FIELD OF THE INVENTION

A new clementine citrus tree Citrus clementina hybrid is described. The new variety name 'Red Tacle' is desirable to the consumer because the fruit is characterized by having seedless blood flesh. As a result, the consistency of the fruit of 'Red Tacle' is substantially immune from being adversely affected by any unwanted hybridization from similar varieties in neighboring fields. That is, any resultant fruit crop remains seedless even if cross pollinated with other varieties had occurred.

BACKGROUND OF THE NEW PLANT

The present invention relates to a new and distinct variety of clementine citrus tree hybrid, i.e., Citrus clementina hybrid, developed from a mutant originating from a triploid 'Tacle' hybrid obtained from a cross of Citrus clementina variety Monreal clementine 2x(female parent)×Citrus sinensis ssp. Vararocco 4x(male parent).

The original triploid 'Tacle' variety cross was carried out in the spring of May 1980 and designated with the original number as A146. The successful rescue of the subsequent immature embryos was recovered by in vitro culture four months after pollination. In 1983, the first trees of the triploid 'Tacle' were grafted on Toyer clementine and were planted in the experimental orchard at Palazzelli (Lentini) Italy. The first fruits of the triploid 'Tacle' hybrid were subsequently produced six years later in 1989.

In 1994, the triploid mutation 'Red Tacle' had emerged which yielded a seedless and a substantially more redder fruit (i.e., having a higher anthocyanin content) which distinguished it from the fruit of the triploid 'Tacle' hybrid. Except for the new seedless and redder fruit, the triploid mutation 'Red Tacle' maintaining the same or similar characteristics of the original A146 triploid 'Tacle' hybrid. The first fruits from a graft of the original triploid mutation of 'Red Tacle' appeared in 1998 which confirmed the differentiation between the original A146 triploid 'Tacle' hybrid and the A146 triploid 'Red Tacle' mutation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The new variety is illustrated by the accompanying photographic prints in which:
FIG. 2 depicts the exterior of the Citrus clementina fruit as well as traverse midsections of the plane substantially perpendicular to the axis, illustrating no seeds in the interior of the fruit;

FIG. 3 depicts a portion of the Citrus clementina tree with the fruit attached to branches of the tree; and

FIG. 4 depicts the morphology of the flowers from the tree.

BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANT

The following is a detailed description of the ‘Red Tacle’ new variety of Citrus clementina based on observations made of plants grown in commercial nursery production practices at Palazzelli (Lentini) in Italy.

Tree:

Form—tree.

Origin—1996 mutation from a cross of Citrus clementina variety Monreal clementine 2x(female parent)×Citrus sinensis variety Tarocco orange 4x(male parent).


Shape—Medium in size, somewhat round.

Thorns—Thorns 1-10 mm length.

Branching—Upright.

Canopy—Moderately dense.

Bark—Immature: Smooth, green RHS 137A.

Bark—Mature Smooth, yellow-green RHS148A

Leaf—Size: Narrow width, 36 mm, length 78 mm.

Leaf Blade—short to medium.

Leaf Blade—cross section slightly concave tapered pointed.

Leaf Petioles—Wingless 12 mm length 1.5 mm in diameter.

Leaf Upper Surface—Green RHS 146A

Leaf Lower Surface—Green RHS 146B

Habit—Moderately vigorous

Height—2.5-3 m.

Trunk Diameter—18 to 20 cm above the ground

Spread—Depends on proximity in grove and pruning

Disease Resistance—No particular susceptibility or resistance observed.

Winter Hardiness—Winter temperature in Palazzelli (Italy) averages 5-10 degrees Centigrade.

Flower:

Petals—5

Petal Color—White RHS 155C

Flowering Period—Late March to Mid April (Palazzini, Italy)

Flower Drop—May

Stamens—Approximately 20 with complete style development

Anther Color—Yellow RHS 12C

Pollen Fertility—0%

Anther Coloration—0

Fruit:

Shape—Oblate

Size—Medium

Weight—120 g (average of 50 fruits)

Height—50 mm

Diameter—69 mm

Rind Color—11.5 (Using the Numerical Scale: 4=Dark Green; 5=Light Green with some break to Yellow; 6=Green-Yellow; 8-10=Yellow; 11=Yellow-Orange; 12=Orange; 13=Red-Orange)

Rind Texture—2.5 Higher numbers indicate rougher rind texture.

Rind Thickness—2.5 mm and easy to peel.

Fruit Segments—9-12

Color of Flesh—dark red RHS 65A

Time to Maturity—mid December to mid January (Pallazini, Italy)

Productivity—50 kg per tree each season at age 6

Fruit Extract—(Quality tested January 2002)

Total soluble solids (TSS): 12%

Acid content 1.32%

TSS/acid ration 13.

Flavor—Pleasant.

% juice—30%

Seeds: None

I claim:

1. A new and distinct variety of Citrus clementina plant named ‘Red Tacle’ as illustrated and described.