ARS may have a pretty sweet deal for diabetics and others looking to curb their sugar intake. ARS scientists at the National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, IL, partnered with private industry to develop a sweetener called Sucromalt. Sucromalt, also called “Xtend™,” offers consumers health benefits such as its slow and complete digestibility, as well as its ability to release carbohydrates into the bloodstream slowly.

As a low-glycemic-index ingredient, Sucromalt is only 70 percent as sweet as sugar and provides comparatively stable blood sugar levels after consumption. In contrast, high-glycemic foods and traditional sugars cause rapid spikes and falls in blood sugar levels that are dangerous – or even fatal – for people suffering from diabetes.

Consumers may currently find Sucromalt-sweetened products in beloved foods like ice cream, jam, cereal, and shakes. Because of Sucromalt’s unique properties, diabetics and people watching their blood sugar levels can now enjoy their favorite desserts and sweet foods once again.