardly. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 146B.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity per cyathium: About 15. Filament length: About 4 mm. Filament color: Close to 187A. Anther shape: Oval; bi-lobed. Anther length: About 1 mm. Anther color: Close to 187A. Amount of pollen: Scarce. Pollen color: Close to 12A. Pistils: Quantity per cyathium: One or two. Pistil length: About 8 mm. Stigma shape: Three-parted. Stigma color: Close to 187B. Style length: About 2 mm. Style color: Close to 195A. Ovary color: Close to 146C.

Seeds and fruits.—Seed and fruit production have not been observed on plants of the new Poinsettia.

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

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new Poinsettia have been observed to tolerate temperatures ranging from about 16° C. to about 29° C.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct Poinsettia plant named 'PER1303' as illustrated and described.

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