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(54) **CALIBRACHOA PLANT NAMED**
'SUNBELKUCHE'

(50) Latin Name: *Calibrachoa* sp.
Varietal Denomination: **Sunbelkuche**

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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See application file for complete search history.

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct cultivar of *Calibrachoa* plant named 'Sunbelkuche', characterized by its outwardly spreading to somewhat trailing plant habit; vigorous growth habit; freely branching and flowering plant habit; early and long flowering period; red purple-colored flowers; and good garden performance.

1 Drawing Sheet

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Botanical designation: *Calibrachoa* sp.
Cultivar denomination: 'SUNBELKUCHE'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of *Calibrachoa* plant, botanically known as *Calibrachoa* sp. and hereinafter referred to by the name 'Sunbelkuche'.

The new *Calibrachoa* plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan. The objective of the breeding program is to develop new trailing and freely-branching *Calibrachoa* plants with attractive and unique flower coloration.

The new *Calibrachoa* plant originated from a cross-pollination conducted by the Inventor in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan in April, 2005 of a proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 3402-2, not patented, as the female, or seed, parent with a proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number L1, not patented, as the male, or pollen, parent. The new *Calibrachoa* 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 Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan in September, 2006.

Asexual reproduction of the new *Calibrachoa* plant by vegetative cuttings in a controlled greenhouse environment in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan since October, 2006, has shown that the unique features of this new *Calibrachoa* plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* have not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment and cultural practices such as temperature 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 'Sunbelkuche'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'Sunbelkuche' as a new and distinct cultivar of *Calibrachoa*:

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1. Outwardly spreading to somewhat trailing plant habit.
2. Vigorous growth habit.
3. Freely branching and flowering plant habit.
4. Early and long flowering period.
5. Red purple-colored flowers.
6. Good garden performance.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can be compared to plants of the female parent selection. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* differ primarily from plants of the female parent selection in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* are more trailing than plants of the female parent selection.
2. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* and the female parent selection differ in flower color as plants of the female parent selection have purple-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can be compared to plants of the male parent selection. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* differ primarily from plants of the male parent selection in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* are more trailing than plants of the male parent selection.
2. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* and the male parent selection differ in flower color as plants of the male parent selection have yellow-colored flowers.

Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* can also be compared to plants of 'Sunbelochipi', disclosed in U.S. Plant Pat. No. 10,355. In side-by-side comparisons conducted in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* and 'Sunbelochipi' differed primarily in the following characteristics:

1. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* were more trailing than plants of 'Sunbelochipi'.
2. Leaves of plants of the new *Calibrachoa* were broader than leaves of plants of 'Sunbelochipi'.
3. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* had larger flowers than plants of 'Sunbelochipi'.
4. Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* had longer peduncles than plants of 'Sunbelochipi'.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new *Calibrachoa* 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 *Calibrachoa* plant.

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

The photograph at the bottom of the sheet is a close-up view of typical flowers and leaves of 'Sunbelkuche'.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The aforementioned photographs and following observations, measurements and values describe plants grown in 15-cm containers in Higashiomi, Shiga, Japan, under commercial practice during the early summer in an outdoor nursery. During the production of the plants, day temperatures averaged 23° C. and night temperatures averaged 13° C. Plants had been growing for four and five months when the description and photographs, respectively, were taken. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2001 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical classification: *Calibrachoa* sp. 'Sunbelkuche'.

Parentage:

Female, or seed, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number 3402-2, not patented.

Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of *Calibrachoa* sp. identified as code number L1, not patented.

Propagation:

Type.—By vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate roots.—About one week at 15° C. to 20° C.

Time to produce a rooted young plant.—About three weeks at 15° C. to 20° C.

Root description.—Fibrous; white in color.

Rooting habit.—Freely branching.

Plant description:

Plant and growth habit.—Outwardly spreading to somewhat trailing and mounding plant habit; freely branching habit with numerous lateral branches developing per plant; pinching enhances lateral branch development; vigorous growth habit.

Plant height.—About 17.7 cm.

