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(54) **METHOD TO IMPROVE LACTOCOCCUS PRESERVATION**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Lactococcus lactis strains with improved preservation characteristics, and improved acid and bile salt tolerance are disclosed. More specifically, a *L. lactis* strain having a heterologous trehalose-6-phosphate synthase gene and/or a trehalose-6-phosphate phosphatase gene, results in an accumulation of trehalose in the cytoplasm and/or in the cytoplasmic membrane. A *L. lactis* strain, having an internal trehalose concentration of at least 10 mg per gram cells (w/w) is disclosed.

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