[0041] From the viewpoints of better processing suitability, better processing stability over time, and better heat-melting properties, the content of the starch treated with oxidation in the imitation cheese according to the present invention is preferably 5.0% by mass or more, more preferably 7.0% by mass or more, far more preferably 9.0% by mass or more, or 10.0% by mass or more, and the upper limit thereof is preferably 25.0% by mass or less, more preferably 22.0% by mass or less, and far more preferably 20.0% by mass or less. Accordingly, in one embodiment, the content of the ingredient (B) in the imitation cheese according to the present invention is preferably in the range of 5.0 to 25.0% by mass, more preferably in the range of 7.0 to 22.0% by mass, and far more preferably in the range of 10.0 to 20.0% by mass.

[0042] From the viewpoint of better heat-melting properties, the ratio of the content of (B) the starch treated with oxidation to the content of the starch in the imitation cheese according to the present invention is preferably 60.0% by mass or more, more preferably 70.0% by mass or more, far more preferably 75.0% by mass or more, or 80.0% by mass or more, and the upper limit thereof is preferably 95.0% by mass or less, more preferably 93.0% by mass or less, and far more preferably 91.0% by mass or less, or 90.0% by mass or less. Accordingly, in one embodiment, the ratio of the content of the ingredient (B) to the content of the starch in the imitation cheese according to the present invention is preferably in the range of 60.0 to 95.0% by mass, more preferably in the range of 70.0 to 93.0% by mass, and far more preferably in the range of 75.0 to 90.0% by mass.

[0043] The starch content in the imitation cheese according to the present invention is the sum of (B) the

Example 1, the hydroxypropyl distarch phosphate and pectin were added to the blended fat and oil; and then the resulting mixture was stirred and mixed to obtain an oil phase.

Next, the oxidized starch, salt, potassium chloride, sodium glutamate, a trehalose, and an agar were added to water, and stirred and mixed to obtain an aqueous phase.

To the aqueous phase, the oil phase was added and mixed, and then the resulting mixture was emulsified to obtain a mixture in the emulsification form of an oil-in-water type. To the obtained mixture, 50%-fermented lactic acid (fermented lactic acid containing 50% of lactic acid) was added to adjust to the pH as described in Table 2; then, the mixture was homogenized under a homogenization pressure of 3 MPa.

The resulting homogenized mixture was heated with a direct-heating UHT sterilizer at 120°C for 3 seconds, followed by slow cooling to 4°C to obtain the respective imitation cheeses of Examples 1 to 5 and Comparative Examples 1 to 3.

[0195] [Table 2]

[0196] <Evaluation method>

(Table 2)

		Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Example 4	Example 5	Comparative Example 1	Comparative Example 2	Comparative Example 3
(A)	Almond-derived protein material (1)	2			1	4			
	Almond-derived protein material (2)		2						
	Powdered almond			4					
(A')	Soybean-derived protein material							2	
	Powdered chickpea								4
(B)	Oxidized starch	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3
(C)	Hydroxypropyl distarch phosphate	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
(D)	Fat and oil D1	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
	Salt	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Potassium chloride	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
	Sodium glutamate	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Trehalose	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Agar	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Pectin	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	50%-fermented lactic acid	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.4	0.7	0.2	0.6	0.7
	Water	50.08	50.08	48.08	51.28	47.98	52.48	50.08	47.98
Triglyceride composition in oil phase[*1]	SSS content (% by mass)	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5
	Tri-laurin content (% by mass)	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1
	Tri-laurin/SSS	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
	Oleoyl dipalmitin content (% by mass)	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Tri-saturated fatty acid triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 16 to 22 content (% by mass)	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Oil content (% by mass)		22.8	23.0	24.6	22.7	23.0	22.6	22.6	22.8
Water content (% by mass)		53.7	53.7	51.8	54.8	51.8	55.8	53.7	51.6
Protein content in imitation cheese (% by mass)		1.0	1.0	0.9	0.6	1.9	0.2	1.8	0.9
p H		4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

[*1] S represents a saturated fatty acid residue having the carbon number of 12 to 22, and SSS represents tri-saturated triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 12 to 22.

(Table 4)

		(Reference) Example 1	Example 6	Example 7	Example 8	Comparative Example 4	Comparative Example 5
(A)	Almond-derived protein material (1)	2	2	2	2	2	2
(B)	Oxidized starch	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3		16.3
(C)	Hydroxypropyl distarch phosphate	2.5	1	4		2.5	
	Hydroxypropyl starch				2.5		
(D)	Fat and oil D1	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5	22.5
	Salt	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Potassium chloride	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
	Sodium glutamate	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Trehalose	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Agar	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Pectin	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	50%-fermented lactic acid	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Water	50.08	51.58	48.58	50.08	66.38	52.58
Triglyceride composition in oil phase*1	SSS content (% by mass)	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5	57.5
	Tri-laurin content (% by mass)	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1	18.1
	Tri-laurin/SSS	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32
	Oleoyl dipalmitin content (% by mass)	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Tri-saturated fatty acid triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 16 to 22 content (% by mass)	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Oil content (% by mass)		22.8	22.8	22.8	22.8	22.8	22.8
Water content (% by mass)		53.7	55.0	52.5	53.7	68.1	55.9
Protein content in imitation cheese (% by mass)		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
p H		4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

*1 S represents a saturated fatty acid residue having the carbon number of 12 to 22, and SSS represents tri-saturated triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 12 to 22.

(Table 6)

		(Reference) Example 1	Example 9	Example 10	Example 11	Comparative Example 6
(A)	Almond-derived protein material (1)	2	2	2	2	2
(B)	Oxidized starch	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3
(C)	Hydroxypropyl distarch phosphate	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
(D)	Fat and oil D1	22.5				
	Fat and oil D2		22.5			
	Fat and oil D3			22.5		
	Fat and oil D4				22.5	
	Fat and oil D5					22.5
	Salt	2	2	2	2	2
	Potassium chloride	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12
	Sodium glutamate	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Trehalose	3	3	3	3	3
	Agar	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	Pectin	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
	50%-fermented lactic acid	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6
	Water	50.08	50.08	50.08	50.08	50.08
Triglyceride composition in oil phase[*1]	SSS content (% by mass)	57.5	55.8	60.0	61.4	2.9
	Tri-laurin content (% by mass)	18.1	20.9	10.7	7.3	0.3
	Tri-laurin/SSS	0.32	0.37	0.18	0.12	0.10
	Oleoyl dipalmitin content (% by mass)	0.6	0.4	0.9	1.0	63.1
	Tri-saturated fatty acid triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 16 to 22 content (% by mass)	2.1	0.2	5.5	7.3	2.4
Oil content (% by mass)		22.8	22.8	22.8	22.8	22.8
Water content (% by mass)		53.7	53.7	53.7	53.7	53.7
Protein content in imitation cheese (% by mass)		1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
p H		4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1

[*1] S represents a saturated fatty acid residue having the carbon number of 12 to 22, and SSS represents tri-saturated triglyceride consisting of solely saturated fatty acid residues having the carbon number of 12 to 22.