Plant diameter.—About 46.4 cm.

Lateral branch description:

Length.—About 23.6 cm.

Diameter.—About 1.5 mm.

Internode length.—About 2 cm.

Strength.—Strong.

Aspect.—Decumbent.

Texture.—Pubescent.

Color.—Close to 144A.

Foliage description:

Arrangement.—Alternate, simple.

Length.—About 3.2 cm.

Width.—About 1.2 cm.

Shape.—Elliptic.

Apex.—Broadly acute.

Base.—Cuneate.

Margin.—Entire.

Texture, upper and lower surfaces.—Pubescent.

Venation pattern.—Pinnate; reticulate.

Color.—Developing and fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Close to 137B; venation, close to 144C. Developing and fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 138B; venation, close to 144C.

Petiole.—Length: About 3.5 mm. Diameter: About 1.4 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Sparsely pubescent. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 144C.

Flower description:

Flower arrangement and habit.—Single salverform flowers arising from upper leaf axils; freely flowering habit with usually about 66 flowers per plant; flowers face upright or outwardly.

Fragrance.—None detected.

Natural flowering season.—Early flowering habit, plants of the new *Calibrachoa* initiate and develop flowers about three weeks after planting; long flowering period, flowering commences naturally during the spring and plants flower continuously throughout the summer until late autumn in Japan.

Flower longevity.—Individual flowers last about seven to ten days on the plant; flowers not persistent.

Flower diameter.—About 3.5 cm.

Flower length (depth).—About 3.1 cm.

Throat diameter.—About 8.5 mm.

Tube length.—About 1.9 cm.

Tube diameter, base.—About 2.1 mm.

Flower bud.—Shape: Cylindrical. Length: About 2.4 cm. Diameter: About 7.1 mm. Color: Close to N79B.

Corolla.—Arrangement: Five petals fused at the base and opening into a flared trumpet. Petal length from throat: About 1.2 cm. Petal width: About 1.57 cm. Petal shape: Spatulate. Petal apex: Blunt to slightly cordate. Petal margin: Entire. Petal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Throat texture: Smooth, glabrous. Tube texture: Pubescent. Color: Petal, when opening and fully opened, upper surface: Close to N66A; towards the throat, close to N184A. Petal, when opening and fully opened, lower surface: Close to 67B. Throat: Close to 13B; venation, close to 200B. Tube: Close to 154C; venation, close to 200B.

Calyx.—Arrangement: One star-shaped calyx tube with five sepals fused at the base. Sepal length: About 9 mm to 12 mm. Sepal width: About 3.2 mm. Sepal shape: Lanceolate. Sepal apex: Broadly acute. Sepal margin: Entire. Sepal texture, upper and lower surfaces: Pubescent. Sepal color: Immature and mature, upper surface: Close to 138A. Immature and mature, lower surface: Close to 138B.

Peduncles.—Length: About 2.7 cm. Diameter: About 0.8 mm. Angle: Upright to outwardly. Strength: Strong. Texture: Pubescent. Color: Close to 144B with reddish tinting.

Reproductive organs.—Stamens: Quantity/arrangement: Five per flower. Stamen length: About 1 cm to 1.27 cm. Anther shape: Ellipsoidal. Anther length: About 1.7 mm. Anther diameter: About 1.4 mm. Anther color: Close to 10A. Pollen amount: Moderate. Pollen color: Close to 10B. Pistils: Quantity: One per flower. Pistil length: About 1.18 cm. Style color: Close to 145C. Stigma shape: Transversely ellipsoidal. Stigma color: Close to 146C. Ovary color: Close to 145A.

Seed/fruit.—Seed and fruit development have not been observed on plants of the new *Calibrachoa*.

Garden performance: Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* have been observed to have good garden performance and to tolerate wind, rain and temperatures ranging from about 5° C. to about 35° C.

Pathogen/pest resistance: Plants of the new *Calibrachoa* have not been observed to be resistant to pests and pathogens common to *Calibrachoa* plants.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct *Calibrachoa* plant named 'Sunbelkuche' as illustrated and described.

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