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**Pecota et al.**

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(54) **ORNAMENTAL SWEETPOTATO PLANT NAMED 'SWEET CAROLINE PURPLE'**

(50) Latin Name: *Ipomoea batatas*  
Varietal Denomination: **Sweet Caroline Purple**

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(52) **U.S. Cl. .... Plt./258**

(58) **Field of Search ..... Plt./258**

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**PUBLICATIONS**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct ornamental cultivar of *Ipomoea batatas* called 'Sweet Caroline Purple' is described that is a moderately compact, densely-mounding, plant with purple leaves that are deeply-lobed. The plant is distinguished by its short shoots and highly branched plant habit. Furthermore, this plant has excellent vigor and will flower under short day conditions. *Ipomoea batatas* 'Sweet Caroline Purple' is suitable for use in landscaping and containerized gardens.

**5 Drawing Sheets**

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Latin name of the genus and species: The Latin name of the novel, ornamental plant variety disclosed herein is *Ipomoea batatas* (L.) Lam.

Variety denomination: The inventive cultivar of *Ipomoea batatas* disclosed herein has been given the variety denomination 'Sweet Caroline Purple'.

**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

*Ipomoea batatas* species are members of the morning glory family Convolvulaceae. *Ipomoea batatas*, commonly referred to as the white or yellow sweetpotato and the orange yam, are typically fast growing vines with palmately-lobed leaves. These ornamental species produce storage roots identical in appearance to the common sweet potato, but not as palatable. Late in the growing season, tubular flowers appear which are similar to morning glories, but plantings are dominated by the appearance of the foliage. The plants are highly desirable due to their ability to grow under varied stress conditions, cover a large space, and last the entire growing season. Moreover, these plants have few insect or disease problems.

Existing varieties of *Ipomoea batatas* are popular for landscaping applications. There are currently six common

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types of ornamental sweetpotatoes that are being cultivated primarily for annual, summer vines. These six cultivars are: 'Blackie' (unpatented), having dark purple-black foliage, lavender flowers, and edible storage roots; 'Terrace Lime' (unpatented) and 'Margarita' (unpatented; also known as 'Sulfur'), which have large brilliant chartreuse leaves and lavender blooms; 'Black Heart' (unpatented, also known as 'Ace of Spades'), having heart-shaped leaves with burgundy purple color; 'Tricolor' (unpatented, also known as 'Pink Frost'), is a variegated plant which has pale green, white, and pink-margined leaves; and 'Lady Fingers' (unpatented), which has medium green, dainty leaves divided into long, thin, fingerlike lobes which are complemented by burgundy stems and veins.

*Ipomoea batatas* 'Margarita' has recently been released in the United States, and has become widely used as a landscape annual. It is not suitable for mixed containers, as this variety exhibits a very vigorous growth and tends to out-compete other species. Another popular variety is 'Blackie', a vigorous purple-leaved clone which is also unsuited to containerized gardens. See Armitage, A. M. and J. M. Garner. 2001. *Ipomoea batatas* 'Margarita'. *HortScience* 36:178.