allow water to pass through, and is disposed along the surface (including the surfaces of the first recess 11a and the second recess 11b) of the cultivation container 11 to cover the entire upper side of the surface. The waterproof sheet 12 serves a role of preventing leakage of the nutrient solution and the like from the cultivation container 11.

[0028] The mesh pipe 13 is a cylindrical pipe extending in the front-rear direction, with the entire sidewall being in a mesh shape allowing water to pass through. The mesh pipe 13 is disposed along the drainage path to serve a role of improving drainage and ventilation. For example, a Trical pipe (registered trademark: manufactured by C.I. TAKIRONCIVIL Corporation) may be adopted as the mesh pipe 13. The mesh pipe 13 is fitted into the second recess 11b covered with the waterproof sheet 12, and the up-down position of the upper end of the mesh pipe 13 approximately coincides with the up-down position of the lower end of the first recess 11a.

[0029] The drainage net 14 is a sheet-shaped net member that allows water to pass through, and is disposed to cover the upper side of the waterproof sheet 12 and the mesh pipe 13. The size of the mesh (the size of the holes in the mesh) of the drainage net 14 is smaller than the size of the clay pebbles Y used in the medium 15.

[0030] In this manner, in this embodiment, the drainage net 14 with a size of the mesh that does not allow the clay pebbles Y to pass through is disposed between the medium 15 and the drainage path (second recess 11b). Accordingly, it is possible to allow the nutrient solution supplied to the medium 15 to pass to the drainage path while preventing the clay pebbles Y from falling into the drainage path.

[0031] The medium 15 is a medium for hydroponics formed by filling clay pebbles Y as the planting material. Irregularly shaped clay pebbles with a diameter of one grain varying in a range of 2 to 4 mm are adopted as the clay pebbles Y used to form the medium 15. In the example of this embodiment, the clay pebbles Y are filled to the extent that the first recess 11a is almost completely buried.

[0032] The irrigation tube 16 is a tube (tubular member) for irrigation extending in the front-

rear direction, and in the example of this embodiment, two irrigation tubes 16 are disposed separated in the left-right direction without interfering with strawberry seedlings X (refer to FIG. 4). One irrigation tube 16 is disposed near the left edge of the medium 15, and the other irrigation tube 16 is disposed at a position slightly to the right on the upper side of the medium 15.

[0033] The lighting device 17 is a device that realizes lighting using, for example, LEDs, and is disposed near the top plate of each tier to mainly irradiate light downward. The lighting device 17 is capable of switching the lighting on/off, and the period when lighting is provided corresponds to the light period, which promotes photosynthetic activity of strawberries.

[0034] [Overview of cultivation method using plant cultivation system]

Next, a cultivation process (cultivation method) of strawberries using the plant cultivation system described above will be described with reference to a flowchart shown in FIG. 3.

[0035] First, seeds of strawberries are sown in a seedling raising material, and hydroponic cultivation of the strawberries is started in the first cultivation room P1 (step S1). The seedling raising material in the example of this embodiment is formed in a small, approximately cubic shape with a recess for placing a seed provided on the upper side, is capable of allowing the rhizome of the plant to pass to the outer side, and is capable of being directly used for hydroponic cultivation even after the plant has grown into a seedling.

[0036] The hydroponic cultivation in the first cultivation room P1 described above is continued until a specific medium switching time comes (step S2). The medium switching time is set to a time from germination of strawberries to before fruit formation. When the medium switching time comes ("Y" in step S2), the strawberry seedlings are moved from the first cultivation room P1 to the cultivation container 11 in the second cultivation room P2, and hydroponic cultivation of strawberries is started in the second cultivation room P2 (step S3). When the medium switching time comes, instead of executing the process of step S3, hydroponic cultivation of strawberries using clay pebbles may also be started in the same cultivation room (in

CLAIMS

[Claim 1] A cultivation method, which is a cultivation method of a plant, comprising:

growing the plant from a seed by hydroponics, until a specific medium switching time from germination to before fruit formation; and

in response to coming of the medium switching time, moving the plant to a medium taking clay pebbles as a planting material to continue growing the plant by hydroponics.

[Claim 2] The cultivation method according to claim 1, wherein the planting material comprises the clay pebbles of different sizes mixed together.

[Claim 3] The cultivation method according to claim 2, wherein the planting material comprises the clay pebbles, which are irregularly shaped and of different sizes within a range of 2 to 4 mm, mixed together.

[Claim 4] The cultivation method according to claim 1, comprising a process of baking used clay pebbles, wherein

the baked clay pebbles are reused as the planting material.

[Claim 5] The cultivation method according to claim 1, wherein after the plant is moved to the medium, pollination is performed using a pollinator.

[Claim 6] The cultivation method according to claim 1, wherein the plant is strawberry.

[Claim 7] A cultivation system, which is a cultivation system used for the cultivation method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, comprising:

the medium, and a drainage path disposed below the medium, wherein

a drainage net with a size of a mesh that does not allow the clay pebbles to pass through is disposed between the medium and the drainage path.

[Claim 8] A cultivation system, which is a cultivation system provided in a room having an air conditioner and used for the cultivation method according to any one of claims 1 to 6,

the cultivation system being provided with a pre-filter with a finer mesh than an air conditioning filter of the air conditioner, wherein

air in the room that is drawn into the air conditioner passes through the pre-filter before passing through the air conditioning filter.