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(54) HIGH TITER RECOMBINANT INFLUENZA VIRUSES WITH ENHANCED REPLICATION IN VERO CELLS

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

The invention provides a composition useful to prepare high titer influenza viruses, e.g., in the absence of helper virus, which includes internal genes from an influenza virus vaccine strain or isolate, e.g., one that is safe in humans, for instance, one that does not result in significant disease, and genes from vaccine seed virus isolates which include a HA gene segment with a HA2 sequence encoding a HA2 that confers enhanced growth in cells in culture, such as Vero cells.

20 Claims, 20 Drawing Sheets

Specification includes a Sequence Listing.

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P82

P81

PR8(Cambridge)

AGCGAAAAGCAGGTCAATTATATTCAATATGGAAAGAATAAAAGAACTAAGAAATCTAATGTCGCAGTCTCGCACCCGCGAGATA CTCACAAAAAACCACCGTGGACCATATGGCCATAATCAAGAAGTACACATCAGGAAGAAGAAGAAGAAGAACCCAGCACTTAGGATG AAATGGATGATGGCAATGAAATATCCAATTACAGCAGACAAGAGGATAACGGAAATGATTCCTGAGAGAAATGAGCAAGGACAA ACTITATGGAGTAAAATGAATGATGCCGGATCAGACCGAGTGATGGTATCACCTCTGGCTGTGACATGGTGGAATAGGAATGGA CCAATGACAAATACAGTTCATTATCCAAAAATCTACAAAACTTATTTTGAAAGAGTCGAAAGGCTAAAGCATGGAACCTTTGGC CCTGTCCATTTTAGAAACCAAGTCAAAATACGTCGGAGAGTTGACATAAATCCTGGTCATGCAGATCTCAGTGCCAAGGAGGCA CAGGATGTAATCATGGAAGTTGTTTTCCCTAACGAAGTGGGAGCCAGGATACTAACATCGGAATCGCAACTAACGATAACCAAA AGATTCCTCCCAGTGGCTGGCAGCAGCAGTGTGTGCACTGAAGTGTTGCATTTGACTCAAGGAACATGCTGGGAACAGATG TATACTCCAGGAGGGGAAGTGAAGAATGATGATGATGATCAAAGCTTGATTATTGCTGCTAGGAACATAGTGAGAAGAGCTGCA GTATCAGCAGACCCACTAGCATCTTTATTGGAGATGTGCCACAGCACACAGATTGGTGGAATTAGGATGGTAGACATCCTTAAG CARAACCCAACAACAACAACAACCATRCATATATATCAACCTTCAATGCCAACACTGAGAATTAGCTCATCCTTCAGTTTGGTGGA CTGATAGTGAGTGGGAGAGAGAGAGAGAGTCGATTGCCGAAGCAATAATTGTGGGCCATGGTATTTTCACAAGAGGATTGTATGATA AAAGCAGTTAGAGGTGATCTGAATTCGTCAATAGGGCGAATCAGCGACTGAATCCTATGCATCAACTTTTAAGACATTTTCAG AAGGATGCGAAAGTGCTTTTTCAAAATTGGGGAGTTGAACCTATCGACAATGTGATGGGAATGATTGGGGATATTGCCCGACATG ACTCCAAGCATCGAGATGTCAATGAGAGGAGTGAGAATCAGCAAAATGGGTGTAGATGAGTACTCCAGCACGGAGAGGGGTAGTG gTGAGCATTGACCGGTTCTTGAGAGTCAGGGACCAACGAGGAAATGTACTACTGTCTCCCGAGGAGGTCAGTGAAACACAGGGA ACAGAGAAAACTGACAATAACTTACTCATCGTCAATGATGTGGGAGATTAATGGTCCTGAATCAGTGTTGGTCAATACCTATCAA TGGATCATCAGAAACTGGGAAACTGTTAAAATTCAGTGGTCCCAGAACCCTACAATGCTATACAATAGAAATGGAATTTGAACCA TTTCAGTCTTTAGTACCTAAGGCCATTAGAGGCCAATACAGTGGGTTTGTAAGAACTCTGTTCCAACAAATGAGGGATGTGCTT GGGACATTTGATACCGCACAGATAATAAAACTTCTTCCCTTCGCAGCCGCTCCACCAAAGCAAAGTAGAATGCAGTTCTCCTCA TTTACTGTGAATGTGAGGGGGATCAGGAATGAGAATACTTGTAAGGGGGCAATTCTCCTGTATTCAACTACAACAAGGCCACGAAG AGACTCACAGTTCTCGGAAAGGATGCTGGCACTTTAACCGAAGACCCAGATGAAGGCACAGCTGGAGTGGAGTCCGCTGTTCTG AGGGGATTCCTCATTCTGGGCAAAGAAGACAGGAGATATGGGCCAGCATTAAGCATCAATGAACTGAGCAACCTTGCGAAAGGA CAGACAGCGACCAAAAGAATTCGGATGGCCATCAATTAGTGTCGAATAGTTTAAAAAACGACCTTGTTTCTACT

SEO ID NO:11

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SEQ ID NO:10

Fig. 1A

PR8(Cambridge)

PA

AGCGAAAGCAGGTACTGATTCAAAATGGAAGATTTTGTGCGACAATGCTTCAATCCGATGATTGTCGAGCTTGCGGAAAAAACA TCAGATTTCCACTTCATCAATGAGCAAGGCGAGTCAATAATCGTAGAACTTGGTGATCCTAATGCACTTTTGAAGCACAGATTT GAAATAATCGAGGGAAGAGATCGCACAATGGCCTGGACAGTAGTAAACAGTATTTGCAACACTACAGGGGCTGAGAAACCAAAG TTTCTACCAGATTTGTATGATTACAAGGAAAATAGATTCATCGAAAATTGGAGTAACAAGGAGAGAAGTTCACATATACTATCTG TACACTCTCGATGAAGAAAGCAGGGGCTAGGATCAAAACCAGGCTATTCACCATAAGACAAGAAATGGCCAGCAGAGGGCCTCTGG AGCTGTCTCAAATGTCCAAAGAAGTAAATGCTAGAATTGAACCTTTTTTGAAAACAACACCACCACCACCTTAGACTTCCGAAT ACTAAAAATATGAAAAAAAAAAGAAGTCAGCTAAAGTGGGGACTTGGTGAGAACATGGCACCAGAAAAGGTAGACTTTGACGACTGT AAAGATGTAGGTGATTTGAAGCAATATGATAGTGATGAACCAGAATTGAGGTCGCTTGCAAGTTGGATTCAGAATGAGTTCAAC AAGGCATGCGAACTGACAGATTCAAGCTGGATAGAGCTTGATGAGAATGGAGAAGATGTGGCTCCAATTGAACACATTGCAAGC ATGAGAAGGAATTATTTCACATCAGAGGTGTCTCACTGCAGAGCCACAGAATACATAATGAAGGGGGTGTACATCAATACTGCC AAGACCAACTTGTATGGTTTCATCATAAAAGGAAGATCCCACTTAAGGAATGACACCGACGTGGTAAACTTTGTGAGCATGGAG TTTTCTCTCACTGACCCAAGACTTGAACCACACACACAGGGGGGGAGAAGTACTGTGTTCTTGAGATAGGGGGGATATGCTTCTAAGAAGT GCCATAGGCCAGGTTTCAAGGCCCATGTTCTTGTATGTGAGGACAAATGGAACCTCAAAAATTAAAATGAAATGGGGAATGGAG ATGAGGCGTTGTCTCCTCCAGTCACTTCAACAAATTGAGAGTATGATTGAAGCTGAGTCCTCTGTCAAAGAGAAAGACATGACC AAAGAGTTCTTTGAGAACAAATCAGAAACATGGCCCATTGGAGAGTCTCCCAAAGGAGTGGAGGAAAGTTCCATTGGGAAGGTC TGCAGGACTTTATTAGCAAAGTCGGTATTTAACAGCTTGTATGCATCTCCACAACTAGAAGGATTTTCAGCTGAATCAAGAAAA CTGCTTCTTATCGTTCAGGCTCTTAGGGACAATCTGGAACCTGGGACCTTTGATCTTGGGGGGGCTATATGAAGCAATTGAGGAG TGCCTAATTAATGATCCCT66GTTTTGCTTAATGCTTCTT6GTTCAACTCCTTCCTTACACATGCATTGAGTTAGTTGTGGCAG TGCTACTATTTGCTATCCATACTGTCCAAAAAAGTACCTTGTTTCTACT

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AGCAAAAGCAGGGTAGATAATCACTCACTGAGTGACATCAAAATCATGGCGTCCCAAGGCACCAAACGGTCTTACGAACAGATG GAGACTGATGGAGAACGCCAGAATGCCACTGAAATCAGAGCATCCGTCGGAAAAATGATTGGTGGAATTGGACGATTCTACATC CAAATGTGCACAGAACTTAAACTCAGTGATTATGAGGGACGGTTGATCCAAAACAGCTTAACAATAGAGAGAATGGTGCTCTCT GCTTTTGACGAAAGGAGAAATAAATACCTGGAAGAACATCCCAGTGCGGGGAAAGATCCTAAGAAAACTGGAGGACCTATATAC AGAAGAGTAAACGGAAAGTGGATGAGAAGAACTCATCCTTTATGACAAAGAAGAAATAAGGCGAATCTGGCGCCAAGCTAATAAT GGTGACGATGCAACGGCTGGTCTGACTCACATGATGATGATCT66CATTCCAATTT6AATGATGCAACTTATCA6A604CA CTTGTTCGCACCGGAAT6GATCCCAGGATGTGCTCTCTGATGCAAGGTTCAACTCTCCCTAGGAGGTCTGGAGCCGCAGGTGCT **GCAGTCAAAGGAGTTGGAACAATGGTGATGGAATTGGTCAGGATGATCAAACGTGGGATCAATGATCGGAACTTCTGGAGGGGT** GAGAATGGACGAAAAACAAGAATTGCTTATGAAAGAATGTGCAACATTCTCAAAGGGAAATTTCAAACTGCTGCACAAAAAGCA ATGATGGATCAAGTGAGAGAGAGAGCCGGAACCCAGGGAATGCTGAGTTCGAAGATCTCACTTTTCTAGCACGGTCTGCACTCATA GAGGGATACTCTCTAGTCGGAATAGACCCTTTCAGACTGCTTCAAAACAGCCAAGTGTACAGCCTAATCAGACCAAATGAGAAT CCAGCACCACAAGAGTCAACT6GT6T6G6AT66CAT6CCATTCT6CCGCATTT6AAGATCTAAGAGTATT6A6CTTCATCAAA66G ACGAAGGTGGTCCCAAGAGGGAAGCTTTCCACTAGAGGAGTTCAAATTGCTTCCAATGAAAATATGGAGACTATGGAATCAAGT ACACTTGAACTGAGAAGCAGGTACTGGGCCATAAGGACCAGAAGTGGAGGAAACACCAATCAACAGAGGGCATCTGCGGGCCAA ATCAGCATACAACCTACGTTCTCAGTACAGAGAAATCTCCCTTTTGACAGAACAACCGTTATGGCAGCATTCACTGGGAATACA GAGGGGAGAACATCTGACATGAGGACCGAAATCATAAGGATGATGGAAAGTGCAAGACCAGAAGATGTGTCTTTCCAGGGGCGG GBAGTCTTCGAGCTCTCGGACGAAAAGGCAGCGAGCCCGATCGTGCCTTCGACATGAGATAATGAAGGATCTTATTTCTTC **GGAGACAATGCAGAGGAGTACGACAATTAAAGAAAAATACCCTTGTTTCTACT**

