[CLAIMS]

[Claim 1]

A thickener comprising:

xanthan gum; and

at least one type of excipient,

wherein the mass ratio of the excipient relative to the xanthan gum falls within the range of 0.1 or more and 0.5 or less;

wherein the viscosity falls within the range of 4,400 mPa·s or more and 4,600 mPa·s or less when the thickener is dissolved in ion exchanged water so that the concentration of the xanthan gum is 1 mass%, wherein the viscosity is a measured value obtained by attaching a rotor to a viscometer, setting the speed of rotor rotation to be 12 rpm, initiating rotation of the rotor, and keeping the rotor rotating for 30 seconds after initiating the rotation.

[Claim 2]

A thickener comprising:

at least one type of thickening polysaccharide compound; and

at least one type of excipient,

wherein the mass ratio of the excipient relative to the thickening polysaccharide compound falls within the range of 0.1 or more and less than 0.5;

wherein the viscosity falls within the range of 4,400 mPa·s or more and 4,600 mPa·s or less when the thickener is dissolved in ion exchanged water so that the concentration of the thickening polysaccharide compound is 1 mass%, wherein the viscosity is a measured value obtained by attaching a rotor to a viscometer, setting the speed of rotor rotation to be 12 rpm, initiating rotation of the rotor, and keeping the rotor rotating for 30 seconds after initiating the rotation.

[Claim 3]

The thickener according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the excipient contains dextrin.

[Claim 4]

A method for imparting a thickener with fresh palatability, the method comprising:

mixing xanthan gum and dextrin to obtain a thickener; and

wherein the mass ratio of the dextrin relative to the xanthan gum is within the range of 0.1 or more and 0.5 or less.

[Claim 5]

A method wherein a thickening polysaccharide compound and an excipient are used as components of a thickener in order to improve fresh palatability of the thickener and/or suppress

stickiness of the thickener,

wherein the thickening polysaccharide compound is xanthan gum and the excipient is dextrin; and

wherein the mass ratio of the dextrin relative to the xanthan gum is within the range of 0.1 or more and 0.5 or less.

[Claim 6]

The method according to claim 4 or 5, wherein

the thickener has a viscosity in the range of 4,400 mPa·s or more and 4,600 mPa·s or less, wherein the viscosity is a measured value obtained by attaching a rotor to a viscometer, setting the speed of rotor rotation to be 12 rpm, initiating rotation of the rotor, and keeping the rotor rotating for 30 seconds after initiating the rotation.

[Claim 7]

A method for developing viscosity of a liquid food by mixing the thickener according to any one of claims 1 to 3 with a liquid food at a temperature that falls within the range of 3°C or higher and 80°C and lower.

[Claim 8]

A food that comprises the thickener according to any one of claims 1 to 3.

[Claim 9]

The food according to claim 8, wherein the concentration of the xanthan gum or thickening polysaccharide compound falls within the range of 0.1 mass% or more and 10 mass% or less.