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(54) **STRAWBERRY PLANT VARIETY NAMED 'DRISSTRAWFIFTYFIVE'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Fragaria* x *ananassa***
Varietal Denomination: **DrisStrawFiftyFive**

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(58) **Field of Classification Search**
USPC Plt./156, 208
See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct variety of strawberry plant named 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' particularly characterized by its uniform fruit shape, large and uniform fruit size, and great flavor, is disclosed.

4 Drawing Sheets

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STRAWBERRY PLANT VARIETY NAMED 'DRISSTRAWFIFTYFIVE'

Latin name:

Botanical classification: *Fragaria* x *ananassa.*

Varietal denomination: The varietal denomination of the claimed variety of strawberry plant is 'DrisStrawFiftyFive'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Cultivated strawberry is a hybrid species of the genus *Fragaria* that is grown worldwide for its fruit. Modern strawberry was first bred in Brittany, France, in the 18th century by crossing *Fragaria virginiana* with *Fragaria chiloensis*. Strawberry fruit is an aggregate accessory fruit, with the fleshy part of the fruit being derived from the receptacle that holds the ovaries.

Strawberry varieties vary widely in color, size, shape, flavor, season of ripening, degree of fertility, and susceptibility to disease. Certain varieties vary in foliage, and some vary in the relative development of their reproductive organs. Typically, strawberry flowers appear hermaphroditic in structure, but function as either male or female. Generally, commercial production of strawberry plants involves propagation from runners and distribution as either plugs or bare root plants. Cultivation is either perennial or annual plasticulture. During the off season, strawberries can also be produced in greenhouses.

Strawberry fruit is widely appreciated for its characteristic bright red color, aroma, juicy texture, and sweetness. Strawberry fruit is a popular fruit that is generally consumed either fresh or in prepared foods, such as preserves and baked goods.

Strawberry is an important and valuable fruit crop. Accordingly, there is a need for new varieties of strawberry plants. In particular, there is a need for improved varieties of strawberry plant that are stable, high yielding, and agronomically sound.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In order to meet these needs, the present invention is directed to an improved variety of strawberry plant. In particular, the invention relates to a new and distinct variety of strawberry plant (*Fragaria* x *ananassa*), which has been denominated as 'DrisStrawFiftyFive'.

Strawberry plant variety 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' was discovered in East Mailing, Kent, United Kingdom in May of 2011 and originated from a cross between the proprietary female parent 'KGEM0102' (unpatented) and the proprietary male parent 'RUK219-001' (unpatented). A single plant was selected and asexually propagated via stolons in East Mailing, Kent, United Kingdom in July of 2011.

'DrisStrawFiftyFive' was subsequently asexually propagated via stolons, and underwent further testing at a farm in East Mailing, Kent, United Kingdom for six years (2011 to 2016). The present invention has been found to be stable and reproduce true to type through successive asexual propagations via stolons and tissue culture.

'DrisStrawFiftyFive' exhibits the following distinguishing characteristics when grown under normal horticultural practices in East Mailing, Kent, United Kingdom:

1. Vivid red fruit;
2. Globose to semi-upright plant habit;
3. Small plant size with a long truss structure; and
4. Resistance to powdery mildew and Verticillium wilt.

'DrisStrawFiftyFive' is particularly characterized by its uniform fruit shape, large and uniform fruit size, and great flavor.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

This new strawberry plant is illustrated by the accompanying photographs which show fruit of the plant, as well as the flowers and leaves. The colors shown are as true as can be reasonably obtained by conventional photographic procedures. The photographs are of plants that are 10 months old.

FIG. **1** illustrates whole fruit of variety 'DrisStrawFifty-Five'.

FIG. **2** illustrates longitudinal cross-sections of fruit of variety 'DrisStrawFiftyFive'.

FIG. **3**A shows the lower surface of a leaf of variety 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' with three leaflets. FIG. **3**B shows the upper surface of a leaf of variety 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' with three leaflets.

FIG. **4** illustrates the upper and lower surfaces of flowers of variety 'DrisStrawFiftyFive'.