SEQ ID NO:13

CAAAGCCGAGATCGCACAGAGACTTGAAGATGTCTTTGCAGGGAAGAACACCGATCTTGAGGTTCTCATGGAATGGCTAAAGAC AAGACCAATCCTGTCACCTCTGACTAAGGGGATTTTAGGATTTGTGTTCACGCTCACCGTGCCCAGTGAGCGAGGACTGCA6CG TAGACGCTTTGTCCAAAATGCCCTTAATGGGAACGGGGATCCAAATAACATGGACAAAGCAGTTAAACTGTATAGGAAGCTCAA CAACAGGATGGGGGGCTGTGACCACTGAAGTGGCATTTGGCCTGGTATGTGCAACCTGTGAACAGATTGCTGACTCCCAGCATCG

Fig.1B

PR8(Cambridge)

GTCTCATAGGCAAATGGTGACAACAACCAACCACCACTAATCAGACATGAGAACAGAATGGTTTTAGCCAGCACTACAGCTAAGGC TATGGAGCAAATGGCTGGATCGAGTGAGCAAGCAGCAGCAGAGGCCATGGAGGTTGCTAGTCAGGCTAGGCAAATGGTGCAAGCGAT GAGAACCATTGGGACTCATCCTAGCTCCAGTGCTGGTCTGAAAAATGATCTTCTTGAAAATTTGCAGGCCTATCAGAAACGAAT GGGGGTGCAGATGCAACGGTTCAAGTGATCCTCTCGCTATTGCCGCAAATATCATTGGGATCTTGCACGTTGATATTGTGGATTC TTGATCGTCTTTTTTCAAATGCATTTACCGTCGCTGTTAAATACGGACTGAAAGGAGGGCCTTCTACGGAAGGAGTGCCAAAGT CTATGAGGGAAGAATATCGAAAGGAACAGCAGAGTGCTGTGGATGCTGACGATGGTCATTTGTCAGCATAGAGCTGGAGGAGTGCCAAAA AAACTACCTTGTTTCTAACT

SEQ ID NO:14

NS

SEQ ID NO:15

Fig.1C



COMPARISON OF AMINO ACID SEQUENCES BETWEEN WT AND PR8-VERO

	POSITION	WT	PR8-VERO
HA2	117	N	D
NA	255	N	Ŷ
PB2	740	D	N(2/4)

Fig. 3







GROWTH PROPERTIES OF THE HA2 N117D MUTANT IN MDCK CELLS

Oct. 20, 2020

U.S.

Patent

POSITION OF HA2 117 IN THE 3D STRUCTURE OF HA



1934 HUMAN H1 HEMAGGLUTININ (MMDB ID: 26941, PDB ID: 1RU7)

Fig.6





THE HA2 N117D MUTANT FUSED CELLS AT A HIGHER PH THAN DID WT.

US 10,808,229 B2

THE PRINCIPAL OF THE METHOD OF COMPARISON OF ENDOSOMAL pH BETWEEN TWO DIFFERENT CELLS (MDCK VS. VERO CELLS)



FLUORESCENCE INTENSITY OF OREGON GREEN IS SENSITIVE TO LOW PH ALTHOUGH INTENSITY OF ALEXA647 IS NOT SENSITIVE TO PH VALUE.

PH CAN BE COMPARED BY MEASURING THE INTENSITY AND CALCULATING THE RATIO BETWEEN ALEXA647 AND OREGON GREEN.

Fig.9A

US 10,808,229 B2



U.S. Patent











HA1	11	
нЗни	TI ATLCLGHHAVPNGTLVKTITDDOIEVTNATELVOSSSTGKICN, NPHRILDGIDCTLIDALLGDPHCDVFON, ETWDLFVERSKAFS, NCYPYDVPDYAS	
H5AV	DQI I Y NNSTEQ D MEKN T H QDILEKTHN L DL GVKP ILR SVAGW N M E L VPE SYI KDNPVNGL ENFN EE	Pa
H5HU	DQI I Y NNSTEQ D MEKN T H QDILERTHN L DL GVKP ILR SVAGW N M E I VPE SYI KASPANDL GNFN EE	Ĭ
H9SW	DKI I YQSTNSTET D L ETN P H K LHTEHN ML AT LGHP ILDT IEGLIY N S LLLGGRE SYI PS VNGM GN ENLEE	ň
H9HU	DKI I QSTNSTET D L ETN P H K LHTEHN ML ATSLGHP ILDT IEGLVY N S LLLGGRE SYI S VNGT GN ENLEE	+
H3HU H5AV H5HU H9SW H9HU	203 LRSLVASSGTLEFITEGFTWTGVTQN.GGSNACKRGPGSGFFSRLNWLTKSGSTYPVLNVTMPNNDNFDKLYIWGIHHPSTNQEQTSLYVQASGRVT KH LS TNHF K RI.IPRSS SNHDASS V S PYNGR S RNVV I KNNA TIKRSYN TNQE L IL NDAA K QNPTTY S KH LSRINHF K QI.IPKSS SNHDASS V S PYLGR S RNVV I KN A TIKRSYN TNQE L VL NDAA K QNPTTY S FS ASSYQR QI. PDTI .N SYS. T K SDS RSMR QKNNA QDAQYT RGKSI M N P DTV N TRTDTTTS T FS ASSYQR QI. PDT .N YT. T R SGS RSMR QKSGF QDAQYT RGKSI P YT N RNDTTTS	Oct. 20, 2020
нзни	302 VSTRRSQQTIIPNIGSRPWVRGLSSRISIYWTIVKPGDVLVINSNGNLIAPR.GYFKMRTGKSSIMRSDAPIDTCISECITPNGSIPNDKPFQNVNKITY	Shee

	204 302	SL
НЗНИ	VSTRRSQQTIIPNIGSRPWVRGLSSRISIYWTIVKPGDVLVINSNGNLIAPR.GYFKMRTGKSSIMRSDAPIDTCISECITPNGSIPNDKPFQNVNKITY	lee
H5AV	G STLN RS E AT K N Q G MEF L N AINFE F EYA KIVKK G A K GLEYGN NTK Q M A NSSM H HPL I	1
H5HU	G STLN RL E AT K N Q G MEF L N AINFE F EYA KIVKK D T K ELEYGN NTK Q M A NSSM H HPL I	7
H9SW	TEDINR FK V P L N HG DY S L QT R R WY HILSGESHGR LKT LNSGN VQ Q ER GLNTTL H S YA	of
H9HU	TEDLNR FK V P L N QG DY S L QT R R WY HVLSGGSHGR LKT LKGGN VQ Q EK GLNSTL H S YA	20

Fig. 12A

	303				328 *		
нзни	GACE	KYVKQNTLKI	ATGMR	NV	PEKQTR	SEQ ID	NO:16
H5AV	E	SGR V	L		QRE	SEQ ID	NO:17
H5HU	Ε	SRV	L	T	QRERRRKK	SEQ ID	NO:18
H9SW	Ν	GVKS	VL		ARSS	SEQ ID	NO:19
H9HU	T	RV S	VL		ARSS	SEQ ID	NO:20

US 10,808,229 B2

HA2																																					
	1																																			10	0
H3HU	GLF	'GA	IAC	FI	EN	GWE	IGM	ID(GWY	YGI	FRE	IQN	SEC	3T(GQAAD	LKSI	'QAA	IDÇ	IN	GKI	NR	VIE	KT	NEK	(FH() IEKE	FSEN	/EG	RI()DI	EKY	YVEI	OTKJ	[D]	WSY	NAELL	V
H5AV					G	C)				Н	S	ΕO	S	Ŷ	KE	K	ē	TTI	V V	S	Γ) M	TO) E2	A G	NNI	R	I	EN	ΝI	ΧM	GFI	υV	' T		
H5HU					G	Õ)				Н	S	ΕÕ	S	Y	KE	K	6	: TI	v v	' S	N	ΙM	TÕ) El	A GR	NNI	. R	1	EN	NI	KM	GFI	ίV	r T		
H9SW					G	ŗ	5 1	A			0	S	DÕ	v	M	RD	ĸ	X	T	5 V	N	Г	M	KÔ	G	грн		Ţ	T	IMT	'NNI	ΧD	OTC) T	m		
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Fig. 12A CONT'D

SEQ ID NO:27

H9HU

Oct. 20, 2020

1	MKAILVVLLY	TFATANADTL	CIGYHANNST	DTVDTVLEKN	VTVTHSVNLL	EDKHNGKLCK
61	LRGVAPLHLG	KCNIAGWILG	NPECESLSTA	SSWSYIVETP	SSDNGTCYPG	DFIDYEELRE
121	QLSSVSSFER	FEIFPKTSSW	PNHDSNKGVT	AACPHAGAKS	FYKNLIWLVK	KGNSYPKLSK
181	SYINDKGKEV	LVLWGIHHPS	TSADQQSLYQ	NADAYVFVGS	SRYSKKFKPE	IAIRPKVRDQ
241	EGRMNYYWTL	VEPGDKITFE	ATGNLVVPRY	AFAMERNAGS	GIIISDTPVH	DCNTTCQTPK
301	GAINTSLPFQ	NIHPITIGKC	PKYVKSTKLR	LATGLRNIPS	IQSRGLFGAI	AGFIEGGWTG
361	MVDGWYGYHH	QNEQGSGYAA	DLKSTQNAID	EITNKVNSVI	EKMNTQFTAV	GKEFNHLEKR
421	IENLNKKVDD	GFLDIWTYNA	ELLVLLENER	TLDYHDSNVK	NLYEKVRSQL	KNNAKEIGNG
481	CFEFYHKCDN	TCMESVKNGT	YDYPKYSEEA	KLNREEIDGV	KLESTRIYQI	LAIYSTVASS
541	LVLVVSLGAI	SFWMCSNGSL	QCRICI SEQ I	D NO:21		


A/Kawasaki/173/2001 (H1N1) GLFGAIAGFIEGGWTGMVDGWYGYHHQNEQGSGYAADQKSTQNAINGITNKVNSVIEKMNTQFTAVG KEFNKLERRMENLNKKVDDGFLDIWTYNAELLVLLENERTLDFHDSNVKDLYEKVKSQLKNNAKEIGNGCF EFYHKCNNECMESVKNGTYDYPKYSEESKLNREKIDGVKLESMGVYQILAIYSTVASSLVLLVSLGAISFWM CSNGSLQCRICI

SEQ ID NO:28

A/Kawasaki/UTK-4/2009 (H1N1) GLFGAIAGFIEGGWTGMVDGWYGYHHQNEQGSGYAADQKSTQNAINGITNKVNSVIEKMNTQFTAVG KEFNKLERRMENLNKKVDDGFIDIWTYNAELLVLLENERTLDFHDSNVKDLYEKVKSQLKNNAKEIGNGCFE FYHKCNDECMESVKNGTYDYPKYSEESKLNREKIDGVKLESMGVYQILAIYSTVASSLVLLVSLGAISFWMC SNGSLQCRICI

A/Yokohama/2017/2003 (H3N2) GIFGAIAGFIENGWEGMVDGWYGFRHQNSEGTGQAADLKSTQAAINQINGKLNRLIGKTNEKFHQIEKEF SEVEGRIQDLEKYVEDTKIDLWSYNAELLVALENQHTIDLTDSEMDKLFERTKKQLRENAEDMGNGCFKIYH KCDNACIESIRNGTYDHDVYRDEALNNRFQIKGVELKSGYKDWILWISFAISCFLLCVALLGFIMWACQKGN IRCNICI SEQ ID N0:30

Fig. 13

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Sheet 20 of 20

HIGH TITER RECOMBINANT INFLUENZA VIRUSES WITH ENHANCED REPLICATION **IN VERO CELLS**

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/816,807, filed Aug. 3, 2015, which is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/912,411, filed Oct. 26, 2010, which claims the benefit of the filing date of U.S. application Ser. No. 61/254,795, filed on Oct. 26, 2009, the disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.

