CLAIMS

[Claim 1]

A method for producing a fermented milk, comprising the steps of:

(1) preparing a fermented milk mix using one or more starting milk materials;

(2) heat-pasteurizing the fermented milk mix; and

(3) adding a starter to the heat-pasteurized fermented milk mix to ferment the mix,

wherein, in performing steps (1) ~~to (3)~~ above, ~~at least one of~~ the following operations (A) ~~to (C)~~ is carried out:

(A) adding glucose oxidase to said one or more starting milk materials to prepare the fermented milk mix in step (1), wherein said one or more starting milk materials contain a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase~~;~~

~~(B) adding glucose oxidase and a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase to the heat-pasteurized fermented milk mix before step (3); and~~

~~(C) adding glucose oxidase and a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase to the fermented milk after step (3)~~.

[Claim 2]

The method according to Claim 1, wherein the starter is a combination of *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*.

[Claim 3]

The method according to Claim 1 or 2, which is a method for producing a fermented milk that undergoes less change in physical properties caused by coagulation of milk protein than a fermented milk produced without adding glucose oxidase thereto.

[Claim 4]

The method according to Claim 3, wherein the change in

physical properties caused by coagulation of milk protein is at least one selected from the group consisting of occurrence of syneresis, an increase in particle size of milk protein and/or fat, and development of grainy texture of the fermented milk.

[Claim 5]

The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fermented milk is yogurt.

[Claim 6]

A method for suppressing a change in physical properties caused by coagulation of milk protein in a fermented milk produced by a method comprising the following steps:

(1) preparing a fermented milk mix using one or more starting milk materials;

(2) heat-pasteurizing the fermented milk mix; and

(3) adding a starter to the heat-pasteurized fermented milk mix to ferment the mix,

wherein, in performing steps (1) ~~to (3)~~ above, ~~at least one of~~ the following operations (A) ~~to (C)~~ is carried out:

(A) adding glucose oxidase to said one or more starting milk materials to prepare the fermented milk mix in step (1), wherein said one or more starting milk materials contain a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase~~;~~

~~(B) adding glucose oxidase and a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase to the heat-pasteurized fermented milk mix before step (3); and~~

~~(C) adding glucose oxidase and a substance that can serve as a substrate for the glucose oxidase to the fermented milk after step (3)~~.

[Claim 7]

The method according to Claim 6, wherein the starter is a combination of *Lactobacillus bulgaricus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*.

[Claim 8]

The method according to Claim 6, which suppresses a change in physical properties caused by coagulation of milk protein, unlike the method for producing a fermented milk without using glucose oxidase.

[Claim 9]

The method according to Claim 6, wherein the change in physical properties caused by coagulation of milk protein is at least one selected from the group consisting of occurrence of syneresis, an increase in particle size of milk protein and/or fat, and development of grainy texture of the fermented milk.

[Claim 10]

The method according to Claim 6, wherein the fermented milk is yogurt.

[Claim 11]

The method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein step (2) is a step of heat-pasteurizing the fermented milk mix at 90 to 100°C.

[Claim 12]

The method according to any one of claims 6 to 10, wherein step (2) is a step of heat-pasteurizing the fermented milk mix at 90 to 100°C.