Claims

1. A ready-to-drink beverage comprising

- a flavor component;
- a hydrolyzed whole grain composition;
- an alpha-amylase or fragments thereof, which alpha-amylase or fragments thereof show no hydrolytic activity towards dietary fibers when in the active state;
- a sucrose content below 15% by weight of the beverage; and

wherein the beverage has a viscosity in the range 1-300 mPa.s~~.~~ further comprising a protease or fragment thereof, at a concentration of 0.001-5% by weight of the total whole grain content, which protease or fragment thereof shows no hydrolytic activity towards dietary fibers when in the active state

~~2. The ready-to-drink beverage according to claim 1, further comprising a protease or fragment thereof, at a concentration of 0.001-5% by weight of the total whole grain content, which protease or fragment thereof shows no hydrolytic activity towards dietary fibers when in the active state.~~

~~3~~2. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the alpha-amylase or fragment thereof is a mixed sugar producing alpha-amylase, including glucose producing activity, when in the active state.

~~4~~3. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims wherein the beverage has a maltose to glucose ratio below 144:1 by weight in the beverage.~~, such as below 120:1, such as below 100:1 e.g. below 50:1, such as below 30:1, such as below 20:1 or such as below 10:1.~~

~~5~~4. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the beverage further comprises at least one of an amyloglucosidase and a glucose isomerase or fragment thereof, which amyloglucosidase and glucose isomerase or fragment thereof show no hydrolytic activity towards dietary fibers when in the active state.

~~6~~5. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the hydrolyzed whole grain composition has a substantial intact beta-glucan structure relative to the starting material.

~~7~~6. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the hydrolyzed whole grain composition has a substantial intact arabinoxylan structure relative to the starting material.

~~8~~7. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, having a content of the hydrolyzed whole grain composition in the range 1-30% by weight of the beverage.~~, such as 1-20%.~~

~~9~~8. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, having a content of dietary fibers in the range of 0.1-10% by weight of the beverage.~~, preferably, in the range of 0.5-3%, even more preferably in the range of 1-2% (w/w).~~

~~10~~9. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the ready-to-drink beverage has a water activity above 0.35.

~~11~~10. The ready-to-drink beverage according to any of the preceding claims, wherein the flavor is selected from the group consisting of cocoa, coffee, fruit, malt, soya, tea, vegetable, and any combination thereof.

~~12~~11. A process for preparing a ready-to-drink beverage according to any of claims 1-10~~1-11~~, said process comprising:

1) preparing a hydrolyzed whole grain composition, comprising the steps of:

   a) contacting a whole grain component with an enzyme composition in water, the enzyme composition comprising, at least one alpha-amylase, said enzyme composition showing no hydrolytic activity towards dietary fibers,

   b) allowing the enzyme composition to react with the whole grain component, to provide a whole grain hydrolysate,

c) providing the hydrolyzed whole grain composition by inactivating said enzymes when said hydrolysate has reached a viscosity comprised between 50 and 5,000 mPa.s measured at 65°C;

2) providing the ready-to-drink beverage by mixing the hydrolyzed whole grain composition with a flavor component and providing a sucrose content below 15% by weight of the beverage.

~~13~~12. The process according to claim ~~12~~11, further comprising at least one of the following treatments: UHT, pasteurization, thermal treatment, retort and any other thermal or non-thermal treatments, such as pressure treatment.

~~14~~13. The process according to claim ~~12 or 13~~11 or 12, wherein the hydrolyzed whole grain composition in step 1c) is provided in the form of a liquid, a concentrate, a powder, a juice or a puree.

~~15~~14. The process according to any of claims ~~12 14~~11 to 13, wherein the ready-to-drink beverage comprises a liquid component selected from the group consisting of water, milk, liquid fruit extract, liquid vegetable extracts, liquid coffee extract, liquid chocolate extract, tea concentrate, malt extract, plant extracts, a soya component or any combination hereof.