Claims

1. A food ingredient comprising:
20-40 % by dry weight of milk protein; and
35-55% by dry weight of a mixture of lactose, glucose, galactose and galactooligosaccharide, said mixture containing: 1-20% by weight of lactose, 15-35% by weight of glucose, 1-10% by weight of galactose and 50-85% by weight of galactooligosaccharide.

2. A food ingredient according to claim 1 further comprising 0.5-30% by dry weight of milk fat and/or mineral derived from milk.

3. A food ingredient according to any one of claims 1 or 2 further comprising 5-20% by dry weight of vegetable oil.

4. A method for producing a food ingredient of any one of claims 1 to 3, the process comprising:
a) providing an aqueous composition comprising 30-80% by weight of non-fat milk solids including lactose,
b) adding a beta-galactosidase to the composition
c) allowing the beta-galactosidase to react for 10-240 minutes at 50-65°C; and
d) heat treating the composition after step c) at a temperature of 70-150°C for 10-150 seconds.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein the aqueous composition provided in step a) comprises 15-45% of lactose by weight.

6. The method of any one of claims 4 or 5 further comprising spray drying the composition after step d).

7. The method of any one of claims 4-6 wherein skim milk powder is dissolved in water to provide the composition of step a).

8. The method of any one of claims 4-6 wherein skim milk is concentrated by evaporation and/or filtration to provide the composition of step a).