STATEMENT OF GOVERNMENT RIGHTS

This invention was made with government support Under AI069274 awarded by the National Institutes of Health. The government has certain rights in the invention.

BACKGROUND

Influenza is a major respiratory disease in some mammals including horses and is responsible for substantial morbidity and economic losses each year. In addition, influenza virus 25 infections can cause severe systemic disease in some avian species, leading to death. The segmented nature of the influenza virus genome allows for reassortment of segments during virus replication in cells infected with two or more influenza viruses. The reassortment of segments, combined 30 with genetic mutation and drift, can give rise to a myriad of divergent strains of influenza virus over time. The new strains exhibit antigenic variation in their hemagglutinin (HA) and/or neuraminidase (NA) proteins, and in particular the gene coding for the HA protein has a high rate of 35 variability. The predominant current practice for the prevention of flu is vaccination. Most commonly, whole virus vaccines are used. As the influenza HA protein is the major target antigen for the protective immune responses of a host to the virus and is highly variable, the isolation of influenza 40 virus and the identification and characterization of the HA antigen in viruses associated with recent outbreaks is important for vaccine production. Based on prevalence and prediction, a vaccine is designed to stimulate a protective immune response against the predominant and expected 45 influenza virus strains (Park et al., 2004).

There are three general types of influenza viruses, Type A, Type B and Type C, which are defined by the absence of serological crossreactivity between their internal proteins. Influenza Type A viruses are further classified into subtypes 50 based on antigenic and genetic differences of their glycoproteins, the HA and NA proteins. All the known HA and NA subtypes (H1 to H15 and N1 to N9) have been isolated from aquatic birds, which are though to act as a natural reservoir for influenza. The H1N1 "swine flu" virus has 55 recently been declared to be a pandemic. While this virus may be less virulent than some circulating influenza viruses in certain populations, it is ubiquitous and has become the subject of significant public health efforts. Unfortunately, this virus appears to be less amenable than other viruses to 60 high titer productions which may lead to challenges in vacine manufacture.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention provides isolated recombinant, e.g., reassortant, influenza viruses with selected amino acid residues

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at specified positions in HA2, NA and/or PB2. In one embodiment, the recombinant reassortant influenza virus has an amino acid residue at position 117 in HA2 (position is based on H1 HA2 numbering; for example, position 117 in H1 HA2 corresponds to position 116 in H3 HA2) that results in enhanced growth in Vero cells relative to a corresponding virus with, for instance, an asparagine at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the recombinant influenza virus has an amino acid residue at position 117 in HA2 that results in fusion of the virus with membranes in endosomes, e.g., late endosomes, at a higher pH relative to a corresponding virus with, for instance, an asparagine at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 15 HA2. In one embodiment, the invention provides an isolated recombinant reassortant influenza virus having six "internal" gene segments from a vaccine influenza virus, a NA gene segment selected from a first influenza virus isolate, and a HA gene segment selected to encode an aspartic acid 20 or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. For example, the NA and HA gene segments may be from a

strain for a seasonal flu vaccine or from a pandemic strain, and in one embodiment, the HA2 sequence in the HA gene segment is mutated to encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2.

As described herein, an influenza virus isolate useful as a vaccine virus (A/Puerto Rico/8/34 (PR8) to carry heterologous gene segments for NA and/or HA was serially passaged in Vero cells to obtain virus with enhanced replication in those cells. In one embodiment, viruses obtained after serial passage which have enhanced replication, have titers that are at least 2, 3, 4 or 5 logs higher than viruses that were not serially passaged. In one embodiment, viruses obtained after serial passage had substitutions in three gene segments, NA, HA and PB2, relative to the parent virus. It was determined that the substitution in HA2 was primarily associated with the enhanced growth phenotype. PR8 virus with HA2 N117D had at least a three log enhancement in titer in Vero cells. The HA2 N117D mutant fused cells at a higher pH than did wild-type HA. Three different recombinant (6:2 mutant reassortant) influenza viruses were prepared that had the same PR8 "internal" genes (i.e., those other than the HA and NA genes), and the NA and HA from a single isolate, and where the residue at position 117 (or position 116 in the H3 reassortant) in HA2 was altered to aspartic acid. All of the 6:2 mutant reassortants showed enhanced growth in Vero cells relative to the corresponding parent 6:2 reassortant. Thus, for vaccine viruses that are to be grown or passaged in cells in culture, e.g., Vero cells, replacement of the residue at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2, e.g., by mutation, or selection of a HA gene segment with a residue that confers enhanced growth of the virus in cultured cells, can result in significantly higher viral titers. Thus, the invention provides a method to select for influenza viruses with enhanced replication in cell culture. The method includes providing cells suitable for influenza vaccine production; serially culturing one or more influenza virus isolates in the cells; and isolating serially cultured virus with enhanced growth relative to the one or more isolates prior to serial culture. In one embodiment, the cells are rodent or primate, e.g., human, cells. Also provided is a method to identify a HA2 that confers altered growth of a recombinant influenza virus. The method includes introducing one or more substitutions in influenza virus HA2 into a HA gene segment to yield a mutant HA

gene segment; and identifying whether the mutant HA gene segment, when present in a replication competent recombinant influenza virus, results in enhanced replication of the recombinant influenza virus in a cell relative to a corresponding replication competent influenza virus without the 5 one or more substitutions in HA2. In one embodiment, at least one substitution is at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2, e.g., the at least one substitution is to aspartic acid or glutamic acid. In one embodiment, the cells are rodent or primate cells. In one 10 embodiment, the one or more substitutions are to an amino acid residue with an acidic side chain.

In one embodiment, the influenza virus of the invention is a recombinant influenza virus having a mutant HA2 protein with at least one substitution that replaces an amino acid 15 residue with an aliphatic side chain, amide-containing side chain, basic side chain, or sulfur containing side chain with a residue with an aromatic side chain or acidic side chain (a nonconservative substitution), e.g., at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. 20 In one embodiment, the influenza virus is a recombinant influenza virus having a HA2 protein with a residue with an aromatic side chain or acidic side chain at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the recombinant influenza virus 25 has a mutant HA2 protein with at least one substitution that replaces a neutral or positively charged residue with a polar or negatively charged residue, e.g., at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the influenza virus is a recombinant 30 influenza virus having a HA2 protein with a residue with a polar or negatively charged residue at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. The presence of the residue with the aromatic side chain or acidic side chain, or the polar or negatively charged residue, 35 at position 117 in HA2 may alter the efficiency or rate of conformational change of HA or pH dependent membrane fusion. In one embodiment, the recombinant reassortant influenza virus comprises a HA gene segment selected to encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in 40 HA2, wherein recombinant virus has enhanced replication in Vero cells relative to a corresponding virus that does not have aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, e.g., where the corresponding virus has an alanine, asparagine, arginine or lysine at position 117 in HA2, wherein the 45 numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the recombinant virus has a NA gene segment with a tyrosine at position 255, wherein the numbering for NA residues is that for N1.

In one embodiment, the invention provides isolated influ- 50 enza type A virus with a characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2, e.g., the residue at position 117 of HA2 is not asparagine, alanine, arginine or lysine, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the isolated influenza type A virus of the 55 invention with a characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2, has an HA2 amino acid sequence with at least 80%, e.g., 90%, 92%, 95%, 97% or 99%, including any integer between 80 and 99, contiguous amino acid sequence identity to a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ 60 ID NOs:16-20 or 22. In one embodiment, the isolated influenza type A virus of the invention with a characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2, has an HA1 from any one of subtypes 1-15 of HA. In one embodiment, an isolated influenza A virus of the invention has a noncon- 65 servative substitution at residue 117 of HA2, e.g., an asparagine to an asparatic acid substitution, wherein the numbering

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for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the isolated influenza virus of the invention has an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 of HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. Conservative amino acid substitutions refer to the interchangeability of residues having similar side chains. For example, a group of amino acids having aliphatic side chains is glycine, alanine, valine, leucine, and isoleucine; a group of amino acids having aliphatic-hydroxyl side chains is serine and threonine; a group of amino acids having amide-containing side chains is asparagine and glutamine; a group of amino acids having aromatic side chains is phenylalanine, tyrosine and tryptophan; a group of amino acids having basic side chains is lysine, arginine and histidine; and a group of amino acids having sulfur-containing side chain is cysteine and methionine. In one embodiment, conservative amino acid substitution groups are: threonine-valine-leucine-isoleucinealanine; phenylalanine-tyrosine; lysine-arginine; alanine-valine; glutamic-aspartic; and asparagine-glutamine.

In one embodiment, a mutation is introduced into a HA gene segment of an influenza virus isolate, e.g., via recombinant DNA techniques including site-specific mutagenesis or replacing a portion of the HA coding sequence that includes residue 117 of HA2 with a portion that includes the characteristic residue(s), wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2.

In another embodiment, a HA gene segment with a residue that confers enhanced replication in Vero cells is combined with a compatible NA segment, and internal gene segments of an influenza vaccine virus. In one embodiment, the substitution(s) in the HA2 protein, or the characteristic residue in the HA2 protein, that results in the enhanced replication, is/are at or within about 1 to 10 residues, or any integer in between, for instance, at or within 1 to 5, residues, of residue 117 of the HA2 protein of influenza A virus, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, a NA protein has at least one substitution, or has the characteristic residue discussed herein, such as one that results in enhanced replication, at or within about 1 to 10 residues, or any integer in between, e.g., at or within 1 to 5 residues of the codon for residue 255 of the NA protein of influenza A virus, wherein the numbering for NA residues is that for N1.

The invention provides a plurality of influenza virus vectors of the invention, e.g., those useful to prepare reassortant viruses including 6:1:1 reassortants, 6:2 reassortants and 7:1 reassortants. A 6:1:1 reassortant within the scope of the present invention is an influenza virus with 6 internal gene segments from a vaccine virus, a NA gene segment from a different (second) viral isolate, and a HA gene segment with a characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2 as described herein, where the HA gene segment is from a different viral source than the vaccine virus or the first viral isolate; a 6:2 reassortant within the scope of the present invention is an influenza virus with 6 internal gene segments from a vaccine virus, and a NA gene segment and a HA gene segment from a different (second) viral isolate, where the HA gene segment has the characteristic residue or a substitution at position 117 of HA2 as described herein; and a 7:1 reassortant within the scope of the present invention is an influenza virus with 6 internal gene segments and a NA gene segment from a vaccine virus, and a HA gene segment with a characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2 as described herein, where the HA gene segment is from a different viral source than the vaccine virus, or an influenza virus with 6 internal gene segments and a HA gene segment with the characteristic residue or substitution at position 117 of HA2 as described herein, and a NA gene segment is from a different viral source than the vaccine virus.

