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Snodgrass et al.

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(54) **MUSA PLANT NAMED ‘POQUITO’**

(50) Latin Name: *Musa acuminata*
Varietal Denomination: **Poquito**

(71) Applicants: **Edmund C. Snodgrass**, Street, MD
(US); **Robert Mark Saul**, Atlanta, GA
(US)

(72) Inventors: **Edmund C. Snodgrass**, Street, MD
(US); **Robert Mark Saul**, Atlanta, GA
(US)

(73) Assignee: **ITSAUL PLANTS LLC.**, Alpharetta,
GA (US)

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(51) **Int. Cl.**
A01H 5/08 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
USPC **Plt./160**

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
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See application file for complete search history.

Primary Examiner — Keith Robinson

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Penny J. Aguirre

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new cultivar of *Musa* plant named ‘Poquito’, that is characterized by its dwarf plant habit, its young foliage that emerges green in color, develops red spots, and then progresses to a solid green color in mature leaves, its pseudostem that is red in color and bulbous at the base, its production of offsets during the first year of growth, and its foliage that is highly resistant to shredding in the wind.

2 Drawing Sheets

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Botanical classification: *Musa acuminata*.
Cultivar designation: ‘Poquito’.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Musa acuminata* and is hereinafter referred to by its cultivar name ‘Poquito’. ‘Poquito’ is a new dwarf cultivar of banana grown for ornamental use.

The Inventors discovered the new cultivar, ‘Poquito’, in Atlanta, Ga. in the summer of 2007 as a naturally occurring chimera mutation growing outdoors at a nursery in a container block of *Musa acuminata* ‘Rojo’ (not patented).

Asexual propagation of the new cultivar was first accomplished by division of offsets by one of the Inventors in Atlanta, Ga. in spring 2008. Asexual propagation by division of offsets and tissue culture of the new cultivar has shown that the unique characteristics of the new cultivar are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and represent the characteristics of the new cultivar. These attributes in combination distinguish ‘Poquito’ as a new and unique cultivar of *Musa*.

1. ‘Poquito’ exhibits a dwarf plant habit reaching 107 cm in height after 3 years of growth in a large container.
2. ‘Poquito’ exhibits young foliage that emerges green in color, develops red spots, and then progresses to a solid green color in mature leaves.
3. ‘Poquito’ exhibits a pseudostem that is red in color and bulbous at the base.
4. ‘Poquito’ is readily reproduced of offsets during the first year of growth.
5. ‘Poquito’ exhibits foliage that is highly resistant to shredding in the wind.

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‘Poquito’ can be distinguished from its plants of its parent, *Musa* ‘Rojo’, which differs from ‘Poquito’ in having a taller growth habit, in having distinctive and persistent foliar red spotting to maturity, and in having the tendency for its leaves to shred in the wind. ‘Poquito’ can be most closely compared to *Musa* cultivars ‘Little Prince’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,255) and ‘Cheeka’ (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 21,221). ‘Little Prince’ is similar to ‘Poquito’ in having a dwarf plant habit. ‘Little Prince’ differs from ‘Poquito’ in having a longer pseudostem, in having a shorter plant height, in having less distinctive red coloration in young foliage, in having shorter and narrower leaves, and in less readily producing offsets as a young plant. ‘Cheeka’ is similar to ‘Poquito’ in having a dwarf plant habit and in having similar sized leaves. ‘Cheeka’ differs from ‘Poquito’ in having foliage that is a darker shade of green in color and lacking red spots, in having a thicker pseudostem, and in more readily producing offsets.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance and distinct characteristics of the new *Musa*.

The photograph in FIG. 1 was taken of a plant about 3 years in age as grown outdoors in Tavares, Fla. in a ten-gallon container and provides a view of the plant habit and mature foliage coloration of ‘Poquito’.

The photographs in FIG. 2 and FIG. 3 were taken of plants grown for 4 weeks from 72-cell plugs in 3-quart containers in a greenhouse in Alpharetta, Ga.

