We claim:

1. A botanical extract providing insulin-like IRS2 protein stimulatory activity, wherein the extract is an aqueous extract.

2. The extract of claim 1, wherein the extract provides at least 1×10^4 Insulin Equivalent units in 1 milliliter, wherein one Insulin Equivalent unit is defined as the minimum amount of the extract necessary to increase growth of IRS2 overproducing test cells by 1 % over a substantial increased growth achieved by an appropriate amount of insulin.

3. The extract of claim 2, wherein the extract provides at least 3.6×10^4 Insulin Equivalent units in 1 milliliter.

4. The extract of claim 2, wherein the extract provides from 1×10^4 to 1×10^5 Insulin Equivalent units in 1 milliliter.

5. The extract of any one of claims 1 - 4, which is prepared from Cichorium Endivia var. latifolium.

6. The extract of any one of claims 1 - 4, which is prepared from Lactuca sativa var. crispa.

7. The extract of any one of claims 1 - 4, which is prepared from Lactuca sativa var. longifolia.

8. A method of detecting IRS2 stimulatory activity in a botanical extract comprising:

contacting a test cell that expresses an IRS2 isoform with a botanical extract and

detecting an increase of cell proliferation relative to a control cell that does not express the IRS2 isoform, thereby indicating IRS2 stimulatory activity in the extract.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the test cells are 32D cells that overexpress IRS2.