

The dairy industry today faces a problem of providing an alternative to adding sweeteners to fermented milk products in order to achieve the desired sweet taste without the added calories. Furthermore, it would be highly advantageous to establish a method for reducing lactose in fermented milk products to a level which is acceptable for lactose-intolerant consumers. The above problems have been solved by providing mutant *Streptococcus thermophilus* strains and mutant *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* strains that excrete glucose to the milk when the milk is inoculated and fermented with such *Streptococcus thermophilus* strains and *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* strains. Thus, the present invention relates to strains of *Streptococcus thermophilus* and *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* which secrete glucose to the milk substrate during fermentation, as well as to mixed cultures comprising the *Streptococcus thermophilus* strains and the *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* strains, starter cultures comprising the strains and dairy products manufactured with the cultures. The present method also relates to use of the strains for decreasing the lactose content of a fermented food product and for boosting growth of the probiotic BB-12®.