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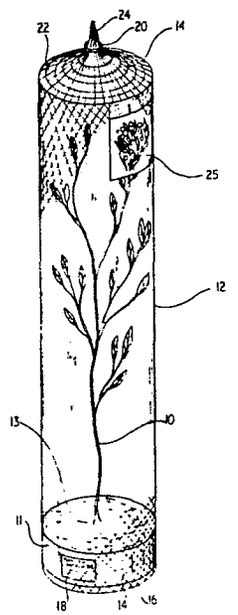
(54) A botanical display device and a botanical display.

(57) The invention provides a botanical display device which comprises a tube (12) of transparent synthetic material such as polyvinylchloride enclosed in a mesh work sock (14) which extends across the bottom of the tube to provide a support for a plant (10) placed in the tube, the sock being drawn together above the top end of the tube. Besides providing an adequate environment in which the plant can live whilst on display, the display device is also aesthetically attractive.



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"A botanical display device and a botanical display".

The invention is concerned with display devices for plants, especially pot plants or shrubs. An application of the display device is in the marketing of plants, particularly in supermarkets, general stores and garden centres. Small shrubs are sometimes placed, with their roots in the compost in which they have grown, inside transparent plastics bags, the mouths of the bags being closed, and then put on display for selling purposes in that condition. There are several drawbacks to this, one of which is that the plants themselves are not readily visible, nor are they displayed to advantage.

According to this invention a botanical display device comprises a self-sustaining tube of transparent synthetic material enclosed in a meshwork sock which forms a bottom perforated support at the lower end of the tube for a plant placed in the tube, the meshwork sock being stretched over the outside of the tube to provide a decorative effect. Preferably the top end of the meshwork sock is drawn into a bunch above the top end of the tube to provide a perforated top closure for the display device. It is further preferred that the drawn together part of the sock is sufficient to provide an effective hand grip for carrying the display device.

Preferably the sock is formed of a net fabric. It is further preferred that the transparent tube is of circular cross-section, although it is to be understood, that the expression "tube" is not intended to be restricted to cylindrical articles. For example, the tube could be of square or hexagonal cross-section.

According to a preferred feature of the invention a plant, the roots of which are in a block of compost in which the plant was grown, is placed inside the transparent tube so that the compost block rests on the support provided by the lower end of the sock. In the preferred arrangement the block of compost is contained in an open-topped plastics bag, which is preferably a sliding fit within the transparent tube. If the plastics bag is employed, it preferably has perforations in its bottom for irrigation purposes. It is further preferred that the compost block and the bag in which it fits, if such a bag is provided protrudes below the bottom of the transparent tube, so that when the display device is placed in a tray containing water, the lower end of the compost block will be in contact with the water.

A botanical display which includes a display device in accordance with the invention will now be described by way of example only, with reference to the accompanying drawing, which is a perspective view of the display.

The intended purpose of this display is the selling of small plants and shrubs, particularly in supermarkets, general stores and garden centres. It is desirable for this purpose that the plant shall be readily visible in its natural growing attitude, but at the same time it is also desirable that the purchaser shall be able to handle the plant easily. (Supermarket customers are generally used to being able to lift an article to be purchased from an open shelf, and simply place it in a shopping trolley.) Traditional methods of displaying plants in pots or trays are not suited to supermarket operations. On the other hand when a plant is simply placed in a plastics bag, the mouth of which is drawn together, it is constricted and certainly not displayed to any advantage.

For the purpose of the present example, it is supposed that a small shrub 10 has to be displayed. A display device for this shrub essentially comprises an open topped plastics bag 11, a cylindrical tube 12 and a perforated sock 14. The roots of the shrub 10 are surrounded by a cylindrical compost block 13, which is contained in the black polyethylene bag 11. This kind of plastics bag is frequently used for containing compost blocks when plants are displayed without protective covering. The base of the bag 11 is perforated. The tube 12 is constructed from a sheet of 250 micron clear polyvinylchloride and the two opposite vertical edges of the sheet are formed with interlocking formations (not shown) whereby a vertical joint can be formed. Alternatively, the two opposite vertical edges of the sheet may be secured together by staples or by use of an adhesive. The tube 12 is large enough for the shrup 10 to grow naturally inside it as illustrated. In other words, the dimensions of the tube are such that when the shrub is placed in it, the shrub is not constricted to any substantial extent. The tube is self-sustaining, open at both top and bottom ends, and completely transparent. As shown in the drawing, the bag 11 containing the shrub 10 is positioned in the lower end of the tube 12. In fact, the bag 11 is a sliding fit in the tube 12 so that it is easily fitted into the tube and presents a neat appearance when in position.

