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(54) **STRAWBERRY PLANT NAMED 'PRIZE'**

(50) Latin Name: ***Fragaria ananassa***
Varietal Denomination: **PRIZE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

This invention relates to a new and distinct variety of strawberry plant named 'PRIZE'. This new strawberry plant named 'PRIZE' is primarily adapted to the growing conditions of the central coast of California, and is primarily characterized by its orange red fruit color, small fruit size and very uniform fruit shape and color, medium to large plant size, medium to large foliage with medium green color, strongly concave foliage typically lacking gloss, and medium length fruiting trusses which are typically held level with to beneath the foliage.

4 Drawing Sheets

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Latin name of the genus and species of the plant claimed:
Fragaria ananassa.

Variety denomination: 'PRIZE'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct strawberry variety named 'PRIZE'. This new variety is a result of a controlled cross made in 2003 in an ongoing breeding program between strawberry variety designated 'PS-2880' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 15,597) and strawberry selection designated 'PS-2899' (unpatented). Due to the combining of the reciprocal seed lots, it is unknown as to which parent variety is the seed parent and which parent variety is the pollen parent. The variety is botanically known as *Fragaria ananassa*.

The seedling resulting from the aforementioned cross was selected from a controlled breeding plot in Ventura County, Calif. in the fall of 2005. After its selection, the new variety was asexually propagated by stolons in both San Joaquin County, Calif. and Siskiyou County, Calif. The new variety was extensively tested over the next several years in fruiting fields in Ventura County, Calif. This propagation has demonstrated that the combination of traits disclosed herein as characterizing the new variety are fixed and remain true to type through successive generations of asexual reproduction.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

'PRIZE' is primarily adapted to the climate and growing conditions of the central coast of California. The nearby Pacific Ocean provides the needed humidity and moderate temperatures to produce a strong vigorous plant and maintain fruit quality during the fall production months.

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The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be unique characteristics of 'PRIZE', which in combination distinguish this strawberry plant as a new and distinct variety:

5 1. Fruit is orange red in color, small in size and very uniform in shape and color;

2. Medium to large plant size;

3. Foliage is medium to large, medium green, strongly concave and typically lacking gloss; and

4. Fruiting trusses are medium in length and typically held level with to beneath the foliage.

The strawberry variety that is believed to be most closely related to the new variety 'PRIZE' is 'VALOR' (U.S. Plant Pat. No. 20,394). In side-by-side comparisons to the similar strawberry variety 'VALOR', 'PRIZE' differs by the following combination of characteristics as described in Table 1.

TABLE 1

| COMPARISON WITH THE STANDARD VARIETY | | |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Characteristic | 'PRIZE' | 'VALOR' (US PP20,394) |
| Fruit color -- | Orange red. | Ranges from red to dark red. |
| Fruit size -- | Small. | Medium. |
| Insertion of achenes -- | Level with the surface. | Ranges from level with to below the surface. |
| Plant size -- | Ranges from medium to large. | Medium. |
| 25 Foliage size -- | Ranges from medium to large. | Medium. |
| Foliage color -- | Medium green. | Ranges from medium to dark green. |

For identification, a series of molecular markers have been determined for this new variety.

‘PRIZE’ differs from its parents, ‘PS-2880’ and ‘PS-2899’, by the following combination of characteristics as described in Table 2.

TABLE 2

| COMPARISON WITH THE PARENT VARIETIES | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Characteristic | ‘PRIZE’ | ‘PS-2880’ | ‘PS-2899’ |
| Fruit color -- | Orange red. | Ranges from orange red to red. | Medium red. |
| Seed position -- | Even with the surface. | Above the surface. | Even with the surface. |
| Fruit flavor -- | Good. | Moderate. | Moderate. |
| Plant size -- | Ranges from medium to large. | Large. | Medium. |
| Skin firmness -- | Good. | Moderate. | Ranges from moderate to good. |

BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying color photographs illustrate the overall appearance of typical specimens of the new strawberry variety ‘PRIZE’, at various stages of development as true as it is reasonably possible with color reproductions of this type. Color in the photographs may differ slightly from the color value cited in the botanical descriptions which accurately describe the color of ‘PRIZE’. The depicted plant and plant parts of the new strawberry variety ‘PRIZE’ are between three and four months old. The photographs were taken in Ventura County, Calif.