In one embodiment of the invention, the plurality includes vectors for vRNA production selected from a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PB1 DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PB2 DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus HA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus NP DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus NA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus M DNA 20 linked to a transcription termination sequence, and a vector comprising a operably linked to an influenza virus NS DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence. In one embodiment, the DNAs for vRNA production of PB1, PB2, PA, NP, M, and NS, have sequences from an influenza virus 25 that replicates to high titers in cultured mammalian cells such as Vero cells or PER.C6® cells and also optionally embryonated eggs, and/or from a vaccine virus, e.g., one that does not cause significant disease in humans. The DNA for vRNA production of NA may be from any NA, e.g., any of 30 N1-N9, and the DNA for vRNA production of HA may be from any HA, e.g., H1-H16. In one embodiment, the DNAs for vRNA production may be for an influenza B or C virus. For example, the DNAs for vRNA production include influenza B virus PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M or influenza B 35 virus PA. PB1, PB2, NP, NS, M, and NA, wherein the vRNA for HA has a HA2 with a characteristic amino acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. The DNAs for vRNA production of NA and HA may be from different strains or isolates 40 (6:1:1 reassortants) or from the same strain or isolate (6:2 reassortants), or the NA may be from the same strain or isolate as that for the internal genes (7:1 reassortant), where the HA2 sequence is selected to result in enhanced replication in Vero cells relative to a corresponding virus with, for 45 example, an asparagine at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. The plurality also includes vectors for mRNA production selected from a vector encoding influenza virus PA, a vector encoding influenza virus PB1, a vector encoding influenza 50 virus PB2, and a vector encoding influenza virus NP, and optionally one or more vectors encoding NP. NS, M, e.g., M1 and M2, HA or NA. The vectors encoding viral proteins may further include a transcription termination sequence.

Viruses that may provide the internal genes for reassor- 55 tants within the scope of the invention include viruses that have high titers in Vero cells, e.g., titers of at least about 10^5 PFU/mL, e.g., at least 10^6 PFU/mL, 10^7 PFU/mL or 10^8 PFU/mL; high titers in embryonated eggs, e.g., titers of at least about 10^7 EID_{50} /mL, e.g., at least 10^8 EID_{50} /mL, 10^9 60 EID₅₀/mL or 10^{10} EID_{50} /mL; high titers in MDCK cells, e.g., titers of at least about 10^7 PFU/mL , e.g., at least 10^8 PFU/mL , e.g., at least 10^8 PFU/mL , or high titers in two of more of those host cells.

In one embodiment, the titers of the reassortant viruses of the invention in cells such as Vero cells may be over 1 log, 65 2 logs, 3 logs, or greater, than titers of the corresponding virus without a HA2 substitution or that lacks the selected

residue at position 117 of HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2.

Other reassortants with internal genes from other PR8 isolates or vaccine viruses may be employed in recombinant reassortant viruses of the invention. In particular, 5:1:2 reassortants having PR8(UW) PB1, PB2, PA, NP, and M ("5") and PR8(Cam) NS ("1"); 6:1:1 reassortants having PR8(UW) NA, PB1, PB2, PA, NP, and M ("6") and PR8 (Cam) NS ("1"); and 7:1 reassortants having PR8(UW) PB1. PB2. PA. NP, M, NA, and NS ("7") may be employed.

In one embodiment, the DNAs for the internal genes for PB1. PB2, PA, NP. M, and NS encode proteins with substantially the same activity as a corresponding polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID Nos:1-6 or 10-15. As used herein, "substantially the same activity" includes an activity that is about 0.1%, 1%, 10%, 30%, 50%, 90%, e.g., up to 100% or more, or detectable protein level that is about 80%, 90% or more, the activity or protein level, respectively, of the corresponding full-length polypeptide. In one embodiment, the nucleic acid a sequence encoding a polypeptide which is substantially the same as, e.g., having at least 80%, e.g., 90%, 92%, 95%, 97% or 99%, including any integer between 80 and 99, contiguous amino acid sequence identity to, a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15. In one embodiment, the isolated and/or purified nucleic acid molecule comprises a nucleotide sequence which is substantially the same as, e.g., having at least 50%, e.g., 60%, 70%, 80% or 90%, including any integer between 50 and 100, or more contiguous nucleic acid sequence identity to one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15 and, in one embodiment, also encodes a polypeptide having at least 80%, e.g., 90%, 92%, 95%, 97% or 99%, including any integer between 80 and 99, contiguous amino acid sequence identity to a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15. In one embodiment, the influenza virus polypeptide has one or more, for instance, 2, 5, 10, 15, 20 or more, conservative amino acids substitutions, e.g., conservative substitutions of up to 10% or 20% of the residues, relative to a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15. Conservative amino acid substitutions refer to the interchangeability of residues having similar side chains. For example, a group of amino acids having aliphatic side chains is glycine, alanine, valine, leucine, and isoleucine; a group of amino acids having aliphatic-hydroxyl side chains is serine and threonine; a group of amino acids having amide-containing side chains is asparagine and glutamine; a group of amino acids having aromatic side chains is phenylalanine, tyrosine and tryptophan; a group of amino acids having basic side chains is lysine, arginine and histidine; and a group of amino acids having sulfur-containing side chain is cysteine and methionine. In one embodiment, conservative amino acid substitution groups are: valine-leucineisoleucine; phenylalanine-tyrosine; lysine-arginine; alaninevaline; glutamic-aspartic; and asparagine-glutamine. In one embodiment, the influenza virus polypeptide has one or more, for instance, 2, 3 or 4, nonconservative amino acid substitutions, relative to a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15.

The invention thus includes the use of isolated and purified vectors or plasmids, which express or encode influenza virus proteins, or express or encode influenza vRNA, both native and recombinant vRNA. The vectors comprise influenza cDNA, e.g., influenza A (e.g., any influenza A gene including any of the 16 HA or 9 NA subtypes), B or C DNA (see Fields *Virology* (Fields et al. (eds.), Lippincott. Williams and Wickens (2006), which is specifically incorporated by reference herein). Any suitable promoter or transcription termination sequence may be employed to express a protein or peptide, e.g., a viral protein or peptide, a protein or peptide of a nonviral pathogen, or a therapeutic protein or peptide.

A composition or plurality of vectors of the invention may 5 also comprise a heterologous gene or open reading frame of interest, e.g., a foreign gene encoding an immunogenic peptide or protein useful as a vaccine or in gene replacement, fro instance imay encode an epitope useful in a cancer therapy or vaccine, or a peptide or polypeptide useful in 10 gene therapy. When preparing virus, the vector or plasmid comprising the gene or cDNA of interest may substitute for a vector or plasmid for an influenza viral gene or may be in addition to vectors or plasmids for all influenza viral genes. Thus, another embodiment of the invention comprises a 15 composition or plurality of vectors as described above in which one of the vectors is replaced with, or further comprises, 5' influenza virus sequences optionally including 5' influenza virus coding sequences or a portion thereof, linked to a desired nucleic acid sequence, e.g., a desired cDNA, 20 linked to 3' influenza virus sequences optionally including 3' influenza virus coding sequences or a portion thereof. In one embodiment, the desired nucleic acid sequence such as a cDNA is in an antisense (antigenomic) orientation. The introduction of such a vector in conjunction with the other 25 vectors described above to a host cell permissive for influenza virus replication results in recombinant virus comprising vRNA corresponding to the heterologous sequences of the vector.

The promoter in a vector for vRNA production may be a 30 RNA polymerase I promoter, a RNA polymerase II promoter, a RNA polymerase III promoter, a T7 promoter, or a T3 promoter, and optionally the vector comprises a transcription termination sequence such as a RNA polymerase I transcription termination sequence, a RNA polymerase III transcription termination sequence, a RNA polymerase III transcription termination sequence, or a ribozyme. Ribozymes within the scope of the invention include, but are not limited to, tetrahymena ribozymes, RNase P, hammerhead ribozymes, hairpin ribozymes, hepatitis ribozyme, as 40 well as synthetic ribozymes. In one embodiment, the RNA polymerase I promoter is a human RNA polymerase I promoter.

The promoter or transcription termination sequence in a vRNA or virus protein expression vector may be the same or 45 different relative to the promoter or any other vector. In one embodiment, the vector or plasmid which expresses influenza vRNA comprises a promoter suitable for expression in at least one particular host cell, e.g., avian or mammalian host cells such as canine, feline, equine, bovine, ovine, or 50 primate cells including human cells, or for expression in more than one host.

In one embodiment, at least one vector for vRNA comprises a RNA polymerase II promoter linked to a ribozyme sequence linked to viral coding sequences linked to another 55 ribozyme sequences, optionally linked to a RNA polymerase II transcription termination sequence. In one embodiment, at least 2, e.g., 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8, vectors for vRNA production comprise a RNA polymerase II promoter, a first ribozyme sequence, which is 5' to a sequence corresponding to viral 60 sequences including viral coding sequences, which is 5' to a second ribozyme sequence, which is 5' to a transcription termination sequence. Each RNA polymerase II promoter in each vRNA vector may be the same or different as the RNA polymerase II promoter in any other vRNA vector. Similarly, 65 each ribozyme sequence in each vRNA vector may be the same or different as the ribozyme sequences in any other

vRNA vector. In one embodiment, the ribozyme sequences in a single vector are not the same.

In one embodiment, the invention provides a plurality of influenza virus vectors for a reassortant, comprising a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PB1 DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus PB2 DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus HA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus NP DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus NA DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus M DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, and a vector for vRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus NS cDNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, wherein the DNAs for PB1, PB2, PA, NP. NS, and M from one or more influenza vaccine seed viruses, wherein the DNA for NA has sequences for a heterologous NA, and wherein the DNA for HA selected to encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2; and a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PA, a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PB1, a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PB2, and a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NP, and optionally a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus HA, a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NA, a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus M1, a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus M2, or a vector for mRNA production comprising a promoter operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NS2. In one embodiment, at least one vector comprises sequences corresponding to those encoding PB1, PB2, PA, NP. M, or NS, or a portion thereof, having substantially the same activity as a corresponding polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15, e.g., a sequence encoding a polypeptide with at least 80%, e.g., 85%, 90%, 92%, 95%, 98%, 99% or 100%, including any integer between 80 and 100, amino acid identity to a polypeptide encoded by one of SEQ ID NOs:1-6 or 10-15. Optionally, two vectors may he employed in place of the vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus M cDNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, e.g., a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus M1 cDNA linked to a transcription termination sequence and a vector comprising a promoter operably linked to an influenza virus M2 cDNA linked to a transcription termination sequence.

A plurality of the vectors of the invention may be physically linked or each vector may be present on an individual plasmid or other, e.g., linear, nucleic acid delivery vehicle. In one embodiment, each vRNA production vector is on a separate plasmid. In one embodiment, each mRNA production vector is on a separate plasmid.

The invention also provides a method to prepare influenza 5 virus. The method comprises contacting a cell with a plurality of the vectors of the invention, e.g., sequentially or simultaneously, in an amount effective to yield infectious influenza virus. The invention also includes isolating virus from a cell contacted with the plurality of vectors. Thus, the 10 invention further provides isolated virus, as well as a host cell contacted with the plurality of vectors or virus of the invention. In another embodiment, the invention includes contacting the cell with one or more vectors, either vRNA or protein production vectors, prior to other vectors, either 15 vRNA or protein production vectors. In one embodiment, the promoter for vRNA vectors employed in the method is a RNA polymerase I promoter, a RNA polymerase II promoter, a RNA polymerase III promoter, a T3 promoter or a T7 promoter. In one embodiment, the RNA polymerase I 20 promoter is a human RNA polymerase I promoter. In one embodiment, each vRNA vector employed in the method is on a separate plasmid. In one embodiment, the vRNA vectors employed in the method are on one plasmid or on two or three different plasmids. In one embodiment, each 25 mRNA vector employed in the method is on a separate plasmid. In one embodiment, the mRNA vectors for PA, PB1, PB2 and NP employed in the method are on one plasmid or on two or three different plasmids.

In one embodiment, the invention provides a method to 30 select for influenza viruses with enhanced replication in cell culture. The method includes providing cells suitable for influenza vaccine production; serially culturing one or more influenza virus isolates in the cells; and isolating serially cultured virus with enhanced growth relative to the one or 35 more isolates prior to serial culture. In one embodiment, the cells are rodent or primate cells.