The sock 14 is made of nylon netting which can be stretched, and the tube 14 is placed within the sock. The construction of the sock is such that it is stretched over the cylindrical wall of the tube 12, thus providing the diamond-shaped pattern as illustrated all over the outside of the tube. The patterning of the tube by the stretched netting greatly enhances the aesthetic attraction of the display in a manner which cannot be readily explained logically. Perhaps there is a psychological clash producing a jarring effect on the observer, between the

"natural" as represented by the growing plant and the "synthetic" as represented by the purely transparent plastics tube, and this clash is greatly muted by the effect of the netting. In any event, the enhancement in the appearance of the display produced by the stretched netting is very marked.

The sock 14 also provides a perforated closure or support 16 across the open bottom of the tube. When the tube is forced into the bag, the bag is not stretched taut across the bottom of the tube, and a length of the sock is left free above the top end of the tube 12. Before the shrub is placed in the display device therefore, the latter can be said to comprise a net sock closed at one end and open at the other, with the plastics tube fitted into the sock and stretching that part of the sock which lies around the tube.

When the shrub 10, with its block 13 of compost and the polyethylene bag 11 is placed in the tube 12 through the open top end thereof, because the lower support portion 16 of the sock 14 is not stretched taut across the lower end of the tube 12, the bag 11 and compost block 13 protrudes slightly below the lower end of the tube 12 as illustrated, being supported there by the then stretched lower end portion of the sack.

The part of the sack 14 protruding above the top end of the tube 12, is then drawn together and a clip or elastic band 20 applied around the gathered-together portion of the sack. This has the effect of stretching part of the sack across the top end of the tube 12, to provide a perforated closure 22. There is also provided a short buhched length 24 of the sack which can be used as a hand grip for the entire display.

Planting and cultivation instructions may be printed on the polyethylene bag 11 as indicated at 18, and these will be clearly visible through the tube 12. Since the sock 14 is made of fine thread, it presents no appreciable impediment

to reading the instructions. Also, a label 25 may be inserted between the outside of the transparent tube 12 and the sock 14. The sock therefore provides a convenient method of retaining the label in position on the tube. The label 18 may bear an illustration of the plant when in flower or fruit and it may also bear additional descriptive and/or advertising matter.

A series of displays such as that illustrated in the drawing, can be placed in a shallow tray containing water, on the shelf of a supermarket or the like. Because the compost block 13 will be in contact with the water through the perforated bottom wall of the bag 11, and the lower portion 16 of the sock does not prevent this, the plant is able to receive a moisture supply, so long as it is on display. Also, whilst the top end of the tube is effectively closed, so that it is not possible for anyone to interfere with the plant, there is adequate ventilation through the perforated top 22 of the display. Hence, the plant is able to continue to grow naturally whilst in the display device, and because it is not constricted to any substantial extent by the display device, it is shown to the best possible advantage to potential customers. Moreover, if someone decides to purchase the plant, it is a simple matter to lift the entire display by means of the hand grip 24, and the display device protects the shrub 10 during transportation.

It will be appreciated, that the tube 12, need not be made in the material which has been specified above. For example, it might be possible to make the tube in rigid polyvinylchloride of 150 micron thickness. Alternatively, the tube could be made in any other transparent plastics material. Equally, the sock 14 need not necessarily be made in nylon, though clearly it should preferably be made in a material which is moisture resistant.

The invention also broadly comprises the display of a growing plant in a transparent container, with a net stretched around the outside of the container.

WHAT I CLAIM IS:

1. A botanical display device comprising a self-sustaining tube of transparent synthetic material enclosed in a meshwork sock which forms a bottom perforated support at the lower end of the tube for a plant placed in the tube, the meshwork sock being stretched over the outside of the tube to provide a decorative effect.

2. A botanical display device as claimed in Claim 1, in which the top end of the network sock is drawn into a bunch above the top end of the tube to provide a perforated top closure for the display device.

3. A botanical display device as claimed in Claim 2, in which, the drawn together part of the sock is sufficient to provide an effective hand grip for carrying the display device.

4. A botanical display device as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, in which the sock is formed of a net fabric.

5. A botanical display device as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 4, in which the transparent tube is of circular cross-section.

6. A botanical display device as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 5, in which a plant, the roots of which are in a block of compost in which the plant was grown, is placed inside the transparent tube so that the compost block rests on the support provided by the lower end of the sock.

7. A botanical display device as claimed in Claim 6, in which the block of compost is contained in an open-topped plastics bag.

8. A botanical display device as claimed in Claim 7, in which the plastics bag is a sliding fit within the transparent tube.