FIG. 1 shows typical fruiting field characteristics of ‘PRIZE’, taken in the month of November 2013;

FIG. 2 shows a close-up view of the typical leaf structure of ‘PRIZE’, taken in the month of November 2013;

FIG. 3 shows typical mature and immature field fruit of ‘PRIZE’, taken in the month of October 2013; and

FIG. 4 shows typical internal and external mature fruit characteristics of ‘PRIZE’, taken in the month of November 2013.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

The new variety ‘PRIZE’ has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The characteristics of the new variety ‘PRIZE’ may vary in detail, depending upon variations in environmental factors, including weather (temperature, humidity and light intensity), day length, soil type and location. In addition, the characteristics of any parental variety or comparison variety included in Tables 1 and 2 of the present invention may vary in detail, depending upon variations in environmental factors, including weather (temperature, humidity and light intensity), day length, soil type and location.

The aforementioned photographs, together with the following description of the new variety ‘PRIZE’, unless otherwise noted, are based on observations taken during the 2013 growing season in Ventura County, Calif. These measurements and ratings were taken from plants of ‘PRIZE’ dug from a low-elevation nursery located in San Joaquin County, Calif. during January 2013 and planted six months later in Ventura County, Calif. The approximate age of the observed plants is between three and four months. Yield observations

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including average weight and marketable yield, along with fruit quality characteristics including soluble solids, are averaged from four years of data collected from the 2009 through 2012 growing seasons. Flower measurements and characteristics are from secondary flowers unless otherwise noted. Fruit characteristics and measurements are from secondary fruit unless otherwise noted.

Where noted, color terminology follows The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, London (2007).

The following characteristics describe fruit, plant, stolon, foliage, fruiting truss, flower, and pest and disease characteristics of the new strawberry ‘PRIZE’.

Fruit characteristics:

Color of mature fruit.—RHS 44A (orange red).

Color of internal flesh.—RHS 39A (light red).

Color of core.—RHS 39C (light red).

Length (cm).—3.8.

Width (cm).—3.5.

Size.—Small.

Length/width ratio.—1.11 (slightly longer than broad).

Calyx diameter (cm).—4.4.

Average weight (gm).—19.9.

Achene color, shaded side.—RHS 153C (yellow green group).

Achene color, sun-exposed side.—RHS 182A (greyed red group).

Achene weight (mg).—0.66.

Achenes per berry.—358.

Marketable yield (gm/plant).—420.

Predominant shape.—Ranges from conical to ovoid (ovate).

Difference in shape between primary and secondary fruit.—Slight.

Band without achenes.—Absent or very narrow.

Evenness of surface.—Even or very slightly uneven.

Evenness of color.—Even or very slightly uneven.

Glossiness.—Medium.

Insertion of achenes.—Level with surface.

Position of calyx attachment.—Inserted.

Attitude of sepals.—Outward.

Size of calyx in relation to fruit diameter.—Slightly larger.

Adherence of calyx (when fully ripe).—Strong.

Firmness of flesh.—Medium.

Distribution of red color of the flesh.—Marginal and central.

Hollow center expression.—Moderate.

Flavor.—Good.

Soluble solids (% Brix).—7.6.

Time of first flowering.—Late.

Time of first harvesting.—Late.

Harvest period.—Late September to mid December.

Harvest maturity.—Mid to late season.

Type of bearing.—Fully remontant (non-flowering runners).

Plant characteristics:

Height (cm).—25.1.

Spread (cm).—40.8.

Size.—Ranges from medium to large.

Habit.—Semi-upright.

Density.—Medium.

Vigor.—Strong.

Stolon characteristics:

Color.—RHS 146C (yellow green group).

Anthocyanin coloration.—RHS 183C (greyed purple group).
Anthocyanin intensity.—Strong.
Pubescence.—Dense.
Attitude of hairs.—Strongly outward.
Average quantity (nursery).—Ranges from few to medium.
Average diameter at bract (mm).—3.9 (thick).
Terminal leaflet characteristics:
Length (cm).—9.6.
Width (cm).—8.5.
Length/width ratio.—1.13 (longer than broad).
Shape of base.—Acute.
Shape of teeth.—Obtuse (serrate to crenate).
Serrations per leaf.—21.9.
Foliage characteristics:
Color of upper surface.—RHS 137A (medium green group).
Color of underside.—RHS 148B (yellow green group).
Number of leaflets.—3.
Size.—Ranges from large to medium.
Shape in cross section.—Strongly to slightly concave.
Interveinal blistering.—Medium.
Glossiness.—Absent or weak.
Variegation.—Absent.
Petiole characteristics:
Color.—RHS 144A (yellow green group).
Length (cm).—13.3.
Diameter (mm).—4.0.
Attitude of hairs.—Slightly outward.
Frequency of bract leaflets.—10% occurrence (few).
Bract leaflet size.—Small.
Pubescence.—Moderate.
Petiolule color.—144A (yellow green group).
Petiolule length (mm).—15.5.
Stipule characteristics:
Color.—RHS 146B (yellow green group).
Anthocyanin coloration.—N/A.
Anthocyanin intensity.—Absent or very weak.
Length (mm).—19.1.
Width (mm).—10.0.

