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[54] PETUNIA PLANT NAMED 'ISIDORE'

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[57] ABSTRACT

[73] Assignee: Plantagen S.A., Scharrachbergheim, France

A distinct cultivar of Petunia plant named 'Isidore', characterized by its large bright purple flowers; floriferous with numerous flowers per plant; early flowering; vigorous growth habit and rapid growth rate; spreading plant habit and freely branching; strong, healthy foliage; strong and fast rooting; good weather resistance; and resistance to phytopathological mildews.

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2 Drawing Sheets

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

lighter than the petal color of plants of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'.

The new cultivar is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the inventor in Scharrachbergheim, France. The objective of the breeding program was to create new Petunia cultivars having desirable flower colors, large flower size, strong healthy foliage, and small leaves.

3. Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' flower 8 to 10 days earlier than plants of the cultivar 'Sufinia Shihi Purple'.

The new cultivar originated from a cross made by the inventor of the inventor's proprietary Petunia selection No. 93P15, as the male or pollen parent, with the Petunia cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple' (not patented), as the female or seed parent, in June, 1993.

4. Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' are more freely branching and therefore denser and bushier than plants of the cultivar 'Sufinia Shihi Purple'.

The cultivar 'Isidore' was discovered and selected by the inventor in November, 1993, as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross in a controlled environment in Scharrachbergheim, France. Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by terminal cuttings taken at Scharrachbergheim, France, has shown that the unique features of this new Petunia are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations.

5. Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' are more weather tolerant than plants of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'.

The cultivar 'Isidore' has not been observed under all possible environmental conditions. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environment such as temperature and light intensity, without, however, any variance in genotype. The following observations, measurements and comparisons describe plants grown in Scharrachbergheim, France, under commercial production conditions.

6. Leaves of plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' are stronger and more resistant to phytopathological mildews than leaves of plants of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'.

The following traits have been repeatedly observed and are determined to be the unique characteristics of 'Isidore'. These characteristics in combination distinguish 'Isidore' as a new and distinct cultivar:

7. Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' have stronger and more vigorous root systems than plants of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'.

1. Large bright purple flowers.
2. Floriferous with numerous flowers per plant.
3. Early flowering.
4. Very vigorous growth habit and rapid growth rate.
5. Spreading plant habit and freely branching.
6. Strong, healthy foliage.
7. Strong and fast rooting.
8. Good weather resistance: tolerant to rain, drought and temperature extremes.

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the overall appearance of the new cultivar, showing the colors as true as it is reasonably possible to obtain in colored reproductions of this type.

Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' are similar in flower color to plants of the parent cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'. Plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' differ from plants of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple' in the following characteristics:

18 The first photograph comprises a top perspective view of a typical hanging basket plant of the cultivar 'Isidore'.

1. Flowers of the cultivar 'Isidore' are larger than flowers of the cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple'.
2. The petal color of plants of the cultivar 'Isidore' is

19 The second photograph comprises a close-up view of individual flowers of the cultivar 'Isidore'. Flower and foliage colors in the photographs may appear different than the actual colors due to light reflectance.

20 In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used. Plants used for the description were grown in glass-covered greenhouses during the summer in Scharrachbergheim, France. Measurements are averages or ranges from ten specimens selected at random from five plants.

Botanical Classification: *Petunia axillaris* cultivar 'Isidore'.

Parentage:

Male or pollen parent. Inventor's *Petunia axillaris* proprietary selection No. 93P15.

Female or seed parent. *Petunia axillaris* cultivar 'Surfinia Shihi Purple' (not patented).

Propagation:

Type cutting.—Terminal vegetative cuttings.

Time to initiate and develop roots.—About ten days at 20° C. soil temperature.

Rooting habit.—Numerous, fine, fibrous, and well-branched.

Plant description:

Form.—Indeterminate, decumbent, diffuse spreading, viscid, glandular pubescent.

Branching habit.—Freely branching, usually about 8 branches per stem.

Plant height (from soil level to top of plant plane).—8 to 9 cm.

Spreading area of plant.—16 to 18 cm.

Vigor.—Very vigorous, rapid growth rate.

Crop time.—10 to 12 weeks from an unrooted cutting to produce a finished and flowering specimen in a 12.5-cm container.

Foliage description.—Leaves simple, generally symmetrical and long persisting. Leaves at first whorled, later alternate, somewhat fleshy. Size: Juvenile: Length: About 3.5 cm. Width: About 1.5 cm. Mature: Length: 5.5 to 6 cm. Width: 3.5 to 4 cm. Shape: Ovate. Apex: Acute. Base: Acute. Margin: Entire. Texture: Smooth. Color: Young foliage upper side: 137C. Young foliage under side: 137D. Mature foliage upper side: 137C. Mature foliage under side: 137D.

Stem description.—Diameter About 3 mm. Internode length: 2 to 4 cm. Color: Green, 137C, anthocyanin development may give a reddish tint when plants are exposed to cooler temperatures. Texture: Very pubescent.

Flower description:

Flower type and habit.—Large, single, salverform flowers, facing upwards, axillary. Calyx five-parted, petals united into a flower tube.

Natural flowering season.—Long day responsive, continuously flowers from spring through fall. Flowers self-cleaning

Quantity.—Numerous flowers per plant.

Flower bud.—Length: 3.5 to 4.5 cm. Diameter: About 8 mm.

Corolla.—Diameter: 6.5 to 8 cm. Height: 4 to 5 cm. Petal quantity: Five, fused. Petal apex: Rounded. Margin: Entire, slightly serrated and undulating. Texture: Velvety and smooth. Color: Petal color, adaxial surface: 74A. Petal color, abaxial surface: 80B. Petal vein color, adaxial surface: 79A. Petal vein color, abaxial surface: 79B. Throat: 79A.

Sepals.—Quantity: Five. Shape: Oblong. Apex: Obtuse. Margin: Entire or slightly lobed. Aspect: Upright. Color, abaxial and adaxial surfaces: 137C.

Peduncle.—Aspect: Erect. Size: Length: 3 to 4 cm. Width: About 1 mm. Color: 137C.

Reproductive organs.—Stigma above anthers, superior ovary. Stamens: Stamen number: Five. Anther size: About 1 mm. Anther color: 106B. Pistils: Stigma color: 137A. Style length: About 1.8 cm.

Disease Resistance: Resistant to phytopathological mildews. Seed Production: Rarely observed.

It is claimed:

1. A new and distinct cultivar of *Petunia* plant named 'Isidore', as illustrated and described.

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