WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. Use of a ~~A~~ nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide ~~for use~~ in the manufacture of a medicament for enhancing the healing response of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

2. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 1, wherein the gastrointestinal tract is injured as a result of at least one of antibiotic therapy, radiation therapy, chemotherapy, surgery, enteric infection, inflammatory bowel disease, colitis, bowel obstruction, and chronic stress.

3. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

4. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

5. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 4, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

6. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

7. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 1, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one human milk oligosaccharide.

8. Use of a ~~A~~ nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide ~~for use~~ in the manufacture of a medicament for improving an individual's gastrointestinal prevention function~~reducing the incidence of intestinal mucosa injury~~.

9. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.

10. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition is selected from the group consisting of a human milk fortifier, an infant formula, a pediatric formula, a follow on formula, and an adult nutritional composition.

11. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 10, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 8 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition to about 160 kg/1000 kg of the nutritional composition.

12. The ~~nutritional composition~~ use of claim 8, wherein the nutritional composition comprises the galactooligosaccharide in a concentration of from about 164 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition to about 818 kg/18,000 pounds (8165 kg) of the nutritional composition.

~~13. A nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide for use in improving the barrier function in the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.~~

~~14. The nutritional composition of claim 13 wherein the nutritional composition further comprises at least one probiotic.~~

~~15.~~13. Use of a ~~A~~ nutritional composition comprising a galactooligosaccharide ~~for use~~ in the manufacture of a medicament for enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins when enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins~~reducing the incidence of inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual~~.

14. The use of claim 13, wherein the expression of one or more mucin-associated proteins reduces the incidence of inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract of an individual.

15. The use of claim 13, wherein enhancing the expression of one or more mucin-associated protein improves the barrier function in the gastrointestinal tract o an individual.