Also provided is a method to identify a HA2 that confers altered growth of a recombinant influenza virus. The method includes introducing one or more substitutions in influenza 40 virus HA2 into a HA gene segment to yield a mutant HA gene segment; and identifying whether the mutant HA gene segment, when present in a replication competent recombinant influenza virus, results in enhanced replication of the recombinant influenza virus in a cell relative to a corre- 45 sponding replication competent influenza virus without the one or more substitutions in HA2. In one embodiment, at least one substitution is at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2, e.g., at least one substitution is to aspartic acid or glutamic acid. In one 50 embodiment, the cell is a rodent or primate cell. In one embodiment, the one or more substitutions are to an amino acid residue with an acidic side chain.

In one embodiment, the invention provides a method to prepare a recombinant influenza virus with a HA gene 55 segment having a mutant HA2. The method includes altering influenza virus HA nucleic acid at position 117 in HA2 to aspartic acid or glutamic acid; and expressing the altered nucleic acid in a cell having vectors for influenza vRNA production and viral protein production in an amount effective to yield recombinant influenza virus with a HA gene segment having the aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2. In one embodiment, the cell is a mammalian, e.g., a human cell, or avian cell.

The methods of producing virus described herein, which do not require helper virus infection, are useful in viral mutagenesis studies, and in the production of vaccines (e.g., for AIDS, influenza, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, rhinovirus, filoviruses, malaria, herpes, and foot and mouth disease) and gene therapy vectors (e.g., for cancer, AIDS, adenosine deaminase, muscular dystrophy, ornithine transcarbamylase deficiency and central nervous system tumors). Thus, a virus for use in medical therapy (e.g., for a vaccine or gene therapy) is provided.

The invention also provides isolated viral polypeptides, and methods of preparing and using recombinant virus of the invention. The methods include administering to a host organism, e.g., a mammal, an effective amount of the influenza virus of the invention, e.g., an inactivated virus preparation, optionally in combination with an adjuvant and/or a carrier, e.g., in an amount effective to prevent or ameliorate infection of an animal such as a mammal by that virus or an antigenically closely related virus. In one embodiment, the virus is administered intramuscularly while in another embodiment, the virus is administered intranasally. In some dosing protocols, all doses may be administered intramuscularly or intranasally, while in others a combination of intramuscular and intranasal administration is employed. The vaccine may further contain other isolates of influenza virus including recombinant influenza virus, other pathogen(s), additional biological agents or microbial components, e.g., to form a multivalent vaccine. In one embodiment, intranasal vaccination, for instance containing with inactivated influenza virus, and a mucosal adjuvant may induce virus-specific IgA and neutralizing antibody in the nasopharynx as well as serum IgG.

The influenza virus of the invention may employed with other anti-virals, e.g., amantadine, rimantadine, and/or neuraminidase inhibitors, e.g., may be administered separately in conjunction with those anti-virals, for instance, administered before, during and/or after.

The invention also provides a method in which the pH of media in which cells suitable for propagating influenza virus are cultured, is altered during virus propagation to allow for enhanced influenza virus replication in those cells. Thus, for cells with late endosomes having a pH that is higher than that in MDCK cells, altering media pH to maintain a higher pH during virus replication over time, may enhance virus production in the absence of a HA2 protein with a characteristic residue, such as aspartic acid, at position 117, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

FIGS. 1A-C. Nucleotide sequence for PR8(Cambridge) genes (SEQ ID NOs:10-15).

FIG. **2**. Growth properties of Vero cell-adapted PR8 virus in Vero cells.

FIG. **3**. Comparison of amino acid sequence differences between PR8 and Vero cell-adapted PR8.

FIG. 4. Growth properties of Vero cell-adapted PR8, non Vero cell-adapted "wild-type" PR8, and recombinant viruses with one or two substitutions relative to wild-type virus in Vero cells.

FIG. **5**. Growth properties of HA2 N117D virus and wild-type PR8 in MDCK cells.

FIG. 6. Three dimensional structure of HA as a trimer (A), HA as a monomer (B) and HA2 (C).

FIG. **7**. Schematic of fusion assay which expresses full 65 length HA.

FIG. 8. Photomicrographs of Vero cells expressing wildtype PR8 HA or HA2 N117D virus at various pH conditions.

FIGS. **9**A-B, pH sensitivity of Alexa647 and Oregon Green dyes. A) The fluorescence intensity of Oregon Green dye is sensitive to variations in pH while the fluorescence intensity of Alexa647 does not vary over pH 3 to 7. B) Schematic of assay to detect endosomal pH.

FIG. 10. Comparison of endosomal pH in MDCK cells and Vero cells.

FIGS. **11**A-C. HA2 N117D substitution mutants have enhanced infectivity titers in Vero cells. A) Vero cells were infected with A/Kawasaki/173/2001 (H1N1) and A/Kawa- ¹⁰ saki/173/2001 HA2 N117D and the titers over time determined. B) Vero cells were infected with A/Kawasaki/UTK-4/2009 (H1N1) and A/Kawasaki/UKT-4/2009 HA2 N117D and the titers over time determined. C) Vero cells were infected with A/Yokohama/2017/2003 (H3N2) and A/Yoko- ¹⁵ hama/2017/2003 HA2 N116D and the titers over time determined.

FIGS. **12**A-B. A) Alignment of HA2 sequences from A/Aichi/2/68; A/Dk/Sing/97; A/HK/486/97; A/Sw/9/98; and A/HongKong/1073/99 (SEQ ID Nos.16-20 and 23-27). B) ²⁰ Amino acid sequence of HA sequence from A/California/ 08/2009 (SEQ ID NO:21). HA2 sequences correspond to residues 336-566 (SEQ ID NO:22).

FIG. **13**. HA2 sequences for A/Kawasaki/173/2001, A/Kawasaki/UKT-4/2009, and A/Yokohama/2017/2003 ²⁵ (SEQ ID NOs:28-30). According to the NCBI database, influenza virus HA2 sequences for H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, and H9 HAs were generally conserved at position 116 or 117 (N116 or N117) (more than 99%).

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Definitions

As used herein, the term "isolated" refers to in vitro 35 preparation and/or isolation of a nucleic acid molecule, e.g., vector or plasmid, peptide or polypeptide (protein), or virus of the invention, so that it is not associated with in vivo substances, or is substantially purified from in vitro substances. An isolated virus preparation is generally obtained 40 by in vitro culture and propagation, and/or via passage in eggs, and is substantially free from other infectious agents.

As used herein, "substantially purified" means the object species is the predominant species, e.g., on a molar basis it is more abundant than any other individual species in a 45 composition, and preferably is at least about 80% of the species present, and optionally 90% or greater, e.g., 95%, 98%, 99% or more, of the species present in the composition.

As used herein, "substantially free" means below the level 50 of detection for a particular infectious agent using standard detection methods for that agent.

A "recombinant" virus is one which has been manipulated in vitro, e.g., using recombinant DNA techniques, to introduce changes to the viral genome. Reassortant viruses can be 55 prepared by recombinant or nonrecombinant techniques.

As used herein, the term "recombinant nucleic acid" or "recombinant DNA sequence or segment" refers to a nucleic acid, e.g., to DNA, that has been derived or isolated from a source, that may be subsequently chemically altered in vitro, 60 so that its sequence is not naturally occurring, or corresponds to naturally occurring sequences that are not positioned as they would be positioned in the native genome. An example of DNA "derived" from a source, would be a DNA sequence that is identified as a useful fragment, and which 65 is then chemically synthesized in essentially pure form. An example of such DNA "isolated" from a source would be a

useful DNA sequence that is excised or removed from said source by chemical means, e.g., by the use of restriction endonucleases, so that it can be further manipulated, e.g., amplified, for use in the invention, by the methodology of genetic engineering.

As used herein, a "heterologous" influenza virus gene or gene segment is from an influenza virus source that is different than a majority of the other influenza viral genes or gene segments in a recombinant, e.g., reassortant, influenza virus.

The terms "isolated polypeptide", "isolated peptide" or "isolated protein" include a polypeptide, peptide or protein encoded by cDNA or recombinant RNA including one of synthetic origin, or some combination thereof.

The term "recombinant protein" or "recombinant polypeptide" as used herein refers to a protein molecule expressed from a recombinant DNA molecule. In contrast, the term "native protein" is used herein to indicate a protein isolated from a naturally occurring (i.e., a nonrecombinant) source. Molecular biological techniques may be used to produce a recombinant form of a protein with identical properties as compared to the native form of the protein.

Methods of alignment of sequences for comparison are well known in the art. Thus, the determination of percent identity between any two sequences can be accomplished using a mathematical algorithm.

Computer implementations of these mathematical algorithms can be utilized for comparison of sequences to 30 determine sequence identity. Alignments using these programs can be performed using the default parameters. Software for performing BLAST analyses is publicly available through the National Center for Biotechnology Information (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/). The algorithm may involve first identifying high scoring sequence pairs (HSPs) by identifying short words of length W in the query sequence, which either match or satisfy some positive-valued threshold score T when aligned with a word of the same length in a database sequence. T is referred to as the neighborhood word score threshold. These initial neighborhood word hits act as seeds for initiating searches to find longer HSPs containing them. The word hits are then extended in both directions along each sequence for as far as the cumulative alignment score can be increased. Cumulative scores are calculated using, for nucleotide sequences, the parameters M (reward score for a pair of matching residues; always >0) and N (penalty score for mismatching residues; always <0). For amino acid sequences, a scoring matrix is used to calculate the cumulative score. Extension of the word hits in each direction are halted when the cumulative alignment score falls off by the quantity X from its maximum achieved value, the cumulative score goes to zero or below due to the accumulation of one or more negative-scoring residue alignments, or the end of either sequence is reached.

In addition to calculating percent sequence identity, the BLAST algorithm may also perform a statistical analysis of the similarity between two sequences. One measure of similarity provided by the BLAST algorithm may be the smallest sum probability (P(N)), which provides an indication of the probability by which a match between two nucleotide or amino acid sequences would occur by chance. For example, a test nucleic acid sequence is considered similar to a reference sequence if the smallest sum probability in a comparison of the test nucleic acid sequence to the reference nucleic acid sequence is less than about 0.1, more preferably less than about 0.01, and most preferably less than about 0.001.

The BLASTN program (for nucleotide sequences) may use as defaults a wordlength (W) of 11, an expectation (E) of 10, a cutoff of 100, M=5. N=-4, and a comparison of both strands. For amino acid sequences, the BLASTP program may use as defaults a wordlength (W) of 3, an expectation 5 (E) of 10, and the BLOSUM62 scoring matrix. See http:// www.ncbi.n1m.nih.gov. Alignment may also be performed manually by inspection.