Fruiting truss characteristics:
Anthocyanin coloration.—RHS 182B (greyed red group).
Anthocyanin intensity.—Absent or very weak.
Length at maturity (cm).—26.4.
Position relative to foliage.—Ranges from beneath to level with.
Number of flowers.—Medium.
Pedicel attitude of hairs.—Strongly outward.
Pubescence.—Strong.
Attitude at first pick.—Prostrate.
Flower characteristics:
Petal color.—RHS NN 155C (white group).
Sepal color.—RHS 137A (green group).
Receptacle color.—RHS 148C (yellow green group).
Anther color.—RHS 13A (yellow group).
Corolla diameter (mm).—34.4 (large).
Calyx diameter (mm).—36.5.
Petal length (mm).—13.5.
Petal width (mm).—13.4.
Petal length/width ratio.—1.01 (as long as broad).
Petals/flower.—6.0.
Sepal length (mm).—13.5.
Sepal width (mm).—5.8.
Sepal length/width ratio.—2.33.
Sepals/flower.—12.0.
Size of calyx relative to corolla.—Larger.
Relative position of petals (flowers with 5-6 petals).—Overlapping.
Stamen.—Present.
Size of inner calyx relative to outer.—Smaller.
Pest and disease reactions:
Powdery mildew.—Moderately susceptible.
Angular leaf spot.—Moderately resistant.
Botrytis fruit rot.—Moderately susceptible.
Two-spotted spider mite.—Moderately susceptible.
It is claimed:
1. A new and distinct strawberry plant named 'PRIZE', as herein described and illustrated by the characteristics set forth above.

* * * * *

FIG. 1



FIG. 2



FIG. 3

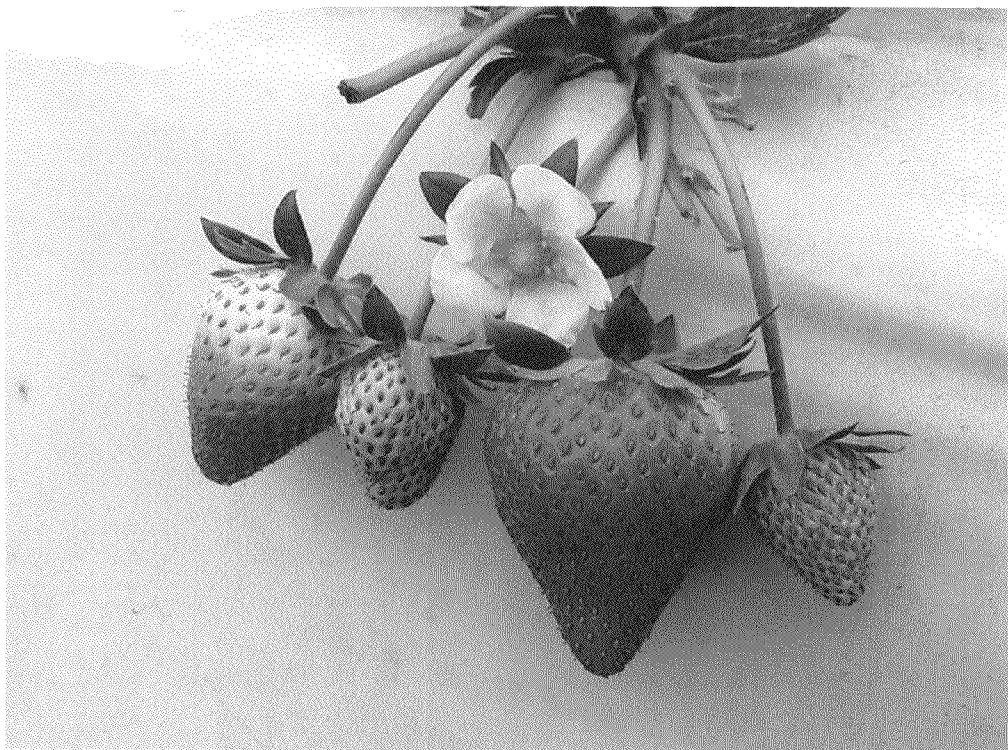


FIG. 4

