CLAIMS

1. A proline-containing milky beverage comprising less than 3.0% of non-fat milk solids, less than 1,000,000 lactic acid bacteria or yeast cells per 1 mL and from 0.0010-0.0600 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage.

2. The milky beverage as claimed in claim 1, which is a yogurt flavored soft drink.

3. The milky beverage as claimed in claim 1, which is a soft drink having a combined flavor of yogurt and fruit.

4. The milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, which does not contain amino acids other than proline.

5. The milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 4, which can be stored at a temperature from 0 to 40 °C.

6. The milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, which contains 0.0060-0.0300 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage.

7. The milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 5, which contains 0.0060-0.0120 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage.

8. The milky beverage as claimed in claim 6, which is a non-carbonated beverage.

9. The milky beverage as claimed in claim 7, which is a carbonated beverage.

10. The milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 9, which has a fermented milk flavor.

11. A method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage, the method comprising:

(i) preparing a milky beverage comprising less than 3.0% of non-fat milk solids, less than 1,000,000 lactic acid bacteria or yeast cells per 1 mL, and no proline, and

(ii) adding 0.0010-0.0600 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage, thereby providing a proline-containing milky beverage.

12. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in claim 11, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage is a yogurt flavored soft drink.

13. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in claim 11, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage is a soft drink having a combined flavor of yogurt and fruit.

14. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 13, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage does not contain amino acids other than proline.

15. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 14, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage can be stored at a temperature from 0 to 40 °C.

16. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 15, wherein 0.0060-0.0300 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

17. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 15, wherein 0.0060-0.0120 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

18. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in claim 16, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage is a non-carbonated beverage.

19. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in claim 17, wherein the proline-containing milky beverage is a carbonated beverage.

20. The method for producing a proline-containing milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 19, wherein addition of proline in (ii) provides a fermented milk flavor.

21. A method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage, the method comprising:

(i) providing a milky beverage comprising less than 3.0% of non-fat milk solids, less than 1,000,000 lactic acid bacteria or yeast cells per 1 mL, and no proline, and

(ii) adding 0.0010-0.0600 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage thereby providing a milky beverage with improved flavor.

22. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in claim 21, wherein the milky beverage is a yogurt flavored soft drink.

23. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in claim 21, wherein the milky beverage is a soft drink having a combined flavor of yogurt and fruit.

24. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 23, wherein the milky beverage with improved flavor does not contain amino acids other than proline.

25. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 24, wherein the milky beverage with improved flavor can be stored at a temperature from 0 to 40 °C.

26. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 25, wherein 0.0060-0.0300 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

27. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 25, wherein 0.0060-0.0120 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

28. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in claim 26, wherein the milky beverage is a non-carbonated beverage.

29. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in claim 27, wherein the milky beverage is a carbonated beverage.

30. The method for improving the flavor of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 21 to 29, wherein proline is added to the milky beverage so that the milky beverage with improved flavor has a fermented milk flavor.

31. A method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage, the method comprising:

(i) providing a milky beverage comprising less than 3.0% of non-fat milk solids, less than 1,000,000 lactic acid bacteria or yeast cells per 1 mL, and no proline, and

(ii) adding 0.0005-0.0600 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage, thereby providing a milky beverage with suppressed sourness.

32. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in claim 31, wherein the milky beverage is a yogurt flavored soft drink.

33. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in claim 31, wherein the milky beverage is a soft drink having a combined flavor of yogurt and fruit.

34. The method for suppressing sourness in of a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 31 to 33, wherein the milky beverage with suppressed sourness does not contain amino acids other than proline.

35. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 31 to 34, wherein the milky beverage with suppressed sourness can be stored at a temperature from 0 to 40 °C.

36. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 31 to 35, wherein 0.0060-0.0600 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

37. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in any one of claims 31 to 35, wherein 0.0020-0.0120 g of proline per 100 g of the milky beverage is added in (ii).

38. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in claim 36, wherein the milky beverage is a non-carbonated beverage.

39. The method for suppressing sourness in a milky beverage as claimed in claim 37, wherein the milky beverage is a carbonated beverage.