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Pecota et al.

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

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

(75) Inventors: **Kenneth Pecota**, Raleigh, NC (US); **G. Craig Yench**, Washington, NC (US); **Cynthia Pierce**, Clayton, NC (US)

(73) Assignee: **North Carolina State University**, Raleigh, NC (US)

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

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

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Primary Examiner—Kent Bell

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec, P.A.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A new and distinct ornamental cultivar of *Ipomoea batatas* called 'Sweet Caroline Green' is described that is a compact plant, with a round mounded shape, a dense canopy and dark green leaves that are deeply lobed. The plant is further distinguished by its unusual leaves, which have 3-5 narrow lobes, with prominent light green palmate veins. In addition, this cultivar has a reduced vigor as compared with existing cultivars of *Ipomoea batatas* known to the inventors. *Ipomoea batatas* 'Sweet Caroline Green' is suitable for use in landscaping and containerized gardens.

4 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 Green'.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Ipomoea 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 it 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.

Therefore, to meet the current horticultural demand, it is desirable to produce new, more robust cultivars of ornamen-