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Heidgen

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[54] GERANIUM PLANT NAMED 'FLAME DELIGHT'

[56] References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

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[57] ABSTRACT

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[58] Field of Search ..... Plt./68, 87.12

A new and distinct variety of Geranium plant, "Flame Delight" characterized by its cascading growth habit; its medium to large sized medium green foliage with little zoning, its abundant flowers and, its double, bright scarlet colored flowers and its heat tolerance.

1 Drawing Sheet

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention, hereinafter referred to by the cultivar name "Flame Delight" relates to a new and distinct geranium plant. "Flame Delight" is a new and improved plant resulting from a planned breeding program as performed by me in my greenhouse at 821 Walnut Street, Batavia, Ill. My breeding program began in March 1977, and has been ongoing since that time. This seedling was initially identified by my records as 80x064F, and was the result of a cross between Deacon Fireball, an unpatented floribunda Geranium as the seed parent crossed with Bonita, an unpatented cascade Geranium as the pollen parent. Being a cross between two market class zonal geranium plants, it is believed that the botanical classification *Pelargonium* x *hortorum* would be appropriate for this plant.

Upon recognition of the outstanding characteristics of this plant, it was selected from the progeny of the stated cross, and was set aside for further observation, testing, and was subsequently named "Flame Delight." Asexual reproduction of "Flame Delight" has been repeatedly accomplished by the rooting of vegetative cuttings in my greenhouse in Batavia, Ill. Examination of the plants so propagated through a series of propagations has demonstrated that the combination of characteristics herein disclosed for "Flame Delight" are firmly fixed and retained through successive generations through asexual reproduction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The new and distinguishing characteristics of "Flame Delight" reside primarily in its cascading growth habit, its medium to large-sized, medium green foliage with inconspicuous zonation and its abundant blooming habit. This plant also has double, large-sized clear scarlet colored flowers and unusually high heat tolerance. This plant might be seen as a novel and desirable introduction within the industry by a combination of desired traits including:

Being particularly adapted to culture in hanging baskets due to its cascading habit, tendency to prolifically branch, and dense leafy canopy. Forming a dense plant mass completely hiding the top of a basket in about 10 weeks from four plantlets, and a thick plant

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mass which is wider than it is tall and of mounded form.

Having a generous amount of matt foliage, with medium green coloration with inconspicuous zonation over the leaves of medium to large size and of higher than normal density.

Presenting a large number of well filled umbels of varied states of maturity placed well above the foliage mass, and having a pleasingly clear scarlet floret coloration which is attractively, contrastingly highlighted over and against the medium green foliage.

Having a large number of umbels with a generous number of open double petal florets of medium to large size and appearance, borne on pedicels which present florets in a tightly condensed arrangement to form umbels having a fairly tightly compacted and mounded shape.

Presenting a large number of umbels which also vary in stage of maturity which gives the plant an attractive appearance for an extended period of time rather than being one which blooms in discontinuous flushes.

The color definitions to follow have been taken from *The Royal Horticultural Colour Chart* of The Royal Horticultural Society, London, where presented by the letters RHS followed by a color grouping indication, the number indicating the color patch and the letter indicating the shade, except where color definitions in general terms of ordinary meaning are presented. Plant descriptions were made from specimens grown under greenhouse conditions during daylight hours in Batavia, Ill.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

The photograph depicts a market unit made up of four market stage specimens of the plant growing in a 10 inch hanging planter, in a stage of inflorescence. The assemblage is shown in side view, depicting the characteristics of branching, leaves, leaf density, leaf coloration and zonation, the number and varied stages of buds and flowers, and the positioning of the flower heads relative to the mass of the plants in the hanging basket.

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

Botanical classification: *Pelargonium* x *hortorum*.

## Market:

*Class.*—Cascading zonal geranium suitable for planting in hanging baskets.

*Name.*—"Flame Delight."

*Growth:* "Flame Delight" is an exceptionally prolific blooming Geranium. The flowers are double and the flower head or truss is of medium to large size and quite resistant to shattering. The growth is generally procumbent in attitude which gives it a cascading effect.

*Rate.*—Rapid, producing a typical 10 inch flowering basket in about 10 to 12 weeks from four 2½ inch plantlets using standard commercial culture. This plant has exceptional vigor under normal conditions.

*Blooming habit:* Exceptionally profuse and continuously blooming plant throughout the year, outdoors during the frost-free period, or in the greenhouse; a mature 10 inch hanging basket commonly producing a range of 12 to 22 flower heads at one time, in varying stages of maturity.