For sequence comparison, typically one sequence acts as a reference sequence to which test sequences are compared. 10 When using a sequence comparison algorithm, test and reference sequences are input into a computer, subsequence coordinates are designated if necessary, and sequence algorithm program parameters are designated. The sequence comparison algorithm then calculates the percent sequence 15 identity for the test sequence(s) relative to the reference sequence, based on the designated program parameters. Influenza Virus Structure and Propagation

Influenza A viruses possess a genome of eight singlestranded negative-sense viral RNAs (vRNAs) that encode at 20 least ten proteins. The influenza virus life cycle begins with binding of the hemagglutinin (HA) to sialic acid-containing receptors on the surface of the host cell, followed by receptor-mediated endocytosis. The low pH in late endosomes triggers a conformational shift in the HA, thereby 25 exposing the N-terminus of the HA2 subunit (the so-called fusion peptide). The fusion peptide initiates the fusion of the viral and endosomal membrane, and the matrix protein (M1) and RNP complexes are released into the cytoplasm. RNPs consist of the nucleoprotein (NP), which encapsidates 30 vRNA, and the viral polymerase complex, which is formed by the PA, PB1, and PB2 proteins. RNPs are transported into the nucleus, where transcription and replication take place. The RNA polymerase complex catalyzes three different reactions: synthesis of an mRNA with a 5' cap and 3' polyA 35 structure, of a full-length complementary RNA (cRNA), and of genomic vRNA using the cRNA as a template. Newly synthesized vRNAs, NP, and polymerase proteins are then assembled into RNPs, exported from the nucleus, and transported to the plasma membrane, where budding of progeny 40 virus particles occurs. The neuraminidase (NA) protein plays a crucial role late in infection by removing sialic acid from sialyloligosaccharides, thus releasing newly assembled virions from the cell surface and preventing the self aggregation of virus particles. Although virus assembly involves 45 protein-protein and protein-vRNA interactions, the nature of these interactions is largely unknown.

Although influenza B and C viruses are structurally and functionally similar to influenza A virus, there are some differences. For example, influenza B virus does not have a 50 M2 protein with ion channel activity but has BM2 and has a gene segment with both NA and NB sequences. Influenza C virus has only seven gene segments.

Cell Lines that can be Used in the Present Invention Any cell, e.g., any avian or mammalian cell, such as a 55 human, e.g., 293T or PER.C6® cells, or canine, bovine, equine, feline, swine, ovine, rodent, for instance mink, e.g., MvLu1 cells, or hamster, e.g., CHO cells, or non-human primate, e.g., Vero cells, including mutant cells, which supports efficient replication of influenza virus can be 60 employed to isolate and/or propagate influenza viruses. Isolated viruses can be used to prepare a reassortant virus. In one embodiment, host cells for vaccine production are continuous mammalian or avian cell lines or cell strains. A complete characterization of the cells to be used, may be 65 conducted so that appropriate tests for purity of the final product can be included. Data that can be used for the

characterization of a cell includes (a) information on its origin, derivation, and passage history; (b) information on its growth and morphological characteristics; (c) results of tests of adventitious agents; (d) distinguishing features, such as biochemical, immunological and cytogenetic patterns which allow the cells to be clearly recognized among other cell lines; and (e) results of tests for tumorigenicity. In one embodiment, the passage level, or population doubling, of the host cell used is as low as possible.

In one embodiment, the cells are WHO certified, or certifiable, continuous cell lines. The requirements for certifying such cell lines include characterization with respect to at least one of genealogy, growth characteristics, immunological markers, virus susceptibility tumorigenicity and storage conditions, as well as by testing in animals, eggs, and cell culture. Such characterization is used to confirm that the cells are free from detectable adventitious agents. In some countries, karyology may also be required. In addition, tumorigenicity may be tested in cells that are at the same passage level as those used for vaccine production. The virus may be purified by a process that has been shown to give consistent results, before vaccine production (see, e.g., World Health Organization, 1982).

Virus produced by the host cell may be highly purified prior to vaccine or gene therapy formulation. Generally, the purification procedures result in extensive removal of cellular DNA and other cellular components, and adventitious agents. Procedures that extensively degrade or denature DNA may also be used.

Influenza Vaccines

A vaccine of the invention includes an isolated recombinant influenza virus of the invention, and optionally one or more other isolated viruses including other isolated influenza viruses, one or more immunogenic proteins or glycoproteins of one or more isolated influenza viruses or one or more other pathogens, e.g., an immunogenic protein from one or more bacteria, non-influenza viruses, yeast or fungi, or isolated nucleic acid encoding one or more viral proteins (e.g., DNA vaccines) including one or more immunogenic proteins of the isolated influenza virus of the invention. In one embodiment, the influenza virus of the invention may be vaccine vectors for influenza virus or other pathogens.

A complete virion vaccine may be concentrated by ultrafiltration and then purified by zonal centrifugation or by chromatography. Viruses other than the virus of the invention, such as those included in a multivalent vaccine, may be inactivated before or after purification using formalin or beta-propiolactone, for instance.

A subunit vaccine comprises purified glycoproteins. Such a vaccine may be prepared as follows: using viral suspensions fragmented by treatment with detergent, the surface antigens are purified, by ultracentrifugation for example. The subunit vaccines thus contain mainly HA protein, and also NA. The detergent used may be cationic detergent for example, such as hexadecyl trimethyl ammonium bromide (Bachmeyer, 1975), an anionic detergent such as ammonium deoxycholate (Laver & Webster, 1976); or a nonionic detergent such as that commercialized under the name TRITON X100. The hemagglutinin may also be isolated after treatment of the virions with a protease such as bromelin, and then purified. The subunit vaccine may be combined with an attenuated virus of the invention in a multivalent vaccine.

A split vaccine comprises virions which have been subjected to treatment with agents that dissolve lipids. A split vaccine can be prepared as follows: an aqueous suspension of the purified virus obtained as above, inactivated or not, is treated, under stirring, by lipid solvents such as ethyl ether or chloroform, associated with detergents. The dissolution of the viral envelope lipids results in fragmentation of the viral particles. The aqueous phase is recuperated containing the split vaccine, constituted mainly of hemagglutinin and neuraminidase with their original lipid environment 5 removed, and the core or its degradation products. Then the residual infectious particles are inactivated if this has not already been done. The split vaccine may be combined with an attenuated virus of the invention in a multivalent vaccine.

Inactivated Vaccines. Inactivated influenza virus vaccines 10 are provided by inactivating replicated virus using known methods, such as, but not limited to, formalin or β -propiolactone treatment. Inactivated vaccine types that can be used in the invention can include whole-virus (WV) vaccines or subvirion (SV) (split) vaccines. The WV vaccine contains 15 intact, inactivated virus, while the SV vaccine contains purified virus disrupted with detergents that solubilize the lipid-containing viral envelope, followed by chemical inactivation of residual virus.

In addition, vaccines that can be used include those 20 containing the isolated HA and NA surface proteins, which are referred to as surface antigen or subunit vaccines.

Live Attenuated Virus Vaccines. Live, attenuated influenza virus vaccines, such as those including a recombinant virus of the invention can be used for preventing or treating 25 influenza virus infection. Attenuation may be achieved in a single step by transfer of attenuated genes from an attenuated donor virus to a replicated isolate or reassorted virus according to known methods. Since resistance to influenza A virus is mediated primarily by the development of an 30 immune response to the HA and/or NA glycoproteins, the genes coding for these surface antigens come from the reassorted viruses or clinical isolates. The attenuated genes are derived from an attenuated parent. In this approach, genes that confer attenuation generally do not code for the 35 HA and NA glycoproteins.

Viruses (donor influenza viruses) are available that are capable of reproducibly attenuating influenza viruses, e.g., a cold adapted (ca) donor virus can be used for attenuated vaccine production. Live, attenuated reassortant virus vac- 40 µg, e.g., 30 to 100 µg, of HA from each of the strains cines can be generated by mating the ca donor virus with a virulent replicated virus. Reassortant progeny are then selected at 25° C. (restrictive for replication of virulent virus), in the presence of an appropriate antiserum, which inhibits replication of the viruses bearing the surface anti- 45 gens of the attenuated ca donor virus. Useful reassortants are: (a) infectious, (b) attenuated for seronegative non-adult mammals and immunologically primed adult mammals, (c) immunogenic and (d) genetically stable. The immunogenicity of the ca reassortants parallels their level of replication. 50 Thus, the acquisition of the six transferable genes of the ca donor virus by new wild-type viruses has reproducibly attenuated these viruses for use in vaccinating susceptible mammals both adults and non-adult.

Other attenuating mutations can be introduced into influ- 55 enza virus genes by site-directed mutagenesis to rescue infectious viruses bearing these mutant genes. Attenuating mutations can be introduced into non-coding regions of the genome, as well as into coding regions. Such attenuating mutations can also be introduced into genes other than the 60 HA or NA, e.g., the PB2 polymerase gene. Thus, new donor viruses can also be generated bearing attenuating mutations introduced by site-directed mutagenesis, and such new donor viruses can be used in the production of live attenuated reassortants vaccine candidates in a manner analogous 65 to that described above for the ca donor virus. Similarly, other known and suitable attenuated donor strains can be

reassorted with influenza virus to obtain attenuated vaccines suitable for use in the vaccination of mammals.

In one embodiment, such attenuated viruses maintain the genes from the virus that encode antigenic determinants substantially similar to those of the original clinical isolates. This is because the purpose of the attenuated vaccine is to provide substantially the same antigenicity as the original clinical isolate of the virus, while at the same time lacking pathogenicity to the degree that the vaccine causes minimal chance of inducing a serious disease condition in the vaccinated mammal.

The viruses in a multivalent vaccine can thus be attenuated or inactivated, formulated and administered, according to known methods, as a vaccine to induce an immune response in an animal, e.g., a mammal. Methods are wellknown in the art for determining whether such attenuated or inactivated vaccines have maintained similar antigenicity to that of the clinical isolate or high growth strain derived therefrom. Such known methods include the use of antisera or antibodies to eliminate viruses expressing antigenic determinants of the donor virus; chemical selection (e.g., amantadine or rimantidine); HA and NA activity and inhibition; and nucleic acid screening (such as probe hybridization or PCR) to confirm that donor genes encoding the antigenic determinants (e.g., HA or NA genes) are not present in the attenuated viruses.

Pharmaceutical Compositions

Pharmaceutical compositions of the present invention, suitable for inoculation, e.g., nasal, parenteral or oral administration, comprise one or more influenza virus isolates, e.g., one or more attenuated or inactivated influenza viruses, a subunit thereof, isolated protein(s) thereof, and/or isolated nucleic acid encoding one or more proteins thereof, optionally further comprising sterile aqueous or non-aqueous solutions, suspensions, and emulsions. The compositions can further comprise auxiliary agents or excipients, as known in the art. The composition of the invention is generally presented in the form of individual doses (unit doses).

Conventional vaccines generally contain about 0.1 to 200 entering into their composition. The vaccine forming the main constituent of the vaccine composition of the invention may comprise a single influenza virus, or a combination of influenza viruses, for example, at least two or three influenza viruses, including one or more reassortant(s).

Preparations for parenteral administration include sterile aqueous or non-aqueous solutions, suspensions, and/or emulsions, which may contain auxiliary agents or excipients known in the art. Examples of non-aqueous solvents are propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, vegetable oils such as olive oil, and injectable organic esters such as ethyl oleate. Carriers or occlusive dressings can be used to increase skin permeability and enhance antigen absorption. Liquid dosage forms for oral administration may generally comprise a liposome solution containing the liquid dosage form. Suitable forms for suspending liposomes include emulsions, suspensions, solutions, syrups, and elixirs containing inert diluents commonly used in the art, such as purified water. Besides the inert diluents, such compositions can also include adjuvants, wetting agents, emulsifying and suspending agents, or sweetening, flavoring, or perfuming agents.

When a composition of the present invention is used for administration to an individual, it can further comprise salts, buffers, adjuvants, or other substances which are desirable for improving the efficacy of the composition. For vaccines, adjuvants, substances which can augment a specific immune response, can be used. Normally, the adjuvant and the

composition are mixed prior to presentation to the immune system, or presented separately, but into the same site of the organism being immunized.

Heterogeneity in a vaccine may be provided by mixing replicated influenza viruses for at least two influenza virus 5 strains, such as 2-20 strains or any range or value therein. Vaccines can be provided for variations in a single strain of an influenza virus, using techniques known in the art.

