CLAIMS

[Claim 1]

A method for producing fermented milk containing an oligosaccharide and a lactic acid bacterium as a living bacterium which is characterized by culturing the lactic acid bacterium in a medium containing the oligosaccharide, wherein the osmotic pressure of the medium during the culture is 800 to 1200 mOsm.

[Claim 2]

The method for producing fermented milk according to claim 1, wherein the oligosaccharide is a galactooligosaccharide.

[Claim 3]

The method for producing fermented milk according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the lactic acid bacterium is a lactic acid bacterium which does not substantially assimilate oligosaccharides.

[Claim 4]

The method for producing fermented milk according to any of claims 1 to 3, wherein the lactic acid bacterium is a lactic acid bacterium of the genus *Lactobacillus*.

[Claim 5]

The production method according to any of claims 1 to 4 in which an oligosaccharide is further added after culturing the lactic acid bacterium in the medium containing the oligosaccharide.

[Claim 6]

The method for producing fermented milk according to any of claims 1 to 5, wherein the amount of the oligosaccharide in the medium is 5.0 mass% or more.

[Claim 7]

A method to improve the viability of a lactic acid bacterium in fermented milk containing an oligosaccharide and the lactic acid bacterium as a living bacterium which is characterized by culturing the lactic acid bacterium in a medium containing the oligosaccharide, wherein the osmotic pressure of the medium during the culture is 800 to 1200 mOsm.