The photograph in FIG. 2 provides a view of the foliage coloration of young (lower leaves) and maturing leaves of ‘Poquito’.

The photograph in FIG. 3 provides a close-up view of a maturing leaf of ‘Poquito’.

The colors in the photographs are as close as possible with the photographic and printing technology utilized and the

color values cited in the detailed botanical description accurately describe the colors of the new *Musa*.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following is a detailed description of plants about 12 weeks in age as grown in one-gallon containers in a greenhouse in Alpharetta, Ga. with details on mature size taken from plants about 3 years in age as grown both in Tavares, Fla. and Atlanta, Ga. The phenotype of the new cultivar may vary with variations in environmental, climatic, and cultural conditions, as it has not been tested under all possible environmental conditions. The color determination is in accordance with The 2007 R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, England, except where general color terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

General description:

Plant type.—Tropical perennial.

Plant habit.—Upright, dwarf, tufted leaves from short pseudostems.

Height and spread.—Reaches an average of 1 m in height and about 91 cm in spread.

Hardiness.—Unknown, grown as a tropical plant.

Diseases and pests.—No diseases and pests problems have been observed.

Roots.—Fleshy and a blend of N199B and 200B in color, emerge from corms and rhizomes, corms; an average of 5 cm in width and 4 cm in length, scaly and fibrous surface, a blend of 165D and N200A in color, rhizomes; average of 1.5 cm in length and 1 cm in width, 183A in color, above ground offsets (suckers) are also produced with an average of 2 above ground offsets per corm.

Propagation type.—Tissue culture (preferred) or division of offsets.

Growth rate.—Vigorous until a container is fully rooted.

Ploidy.—Triploid.

Trunk description (pseudostem):

Trunk size.—An average of 28 cm in length and 4 cm in width (with sheaths).

Trunk type.—Sturdy, surrounded by sheathed leaf petioles, weakly tapering.

Trunk color.—Anthocyanin coloration; a blend of 175A and 175C with stripes of 187A defined by margins of petioles with coloration blending into 144A near top of petiole.

Petioles.—Newly emerging; 145A in color and sulcate, sheathing to base to comprise trunk, free portion; about 2.5 cm in length and 4 cm in width, sheathed portion; length of trunk up to 4 cm in width (when sheathed), mature color is defined by trunk color.

Petiole surface.—Glabrous and satiny, older free petioles become papery with leaf blade drop and streaks of 200C and 165C in color.

Foliage description:

New shoots.—An average of 22 cm in length and 1 cm in width prior to leaf unfurling, a blend of 144A and 144B in color.

Leaf shape.—Elliptic.

Leaf division.—Simple.

Leaf base.—Rounded.

Leaf apex.—Acute.

Leaf venation.—Pinnate, upper surface; mid rib is sulcate, a color between 137C and 144A, lower surface; mid rib is conspicuous and protruding, a color between 144C and 145A.

Leaf margins.—Entire.

Leaf attachment.—Petiolate.

Leaf arrangement.—Alternate with petioles sheathed, forming a compact plant crown.

Leaf surface.—Glabrous and slightly satiny on upper surface and glabrous and slightly glaucous on lower surface, neither surface is glossy.

Leaf orientation.—Emerge upright and become outward at about a 45° angle when mature.

Leaf color.—Newly emerged foliage; a blend of 144A and 144B on upper and lower surface, maturing foliage upper surface; a color between 144A and 137C with random marbling and spots of 187A, maturing foliage lower surface; 146B and lightly suffused with 77A, mature foliage upper surface; N137A, mature foliage lower surface; N138B.

Leaf size.—Average of 28 cm in length and 16 cm in width when mature.

Inflorescence description: None have been observed to date.

Fruit and seed: None have been observed to date.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Musa* plant named 'Poquito' as herein illustrated and described.