A pharmaceutical composition according to the present invention may further or additionally comprise at least one 10 chemotherapeutic compound, for example, for gene therapy, immunosuppressants, anti-inflammatory agents or immune enhancers, and for vaccines, chemotherapeutics including, but not limited to, gamma globulin, amantadine, guanidine, hydroxybenzimidazole, interferon- α , interferon β , inter- 15 feron- γ , tumor necrosis factor-alpha, thiosemicarbarzones, methisazone, rifampin, ribavirin, a pyrimidine analog, a purine analog, foscarnet, phosphonoacetic acid, acyclovir, dideoxynucleosides, a protease inhibitor, or ganciclovir.

The composition can also contain variable but small 20 quantities of endotoxin-free formaldehyde, and preservatives, which have been found safe and not contributing to undesirable effects in the organism to which the composition is administered.

Pharmaceutical Purposes

The administration of the composition (or the antisera that it elicits) may be for either a "prophylactic" or "therapeutic" purpose. When provided prophylactically, the compositions of the invention which are vaccines are provided before any symptom or clinical sign of a pathogen infection becomes 30 manifest. The prophylactic administration of the composition serves to prevent or attenuate any subsequent infection. When provided prophylactically, the gene therapy compositions of the invention, are provided before any symptom or clinical sign of a disease becomes manifest. The prophylac-35 tic administration of the composition serves to prevent or attenuate one or more symptoms or clinical signs associated with the disease.

When provided therapeutically, a viral vaccine is provided upon the detection of a symptom or clinical sign of 40 actual infection. The therapeutic administration of the compound(s) serves to attenuate any actual infection. When provided therapeutically, a gene therapy composition is provided upon the detection of a symptom or clinical sign of the disease. The therapeutic administration of the 45 compound(s) serves to attenuate a symptom or clinical sign of that disease.

Thus, a vaccine composition of the present invention may be provided either before the onset of infection (so as to prevent or attenuate an anticipated infection) or after the 50 initiation of an actual infection. Similarly, for gene therapy, the composition may be provided before any symptom or clinical sign of a disorder or disease is manifested or after one or more symptoms are detected.

A composition is said to be "pharmacologically accept-55 able" if its administration can be tolerated by a recipient mammal. Such an agent is said to be administered in a "therapeutically effective amount" if the amount administered is physiologically significant. A composition of the present invention is physiologically significant if its pres-60 ence results in a detectable change in the physiology of a recipient patient, e.g., enhances at least one primary or secondary humoral or cellular immune response against at least one strain of an infectious influenza virus.

The "protection" provided need not be absolute, i.e., the 65 influenza infection need not be totally prevented or eradicated, if there is a statistically significant improvement

compared with a control population or set of mammals. Protection may be limited to mitigating the severity or rapidity of onset of symptoms or clinical signs of the influenza virus infection.

Pharmaceutical Administration

A composition of the present invention may confer resistance to one or more pathogens, e.g., one or more influenza virus strains, by either passive immunization or active immunization. In active immunization, an attenuated live vaccine composition is administered prophylactically to a host (e.g., a mammal), and the host's immune response to the administration protects against infection and/or disease. For passive immunization, the elicited antisera can be recovered and administered to a recipient suspected of having an infection caused by at least one influenza virus strain. A gene therapy composition of the present invention may yield prophylactic or therapeutic levels of the desired gene product by active immunization.

In one embodiment, the vaccine is provided to a mammalian female (at or prior to pregnancy or parturition), under conditions of time and amount sufficient to cause the production of an immune response which serves to protect both the female and the fetus or newborn (via passive incorporation of the antibodies across the placenta or in the mother's milk).

The present invention thus includes methods for preventing or attenuating a disorder or disease, e.g., an infection by at least one strain of pathogen. As used herein, a vaccine is said to prevent or attenuate a disease if its administration results either in the total or partial attenuation (i.e., suppression) of a clinical sign or condition of the disease, or in the total or partial immunity of the individual to the disease. As used herein, a gene therapy composition is said to prevent or attenuate a disease if its administration results either in the total or partial attenuation (i.e., suppression) of a clinical sign or condition of the disease, or in the total or partial immunity of the individual to the disease.

A composition having at least one influenza virus of the present invention, including one which is attenuated and one or more other isolated viruses, one or more isolated viral proteins thereof, one or more isolated nucleic acid molecules encoding one or more viral proteins thereof, or a combination thereof, may be administered by any means that achieve the intended purposes.

For example, administration of such a composition may be by various parenteral routes such as subcutaneous, intravenous, intradermal, intramuscular, intraperitoneal, intranasal, oral or transdermal routes. Parenteral administration can be accomplished by bolus injection or by gradual perfusion over time.

A typical regimen for preventing, suppressing, or treating an influenza virus related pathology, comprises administration of an effective amount of a vaccine composition as described herein, administered as a single treatment, or repeated as enhancing or booster dosages, over a period up to and including between one week and about 24 months, or any range or value therein.

According to the present invention, an "effective amount" of a composition is one that is sufficient to achieve a desired effect. It is understood that the effective dosage may be dependent upon the species, age, sex, health, and weight of the recipient, kind of concurrent treatment, if any, frequency of treatment, and the nature of the effect wanted. The ranges of effective doses provided below are not intended to limit the invention and represent dose ranges.

The dosage of a live, attenuated or killed virus vaccine for an animal such as a mammalian adult organism may be from

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about 10^2 - 10^{15} , e.g., 10^3 - 10^{12} , plaque forming units (PFU)/ kg, or any range or value therein. The dose of inactivated vaccine may range from about 0.1 to 1000, e.g., 30 to 100 µg, of HA protein. However, the dosage should be a safe and effective amount as determined by conventional methods, 5 using existing vaccines as a starting point.

The dosage of immunoreactive HA in each dose of replicated virus vaccine may be standardized to contain a suitable amount, e.g., 30 to 100 µg or any range or value therein, or the amount recommended by government agencies or recognized professional organizations. The quantity of NA can also be standardized, however, this glycoprotein may be labile during purification and storage.

The dosage of immunoreactive HA in each dose of replicated virus vaccine can be standardized to contain a suitable amount, e.g., 1-50 µg or any range or value therein, or the amount recommended by the U.S. Public Heath Service (PHS), which is usually 15 µg, per component for children >3 years of age, and 7.5 µg per component for 20 children <3 years of age. The quantity of NA can also be standardized, however, this glycoprotein can be labile during the processor purification and storage (Kendal et al., 1980; Kerr et al., 1975). Each 0.5-ml dose of vaccine may contains approximately 1-50 billion virus particles, and preferably 10 billion particles.

The invention will be described by the following nonlimiting examples.

EXAMPLE 1

Methods

Cells and Viruses

293T human embryonic kidney cells are maintained in Dulbecco's modified Eagle's minimal essential medium 35 (DMEM) with 10% fetal calf serum and antibiotics. Madin-Darby canine kidney (MDCK) cells are grown in MEM with 5% newborn calf serum and antibiotics. African green monkey Vero WCB cells, which had been established after biosafety tests for use in human vaccine production (Sugawara et al., 2002), are maintained in serum-free VP-SFM medium (GIBCO-BRL) with antibiotics. Cells are maintained at 37° C., in 5% CO2. A WHO-recommended vaccine seed virus is NIBRG-14.

Construction of Plasmids and Reverse Genetics

To generate reassortants of influenza A viruses, a plasmid- 45 based reverse genetics (Neumann et al., 1999) is used. The

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full-length cDNAs were cloned into a plasmid under control of the human polymerase I promoter and the mouse RNA polymerase I terminator (PolI plasmids).

A previously produced series of Poll constructs, derived from A/WSN/33 (H5N1; WSN) or PR8 strains is used, for reverse genetics (Horimoto et al., 2006; Neumann et al., 1999). The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends A/Puerto Rico/8/34 (H1N1; PR8) as a donor virus, because of its safety in humans (Wood & Robertson, 2004; Webby & Webster, 2003).

Plasmids expressing WSN or PR8 NP, PA, PB1, or PB2 under control of the chicken β -actin promoter are used for all reverse genetics experiments (Horimoto et al., 2006; Neumann et al., 1999). Briefly, PolI plasmids and protein expression plasmids are mixed with a transfection reagent, Trans-IT 293T (Panvera), incubated at room temperature for 15 minutes, and then added to 293T cells. Transfected cells are incubated in Opti-MEM I (GIBCO-BRL) for 48 hours. For reverse genetics in Vero WCB cells, an electroporator (Amaxa) is used to transfect the plasmid mixtures according to the manufacturer's instructions. Sixteen hours after transfection, freshly prepared Vero WCB cells were added onto the transfected cells and TPCK-trypsin (1 µg/mL) is added to the culture 6 hours later. Transfected cells are incubated in serum-free VP-SFM for a total of 4 days. Supernatants containing infectious viruses are harvested, and may bebiologically cloned by limiting dilution.

A recombinant virus having the HA and NA genes from A/Hong Kong/213/2003 (H5N1) and the remainder of the type A influenza virus genes from PR8(UW) was prepared. The titer of the recombinant virus was $10^{10.67}$ EID₅₀/mL, and the HA titer was 1:1600

TABLE 1

Virus possessing PR8 genes together with the following HA and NA		HA ti	ter (HA	U/mL) ir	1 each d	ilition	
genes	10-2	10-3	10-4	10-5	10-6	10-7	10-8
WSN-HA NA HK-HAavir NA	160 400	40 800	40 400	320 400	40 400	640 800	<1 <1

The sequences of PR8 (UW) genes are as follows:

(SEQ ID NO: 1) AGCGAAAGCA GGTACTGATC CAAAATGGAA GATTTTGTGC GACAATGCTT CAATCCGATG ATTGTCGAGC TTGCGGAAAA AACAATGAAA GAGTATGGGG AGGACCTGAA AATCGAAACA AACAAATTTG CAGCAATATG CACTCACTTG GAAGTATGCT TCATGTATTC AGATTTTCAC TTCATCAATG AGCAAGGCGA GTCAATAATC GTAGAACTTG GTGATCCAAA TGCACTTTTG AAGCACAGAT TTGAAATAAT CGAGGGAAGA GATCGCACAA TGGCCTGGAC AGTAGTAAAC AGTATTTGCA ACACTACAGG GGCTGAGAAA CCAAAGTTTC TACCAGATTT GTATGATTAC AAGGAGAATA GATTCATCGA AATTGGAGTA ACAAGGAGAG AAGTTCACAT ATACTATCTG GAAAAGGCCA ATAAAATTAA ATCTGAGAAA ACACACATCC ACATTTTCTC GTTCACTGGG GAAGAAATGG CCACAAAGGC