9. A botanical display device as claimed in Claim 7 or Claim 8, in which the platics bag has perforations in its bottom.

10. A botanical display device as claimed in any one of Claims 6 to 9, in which the compost block protrudes below the bottom of the transparent tube.

11. A botanical display comprising a growing plant in a transparent container, with a net stretched around the outside of the container.

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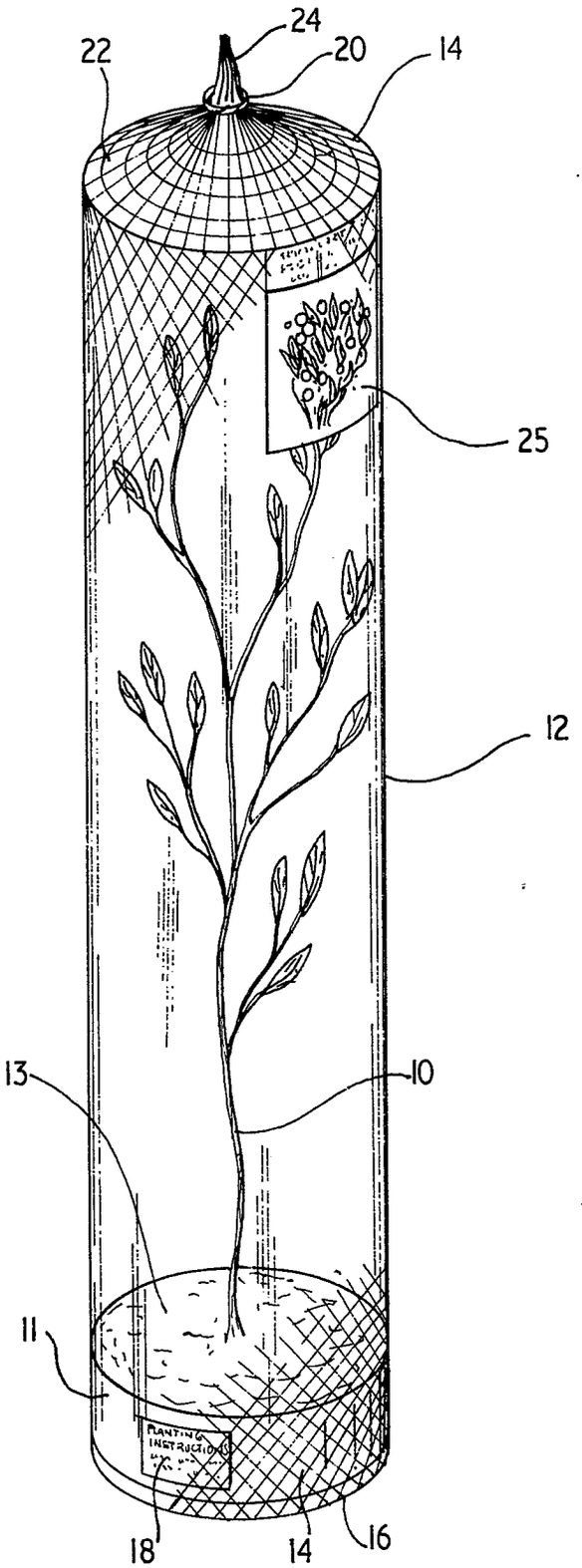

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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

0049122
Application number
EP 81 30 4428

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim
	FR - A - 2 147 527 (DALLE) * Page 1, lines 19-23; page 2, lines 26-30; page 3, lines 5-15,20,21; figures 1,2 *	1,5,6, 11
	DE - A - 1 804 926 (SONTAG) * Page 2, lines 2-5; page 2, lines 21-25; page 3, last paragraph; figures 1-5 *	1,3
	FR - A - 1 345 099 (VITHERM) * Page 1, right-hand column, lines 11-13,20,21; figures 1, 2 *	7,9
	FR - A - 1 245 927 (S.E.V.E.C.) * Patent specification *	1
	FR - A - 1 353 288 (PREVOT) * Patent specification *	1
	FR - A - 2 129 232 (RIGOT STALARS) * Page 1, lines 31-34; page 2, lines 1-10; figures 1-3 *	4

CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int. Cl.³)

B 65 D 85/52

TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int. Cl.³)

B 65 D
A 01 G

CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS

X: particularly relevant
A: technological background
O: non-written disclosure
P: intermediate document
T: theory or principle underlying the invention
E: conflicting application
D: document cited in the application
L: citation for other reasons

&: member of the same patent family, corresponding document

The present search report has been drawn up for all claims

Place of search	Date of completion of the search	Examiner
The Hague	30-12-1981	VANTOMME

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