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FIG. 1



FIG. 2

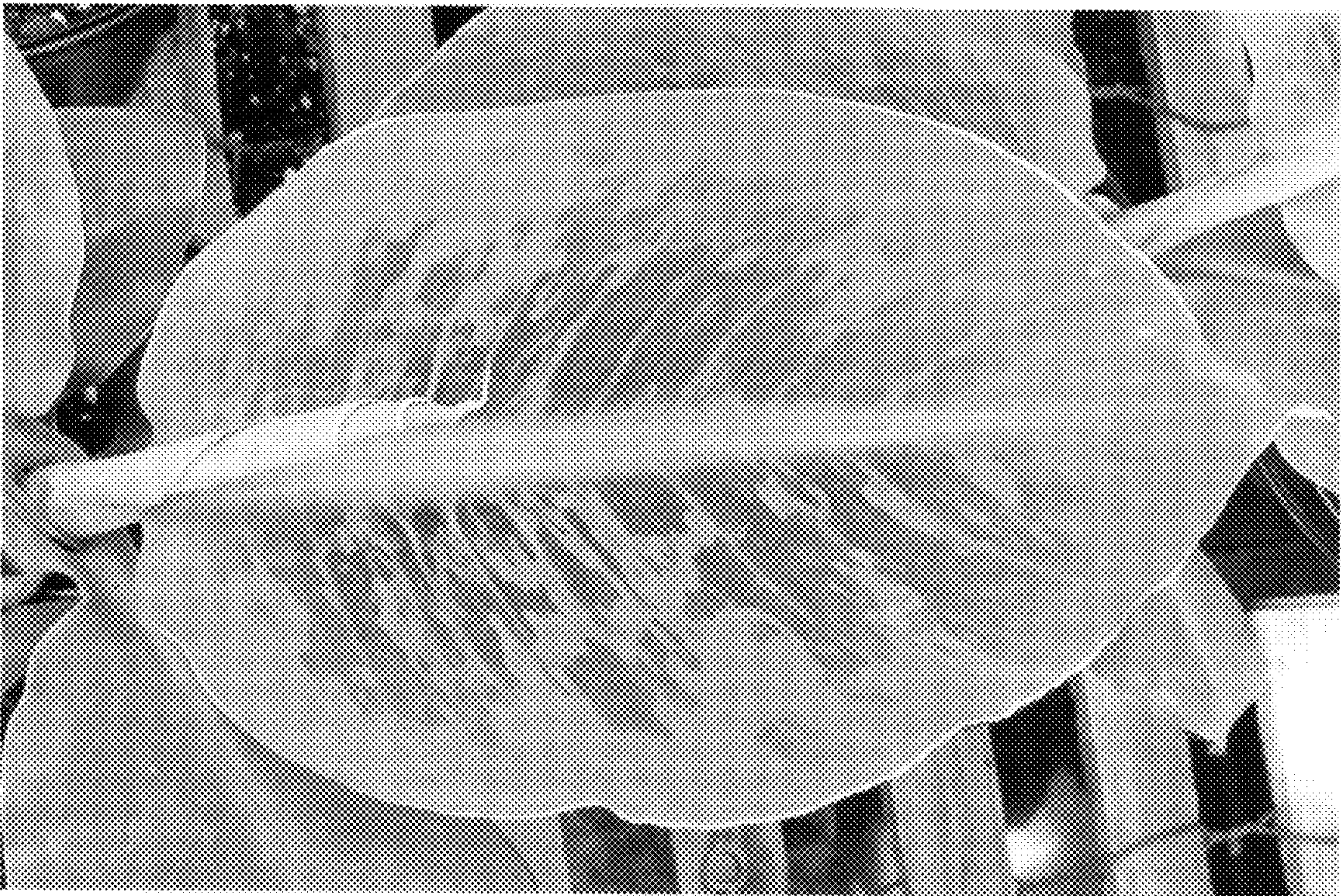


FIG. 3