DESCRIPTION OF THE NEW VARIETY

The following detailed descriptions set forth the distinctive characteristics of 'DrisStrawFiftyFive'. The data which define these characteristics is based on observations taken in East Malling, Kent, United Kingdom from 2011 to 2016. This description is in accordance with UPOV terminology. Color designations, color descriptions, and other phenotypical descriptions may deviate from the stated values and descriptions depending upon variation in environmental, seasonal, climatic, and cultural conditions. 'DrisStrawFifty-Five' has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The botanical description of 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' was taken from plants that were 10 months old. The indicated values represent averages calculated from measurements of several plants. Color references are primarily to The R.H.S. Colour Chart of The Royal Horticultural Society of London (R.H.S.) (2007 edition). Descriptive terminology follows the *Plant Identification Terminology, An Illustrated Glossary,* 2nd edition by James G. Harris and Melinda Woolf Harris, unless where otherwise defined.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

Classification:

Species.—*Fragaria* x *ananassa.*

Common name.—Strawberry.

Denomination.—'DrisStrawFiftyFive'.

Parentage:

Female parent.—The proprietary variety 'KGEM0102' (unpatented).

Male parent.—The proprietary variety 'RUK219-001' (unpatented).

Plant:

Height.—34.6 cm.

Diameter.—41.6 cm.

Number of crowns/plant.—6.

Habit.—Globose — semi-upright.

Terminal leaflets:

Length.—11.1 cm.

Width.—10.2 cm.

Length/width ratio.—1.1.

Number of teeth/terminal leaflet.—28.

Shape of teeth.—Obtuse — serrate to crenate.
Color.—Upper surface: RHS 137A (Moderate olive-green). Lower surface: RHS 137C (Moderate yellow-green).
Shape in cross section.—Slightly concave.
Number of leaflets.—Three only.
Shape.—Obicular.
Base shape.—Slightly oblique.
Apex descriptor.—Rounded.
Margin.—Crenate.
Margin profile.—Revolute (margins rolled backwards).
Variegation.—Absent.

Petiole:

Length.—25.2 cm.
Diameter.—7.34 mm.
Pose of hairs.—Outwards — Horizontal.
Color.—RHS 143C (Strong yellow-green).
Bract frequency (*number present on each petiole*).—0.

Petiolule:

Length.—11.77 mm.
Diameter.—2.32 mm.
Color.—RHS 143C (Strong yellow-green).

Stipule:

Length.—3.6 cm.
Width.—11.18 mm.
Stipule anthocyanin coloration.—Present.
Color.—RHS 63D (Light purplish pink).

Stolon:

Average number of daughter plants per square foot.—17-20.
Anthocyanin coloration.—Present.
Color.—RHS 63C (Strong purplish pink).
Diameter at bract.—2.74 mm.

Inflorescence:

Position relative to foliage.—Beneath.
Flower diameter.—28.54 mm.
Petals.—Shape: Obicular. Apex: Rounded. Base: Concavo-convex. Margin: Entire. Spacing: Free (few touching observed). Length: 12.58 mm. Width: 11.00 mm. Length/width ratio: 1.1. Petal number per flower: 5. Color (upper surface): RHS NN155A (Yellowish white).
Calyx.—Diameter: 26.15 mm. Insertion of calyx: Set above fruit — raised. Pose of calyx segments: Reflexed-upwards to spreading-outwards.
Sepal.—Shape: Elliptical. Apex: Truncate. Margin: Entire. Length: 9.84 mm. Width: 4.37 mm. Sepal number: 5.
Receptacle color.—RHS 145A (Strong yellow-green).
Stamen.—Present. Anther color: RHS 163B (Strong orange-yellow).
Pedicel.—Attitude of hairs: Upwards.

Fruiting truss:

Length.—28.2 cm.
Diameter at base of truss.—5.33 mm.
Number of berries per fruiting truss.—6.
Attitude at first picking.—Erect to semi-erect.

Color at base of truss.—RHS 144A (Strong yellow-green).

Fruit:

Length.—39.37 mm.
Width.—32.79 mm.
Length/width ratio.—1.2.
Fruit hollow length.—23.16 mm.
Fruit hollow width.—14.76 mm.
Fruit hollow length/width ratio.—1.6.
Fruit weight.—17.70 g.
Predominant fruit shape.—Conical.
Fruit skin color.—RHS 44A (Vivid red).
Achenes.—Insertion of achenes: Level with surface. Coloration (sunward side of berry): RHS 164A (Brownish orange). Coloration (shaded side of berry): RHS N164B (Moderate orange-yellow). Achenes weight: 0.0005 g.
Color of flesh (*excluding core*).—RHS 44B (Vivid reddish orange).
Color of core.—RHS 44C (Vivid reddish orange).
Distribution of flesh color.—Marginal and central.
Type of bearing.—Not everbearing — not remontant.
Harvest maturity (*beginning of fruit ripenning when 50% of plants have ripe fruit*).—Mid-season.
Harvest interval.—May to June.
Production.—1188 g/plant.

