HYDRANGEA PLANT NAMED ‘HORCOS’


BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a new and distinct cultivar of Hydrangea plant, botanically known as Hydrangea macrophylla and hereinafter referred to by the name ‘HORCOS’.

The new Hydrangea plant is a product of a planned breeding program conducted by the Inventor in Dresden, Germany. The objective of the breeding program was to develop new container-type Hydrangea plants with strong stems and attractive leaf, stem and flower coloration.

The new Hydrangea plant originated from a cross-pollination in 2004 of Hydrangea macrophylla ‘Selma’, not patented, as the female, or seed parent and a proprietary selection of Hydrangea macrophylla identified as code number 41-99/1, not patented, as the male, or pollen parent. The new Hydrangea plant was discovered and selected by the Inventor in May, 2006 as a flowering plant within the progeny of the stated cross-pollination in a controlled environment in Dresden, Germany.

Asexual reproduction of the new cultivar by softwood cuttings in Dresden, Germany since June, 2006 has shown that the unique features of this new Hydrangea plant are stable and reproduced true to type in successive generations of asexual reproduction.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Plants of the new Hydrangea have not been observed under all possible combinations of environmental conditions and cultural practices. The phenotype may vary somewhat with variations in environmental conditions such as temperature and light intensity without, however, any variance in genotype.
3. Plants of the new Hydrangea and ‘Hbachi’ differ slightly in flower color.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The accompanying colored photographs illustrate the unique appearance of the new Hydrangea 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 from the color values cited in the detailed botanical description which accurately describe the colors of the new Hydrangea plant.

The photograph on the first sheet comprises a side perspective view of a typical flowering plant of ‘Horeco’ grown in a container. The photograph on the second sheet is a close-up view of a typical inflorescence of ‘Horeco’.

DETAILED BOTANICAL DESCRIPTION

Plants used in the aforementioned photographs and in the following description were grown in 13-cm containers in a glass-covered greenhouse in Dresden, Germany and under cultural conditions typical of commercial Hydrangea production conditions. Plants of the new Hydrangea were two years old when the photographs and description were taken. During the production of the plants, day temperatures ranged from 18°C to 25°C and night temperatures ranged from 16°C to 17°C. In the following description, color references are made to The Royal Horticultural Society Colour Chart, 2007 Edition, except where general terms of ordinary dictionary significance are used.

Botanical description: Hydrangea macrophylla ‘Horeco’.

Parentage:
Female, or seed, parent.—Hydrangea macrophylla ‘Selma’, not patented.
Male, or pollen, parent.—Proprietary selection of Hydrangea macrophylla identified as code number 41-091, not patented.

Propagation:
Type cutting.—By softwood cuttings.
Time to initiate roots, summer.—About 14 days at temperatures about 18°C.
Time to initiate roots, winter.—About 16 days at temperatures about 18°C.
Time to produce a rooted young plant, summer.—About 28 days at temperatures about 18°C.
Time to produce a rooted young plant, winter.—About 30 days at temperatures about 18°C.
Root description.—Medium in thickness, fibrous; white to grey in color.
Rooting habit.—Moderately freely branching; medium density.

Plant description:
Plant and growth habit.—Perennial shrub; upright and mounded plant habit; broadly inverted triangle; freely branching habit with about six lateral branches developing per plant; strong lateral branches; moderately vigorous growth habit.
Plant height.—About 28.2 cm.
Plant diameter or area of spread.—About 40.6 cm.

Leaf description:
Arrangement.—Opposite, simple.
Length.—About 12 cm.
Width.—About 7.8 cm.
Shape.—Elliptic-oblong to obovate to ovate.
Apex.—Acute.
Base.—Alternate.
Margin.—Serrate.
Texture, upper surface.—Glabrous; rugose.
Texture, lower surface.—Glabrous; slightly rugose.
Nervation pattern.—Pinnate.
Color.—Developing leaves, upper surface: Close to N137D; towards the margins, strongly tinged with close to 200A. Developing leaves, lower surface: Close to 147B. Fully expanded leaves, upper surface: Darker than between N137A and 147A; venation, close to 144A. Fully expanded leaves, lower surface: Close to 147B; venation, close to 144A to 144B.
Petioles.—Length: About 2.2 cm. Diameter: About 4 mm. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 144A.

Inflorescence & flower description:
Flower type and habit.—Single sterile and inconspicuous fertile flowers arranged on terminal mophead-type panicles; panicles flattened globular in overall shape; fertile flowers face mostly upright and sterile flowers face upright to outwardly.
Fragrance.—Faintly fragrant, pleasant.
Natural flowering season.—Continuous flowering from late spring to late summer in The Netherlands.
Flower longevity, fertile flowers.—Flowers last about one week on the plant; flowers persistent.
Flower longevity, sterile flowers.—Flowers last about six weeks on the plant; flowers persistent.
Quantity of flowers.—Freely flowering; about 65 fertile flowers and about 125 sterile flowers per panicle.
Panicle height.—About 12.4 cm.
Panicle diameter.—About 16.7 cm.
Flower diameter, fertile flowers.—About 9 mm.
Flower depth (height), fertile flowers.—About 5 mm.
Flower diameter, sterile flowers.—About 5.1 cm.
Flower depth (height), sterile flowers.—About 1.2 cm.
Flower buds, fertile flowers.—Length: About 4 mm. Diameter: About 4 mm. Shape: Globular. Color: Close to 144D.
Flower buds, sterile flowers.—Length: About 1 cm. Diameter: About 8 mm. Shape: Ovoid. Color: Close to 144D; margins, close to 583B.
lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color, upper and lower surfaces: Close to 144B.

Sepals, sterile flowers.—Quantity and arrangement: Four, occasionally five, in a single whorl. Length: About 2.6 cm. Width: About 3.2 cm. Shape: Broadly rhomboidal to reniform. Apex: Broadly and bluntly acute. Base: Broadly cuneate. Margin: Entire. Texture, upper and lower surfaces: Smooth, glabrous. Color: When opening, upper and lower surfaces: Center, close to 150D; towards the margins, close to 53D and 58B. Fully opened, upper surface: Center, close to 62C and 73C; towards the margins, close to 59D; with development, center color becomes closer to 65A to 65C and towards the margins, close to 61C to 61D.

Fully opened, lower surface: Center, close to 73C to 73D; towards the margins, close to 60D; with development, center color becomes closer to 62B and 63B and towards the margins, close to 63B.


Pedicels, sterile flowers.—Angle: About 40° from lateral branch. Strength: Strong. Length: About 2.3 cm. Diameter: About 1.5 mm. Texture: Smooth, glabrous. Color: Close to 68D and marbled with close to 63B.


Seeds and fruits.—Seed and fruit development have not been observed on plants of the new Hydrangea to date.

Disease & pest resistance: Plants of the new Hydrangea have not been observed to be resistant to pathogens and pests common to Hydrangea plants.

Temperature tolerance: Plants of the new Hydrangea have been shown to be tolerant to temperatures in USDA Hardiness Zones 5 to 9.

It is claimed:
1. A new and distinct Hydrangea plant named ‘Horcos’ as illustrated and described.
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