## INFLORESCENCE

## Flower heads:

*Size.*—2¼ to 3⅞ inches across when the florets are fully open.

*Count.*—15 to 25 presented at one time.

## Truss:

*Size.*—Medium to large; ranges from about 3 to 3¾ inches in diameter.

*Shape.*—Somewhat tight, a flattened globe as it opens.

*Number of florets.*—Variable, range of from about 15 to 25, average 18 to 20.

*Lasting quality.*—Average. Blooms remain 5 to 10 days and may last longer in cool, dry weather.

## Buds:

*Sepals.*—Shape — Long, slender and pointed. Color — Same as leaves.

*Color.*—Red Group RHS 5 2 B.

*Form.*—Fat and round with a slight point.

## Florets:

*Number.* 15 to 25.

*Form.*—Flat to cupped.

*Size.*—Ranging from 1½ to 1¾ inches across an open floret.

## Petals:

*Number.*—About 8 to 12.

*Size.*—Ranging from about 9/16 to 11/16 inches long to about 11/16 to 13/16 inches wide.

*Texture.*—Soft.

*Appearance.*—Clear.

## Petaloids:

*Number.*—About 6 to 10.

*Shape.*—Variable, often misshapen.

*Color.*—Similar to that of the petals.

*Size.*—About 5/16 to 7/16 inches long and 9/16 to 11/16 inches wide.

## Sepals:

*Number.*—Usually 5.

*Color.*—About like that of the leaves.

## Pedicel:

*Length.*—About 5/16 to 1 1/16 inch.

*Color.*—RHS Greyed Purple, 185 A.

## Peduncle:

*Arises.*—From node, opposed to leaf petiole.

*Pubescence.*—Normal.

*Color.*—RHS Yellow Green 144A.

## Reproductive Organs

## Androecium:

*Stamens.*—Number — 5 to 7. Shape — Ribbon-like filaments jointed at bases. Color — Rose purple. Anther attachment — Versatile.

*Anthers.*—Number — 5 to 7. Shape — Normal, well developed. Color — Purple.

## Gynoecium:

*Pistil.*—Number — One, compound. Length — About within the range of 3/32 to 5/32 inches.

*Stigma.*—Color — Purple.

*Style.*—Color — Green.

*Ovary.*—Size — Within 1/32 to 1/16 inches long.

*Fertility:* Normal, viable seed is produced sparsely.

*Behavior:* Once the plant begins to bloom, it has an exceptionally prolific blooming habit and yields a striking display of medium to large-sized double clear scarlet flowers against its medium green foliage without zoning.

*General observations:* Inflorescence is of medium to large size with rather tight heads borne against the medium foliage of the plant and generally rounded in shape and measure up to about 3 inches across. High floret, petal and petaloid counts make umbels appear as dense balls at optimum stage of opening. Flowers have very high tolerance to heat when compared to those of other varieties.

## STEM

*Thickness:* Medium slim.

*Internodes:* Short.

*Branching:* Free breaking.

*Attitude:* Procumbent habit.

## FOLIAGE

## Leaves:

*Quantity.*—Abundant.

*Shape.*—Reniform.

*Size.*—Largest leaves range from about 1¼ to about 3¼ inches wide.

*Margin.*—Crenate.

*Texture.*—Matt, lightly pubescent.

*Coloration.*—Leaves a medium green tone as normally seen in Geraniums per se RHS Green Group 137B, with narrow zone of slightly darker green hue RHS Green Group 138B. Zonation is centrally located on the leaf surfaces, and concentric to the point of petiole attachment and with green surface portions both inside and outside the zonal band.

## Petioles:

*Texture.*—Lightly pubescent.

*Length.*—About 1¼ to 2⅞ inches.

*Color.*—Yellow Green Group RHS 146B.

"Flame Delight" is comparable to "Midnight Blush" with which it shares market class, but is easily distinguishable therefrom in terms of flower color; "Midnight Blush" having salmon petal coloration, while the petals of "Flame Delight" are more scarlet; and by vigor, "Midnight Blush" being much more vigorous. "Flame Delight" is readily distinguished from "Midnight Rose" by having florets which are much more double, and of much brighter coloration and by having a leaf attitude which more closely follows the shape of the plant mass and by having little leaf zonation.

## I claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of Geranium plant, substantially as shown and described, characterized by its cascading growth habit; its medium to large-sized, medium green foliage; its abundant blooming habit; its bright scarlet colored flowers and its heat tolerance.

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U.S. Patent

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