Disease resistance:

Powdery mildew.—Resistant.
Verticillium wilt.—Moderately resistant.

COMPARISON WITH PARENTAL AND COMMERCIAL VARIETIES

When 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' is compared to the female parent 'KGEM0102' (unpatented), 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' produces plants with a more open, upright plant habit, and with longer, more exposed and less complex trusses. Additionally, 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' produces fruit with better shelf-life than 'KGEM0102'.

When 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' is compared to the male parent 'RUK219-001' (unpatented), 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' produces fruit with a lighter red color.

When 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' is compared to the commercial variety 'DrisStrawThirtyFive' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 24,745), 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' produces plants that are shorter and smaller with a less open, upright plant habit and truss structure than 'DrisStrawThirtyFive'. Additionally, 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' produces fruit with a more vivid red color, and has resistance to powdery mildew and Verticillium wilt, while 'DrisStrawThirtyFive' produces fruit with a medium red color with no observed resistance to powdery mildew and Verticillium wilt.

We claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of strawberry plant named 'DrisStrawFiftyFive' as shown and described herein.

* * * * *

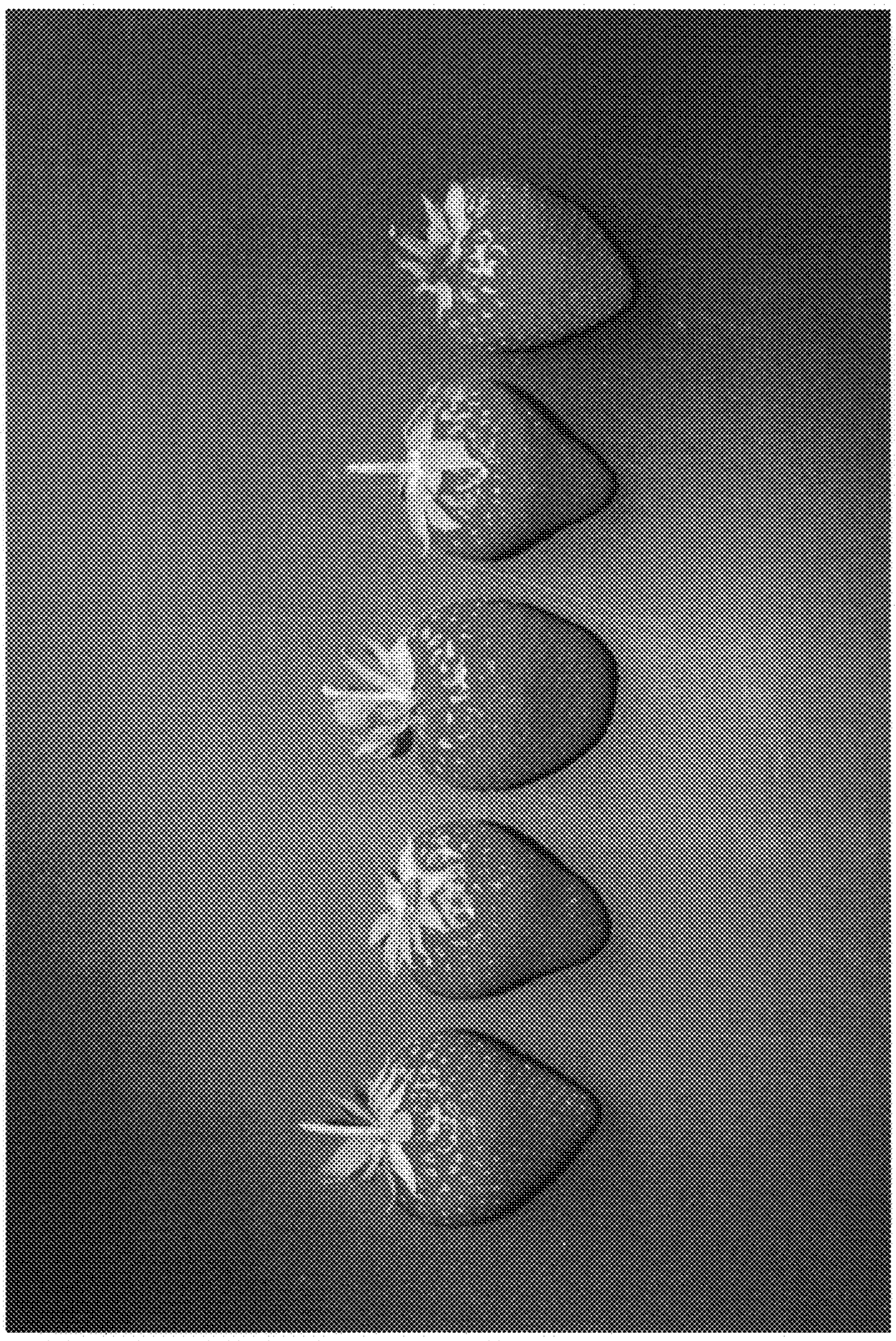

FIG. 1

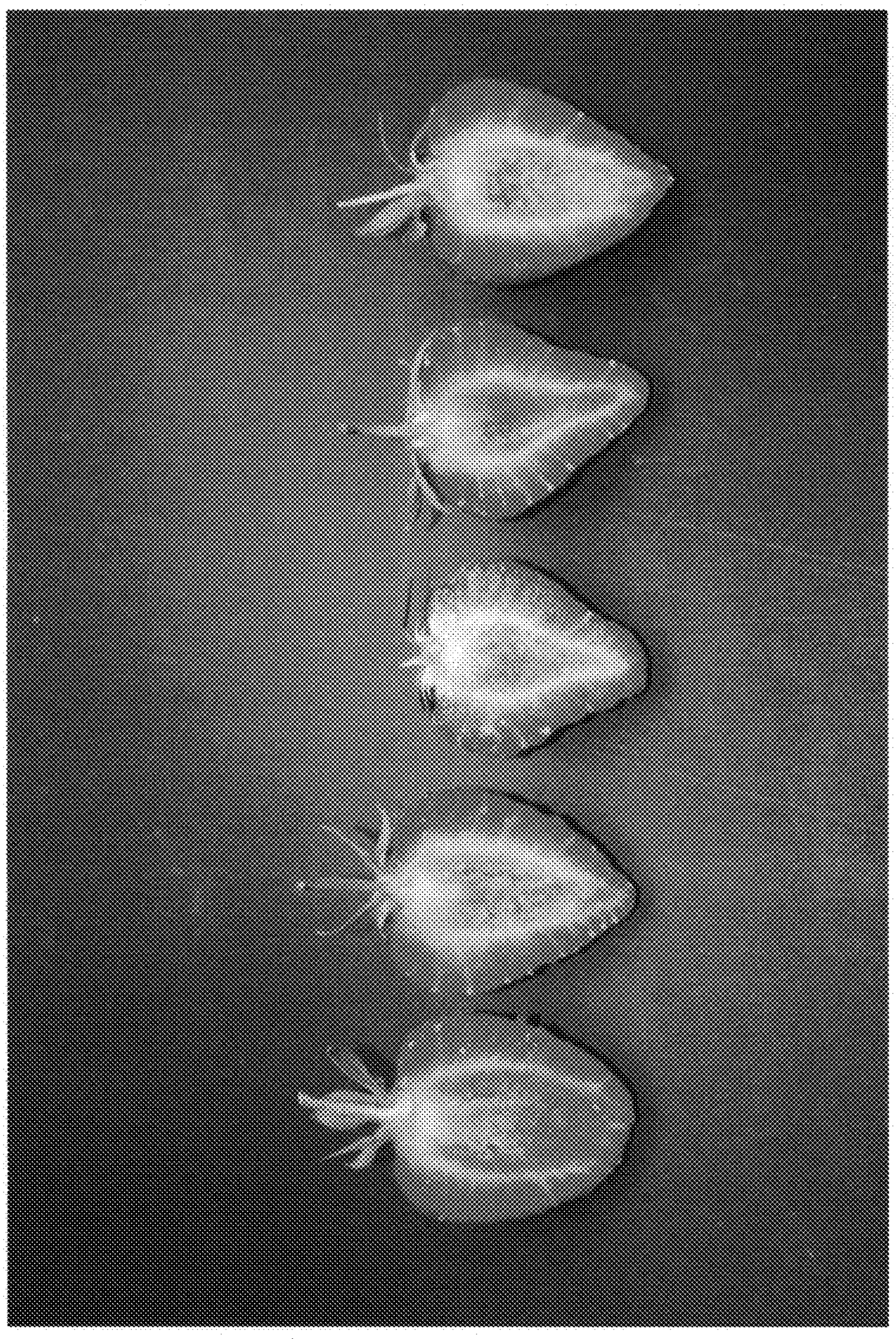

FIG. 2

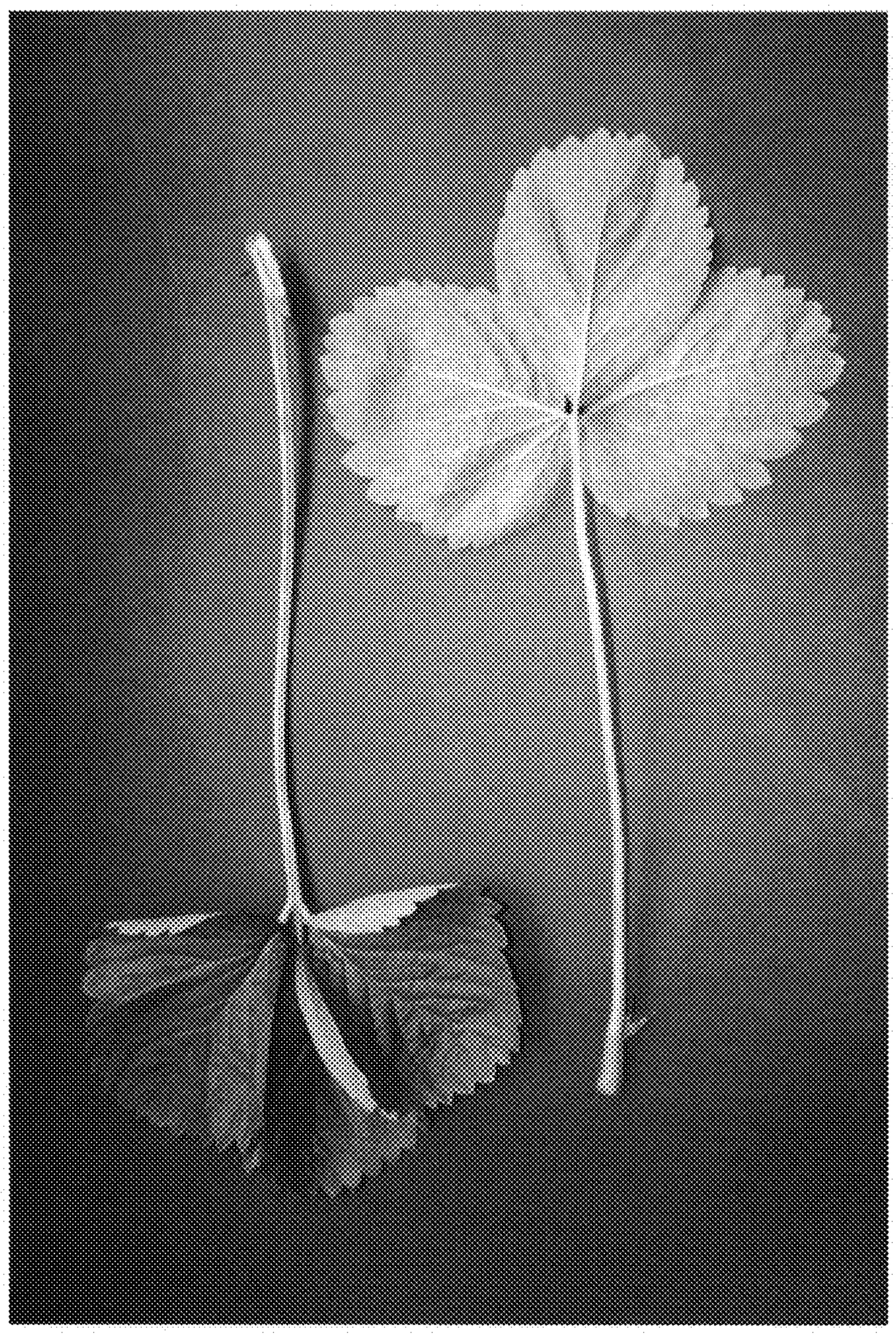

FIG. 3A

FIG. 3B

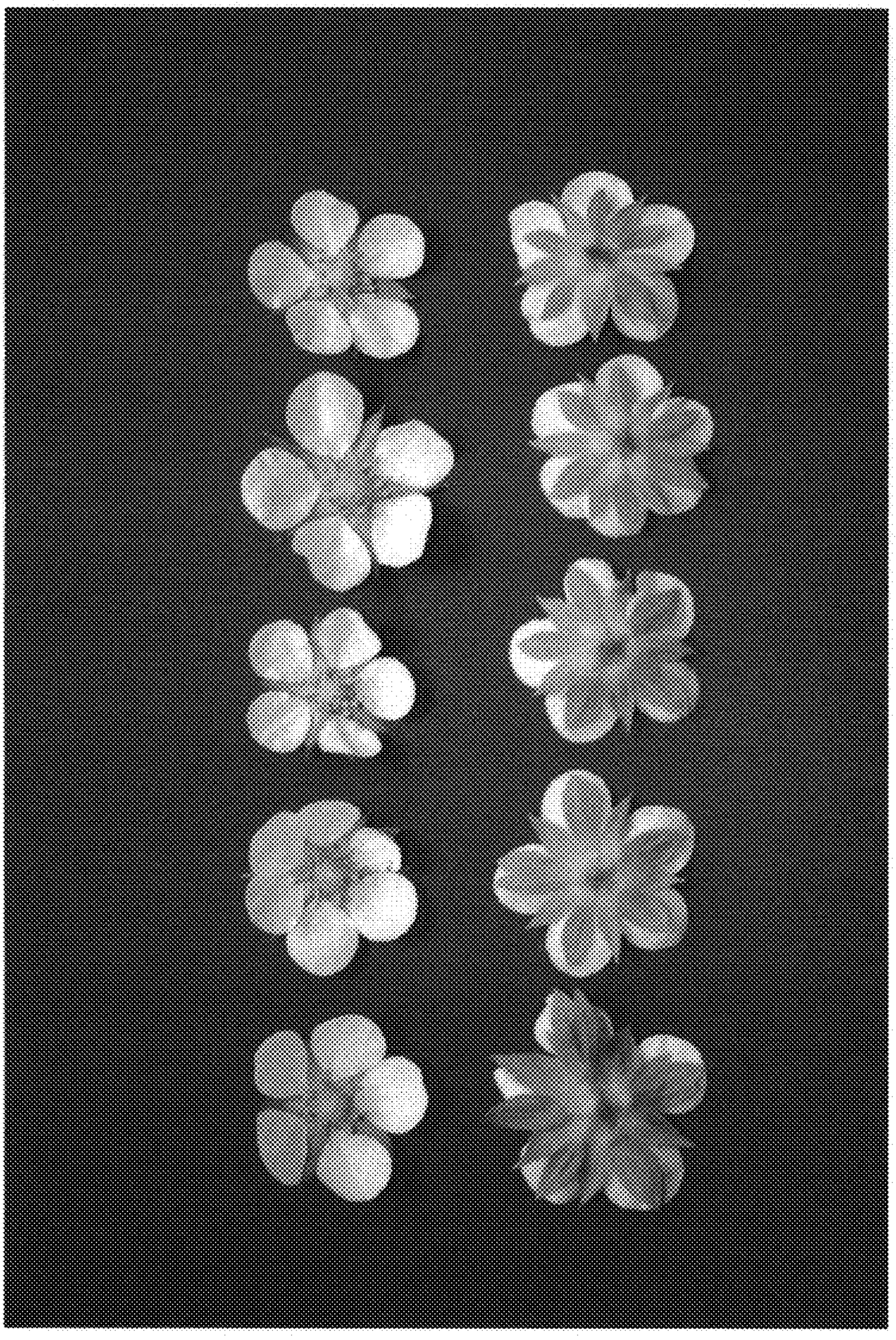

FIG. 4