PA

-continued AGACTACACT CTCGATGAAG AAAGCAGGGC TAGGATCAAA ACCAGACTAT TCACCATAAG ACAAGAAATG GCCAGCAGAG GCCTCTGGGA TTCCTTTCGT CAGTCCGAGA GAGGAGAAGA GACAATTGAA GAAAGGTTTG AAATCACAGG AACAATGCGC AAGCTTGCCG ACCAAAGTCT CCCGCCGAAC TTCTCCAGCC TTGAAAATTT TAGAGCCTAT GTGGATGGAT TCGAACCGAA CGGCTACATT GAGGGCAAGC TGTCTCAAAT GTCCAAAGAA GTAAATGCTA GAATTGAACC TTTTTTGAAA ACAACACCAC GACCACTTAG ACTTCCGAAT GGGCCTCCCT GTTCTCAGCG GTCCAAATTC CTGCTGATGG ATGCCTTAAA ATTAAGCATT GAGGACCCAA GTCATGAAGG AGAGGGAATA CCGCTATATG ATGCAATCAA ATGCATGAGA ACATTCTTTG GATGGAAGGA ACCCAATGTT GTTAAACCAC ACGAAAAGGG AATAAATCCA AATTATCTTC TGTCATGGAA GCAAGTACTG GCAGAACTGC AGGACATTGA GAATGAGGAG AAAATTCCAA AGACTAAAAA TATGAAGAAA ACAAGTCAGC TAAAGTGGGC ACTTGGTGAG AACATGGCAC CAGAAAAGGT AGACTTTGAC GACTGTAAAG ATGTAGGTGA TTTGAAGCAA TATGATAGTG ATGAACCAGA ATTGAGGTCG CTTGCAAGTT GGATTCAGAA TGAGTTTAAC AAGGCATGCG AACTGACAGA TTCAAGCTGG ATAGAGCTCG ATGAGATTGG AGAAGATGTG GCTCCAATTG AACACATTGC AAGCATGAGA AGGAATTATT TCACATCAGA GGTGTCTCAC TGCAGAGCCA CAGAATACAT AATGAAGGGA GTGTACATCA ATACTGCCTT GCTTAATGCA TCTTGTGCAG CAATGGATGA TTTCCAATTA ATTCCAATGA TAAGCAAGTG TAGAACTAAG GAGGGAAGGC GAAAGACCAA CTTGTATGGT TTCATCATAA AAGGAAGATC CCACTTAAGG AATGACACCG ACGTGGTAAA CTTTGTGAGC ATGGAGTTTT CTCTCACTGA CCCAAGACTT GAACCACATA AATGGGAGAA GTACTGTGTT CTTGAGATAG GAGATATGCT TATAAGAAGT GCCATAGGCC AGGTTTCAAG GCCCATGTTC TTGTATGTGA GAACAAATGG AACCTCAAAA ATTAAAATGA AATGGGGAAT GGAGATGAGG CGTTGCCTCC TCCAGTCACT TCAACAAATT GAGAGTATGA TTGAAGCTGA GTCCTCTGTC AAAGAGAAAG ACATGACCAA AGAGTTCTTT GAGAACAAAT CAGAAACATG GCCCATTGGA GAGTCCCCCA AAGGAGTGGA GGAAAGTTCC ATTGGGAAGG TCTGCAGGAC TTTATTAGCA AAGTCGGTAT TCAACAGCTT GTATGCATCT CCACAACTAG AAGGATTTTC AGCTGAATCA AGAAAACTGC TTCTTATCGT TCAGGCTCTT AGGGACAACC TGGAACCTGG GACCTTTGAT CTTGGGGGGGC TATATGAAGC AATTGAGGAG TGCCTGATTA ATGATCCCTG GGTTTTGCTT AATGCTTCTT GGTTCAACTC CTTCCTTACA CATGCATTGA GTTAGTTGTG GCAGTGCTAC TATTTGCTAT CCATACTGTC CAAAAAAGTA CCTTGTTTCT ACT PB1

(SEQ ID NO: 2) AGCGAAAGCA GGCAAACCAT TTGAATGGAT GTCAATCCGA CCTTACTTTT CTTAAAAGTG CCAGCACAAA ATGCTATAAG CACAACTTTC CCTTATACTG GAGACCCTCC TTACAGCCAT GGGACAGGAA CAGGATACAC CATGGATACT GTCAACAGGA CACATCAGTA CTCAGAAAAG GGAAGATGGA CAACAAACAC CGAAACTGGA GCACCGCAAC TCAACCCGAT TGATGGGCCA

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CTGCCAGAAG ACAATGAACC AAGTGGTTAT GCCCAAACAG ATTGTGTATT GGAGGCGATG GCTTTCCTTG AGGAATCCCA TCCTGGTATT TTTGAAAACT CGTGTATTGA AACGATGGAG GTTGTTCAGC AAACACGAGT AGACAAGCTG ACACAAGGCC GACAGACCTA TGACTGGACT CTAAATAGAA ACCAACCTGC TGCAACAGCA TTGGCCAACA CAATAGAAGT GTTCAGATCA AATGGCCTCA CGGCCAATGA GTCTGGAAGG CTCATAGACT TCCTTAAGGA TGTAATGGAG TCAATGAACA AAGAAGAAAT GGGGATCACA ACTCATTTTC AGAGAAAGAG ACGGGTGAGA GACAATATGA CTAAGAAAAT GATAACACAG AGAACAATGG GTAAAAAGAA GCAGAGATTG AACAAAAGGA GTTATCTAAT TAGAGCATTG ACCCTGAACA CAATGACCAA AGATGCTGAG AGAGGGAAGC TAAAACGGAG AGCAATTGCA ACCCCAGGGA TGCAAATAAG GGGGTTTGTA TACTTTGTTG AGACACTGGC AAGGAGTATA TGTGAGAAAC TTGAACAATC AGGGTTGCCA GTTGGAGGCA ATGAGAAGAA AGCAAAGTTG GCAAATGTTG TAAGGAAGAT GATGACCAAT TCTCAGGACA CCGAACTTTC TTTCACCATC ACTGGAGATA ACACCAAATG GAACGAAAAT CAGAATCCTC GGATGTTTTT GGCCATGATC ACATATATGA CCAGAAATCA GCCCGAATGG TTCAGAAATG TTCTAAGTAT TGCTCCAATA ATGTTCTCAA ACAAAATGGC GAGACTGGGA AAAGGGTATA TGTTTGAGAG CAAGAGTATG AAACTTAGAA CTCAAATACC TGCAGAAATG CTAGCAAGCA TCGATTTGAA ATATTTCAAT GATTCAACAA GAAAGAAGAT TGAAAAAATC CGACCGCTCT TAATAGAGGG GACTGCATCA TTGAGCCCTG GAATGATGAT GGGCATGTTC AATATGTTAA GCACTGTATT AGGCGTCTCC ATCCTGAATC TTGGACAAAA GAGATACACC AAGACTACTT ACTGGTGGGA TGGTCTTCAA TCCTCTGACG ATTTTGCTCT GATTGTGAAT GCACCCAATC ATGAAGGGAT TCAAGCCGGA GTCGACAGGT TTFATCGAAC CTGTAAGCTA CTTGGAATCA ATATGAGCAA GAAAAAGTCT TACATAAACA GAACAGGTAC ATTTGAATTC ACAAGTTTTT TCTATCGTTA TGGGTTTGTT GCCAATTTCA GCATGGAGCT TCCCAGTTTT GGGGTGTCTG GGATCAACGA GTCAGCGGAC ATGAGTATTG GAGTTACTGT CATCAAAAAC AATATGATAA ACAATGATCT TGGTCCAGCA ACAGCTCAAA TGGCCCTTCA GTTGTTCATC AAAGATTACA GGTACACGTA CCGATGCCAT ATAGGTGACA CACAAATACA AACCCGAAGA TCATTTGAAA TAAAGAAACT GTGGGAGCAA ACCCGTTCCA AAGCTGGACT GCTGGTCTCC GACGGAGGCC CAAATTTATA CAACATTAGA AATCTCCACA TTCCTGAAGT CTGCCTAAAA TGGGAATTGA TGGATGAGGA TTACCAGGGG CGTTTATGCA ACCCACTGAA CCCATTTGTC AGCCATAAAG AAATTGAATC AATGAACAAT GCAGTGATGA TGCCAGCACA TGGTCCAGCC AAAAACATGG AGTATGATGC TGTTGCAACA ACACACTCCT GGATCCCCAA AAGAAATCGA TCCATCTTGA ATACAAGTCA AAGAGGAGTA CTTGAGGATG AACAAATGTA CCAAAGGTGC TGCAATTTAT TTGAAAAATT CTTCCCCAGC AGTTCATACA GAAGACCAGT CGGGATATCC AGTATGGTGG AGGCTATGGT TTCCAGAGCC CGAATTGATG CACGGATTGA TTTCGAATCT GGAAGGATAA AGAAAGAAGA

-continued GTTCACTGAG ATCATGAAGA TCTGTTCCAC CATTGAAGAG CTCAGACGGC AAAAATAGTG AATTTAGCTT GTCCTTCATG AAAAAATGCC TTGTTTCTAC

T PB2

(SEQ ID NO: 3)

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High-titer A/PR/8/34 (H1N1, PR8(UW)) virus grows 10 times better than other A/PR/8/34 PR8 strains in eggs (10^{10} EID₅₀/mL; HA titer:1:8.000). Thus, replacement of the HA and NA genes of PR8(UW) with those of a currently $_{15}$ circulating strain of influenza virus results in a vaccine strain that can be safely produced, and validates the use of PR8 (UW) as a master vaccine strain.

Genes that contribute to different growth properties between PR8(UW) and PR8 (Cambridge), which provides 20 the non-HA and -NA genes of the NIBRG-14 vaccine strain (FIGS. 1A-C), were determined. Higher titers in eggs were obtained when the majority of internal genes were from PR8(UW). Highest titers were with the M gene segment of PR8(UW) and the NS gene of PR8 (Cambridge). The NS 25 gene in PR8(UW) has a K (lysine) at residue 55 while the NS gene in PR8(Cam) has a E (glutamic acid). The polymerase subunit (PA, PB1, and PB2) and NP genes of PR8(UW) enhanced the growth of an H5N1 vaccine seed virus in chicken embryonated eggs, and the NS gene of PR8(Cam- 30 bridge) enhanced the growth of an H5N1 vaccine seed virus in chicken embryonated eggs. A tyrosine (Y) at position 360 in PB2 of PR8(UW) likely contributes to the high growth rate of that virus in MDCK cells. 35

EXAMPLE 2

To establish robust systems for influenza vaccine production, egg-free, cell culture-based systems are needed. Vero cells are approved for human use and so are candidate hosts 40 for influenza virus vaccine production. To elucidate the molecular basis for efficient growth of influenza vaccine seed virus in Vero cells. A/Puerto Rico/8/34 (PR8) virus was passaged through Vero cells 12 times and the infectivity titer of the resulting virus was determined. Vero cell-adapted PR8 45 had over a 4 log increase in infectivity titers relative to non Vero cell-adapted PR8 (FIG. **2**).

To determine the molecular basis for that growth difference, the genomes of both isolates were sequenced. Three amino acid differences were found: one in HA2, one in NA ⁵⁰ and one in PB2 (FIG. **3**). To identify the contribution of each individual substitution, and of a combination of two of the substitutions, recombinant viruses with the individual substitution(s) were prepared and the growth of those recombinant viruses was compared to Vero cell-adapted PR8 and ⁵⁵ non Vero cell-adapted PR8 (FIG. **4**). The results indicated that the substitution in HA2 was primarily responsible for the enhanced growth in Vero cells. The substitution in HA2 (N117D) did not enhance growth in MDCK cells (FIG. **5**).

Because HA2 has a fusion domain that is exposed after ⁶⁰ infection, a fusion assay was employed to compare the properties of wild-type PR8 HA2 and HA2 N117D (FIGS. **7-8**). The HA2 N117D mutant fused Vero cells at a higher pH than wild-type PR8. The endosomal pH in Vero cells and MDCK cells was determined using pH sensitive and insen- ⁶⁵ sitive dyes (FIGS. **9-10**). The endosomes of Vero cells likely have a higher pH than those from MDCK cells. Thus, the

HA2 N117D mutation may elevate the optimal pH for membrane fusion mediated by HA2, thereby enhancing virus replication efficiency in Vero cells.

To determine if the HA2 N117D mutation alone could enhance virus replication efficiency in different viruses in Vero cells, that substitution was introduced into two different H1N1 viruses (a AAT to GAT mutation) and one H3N2 virus (a AAC to GAC mutation) in a PR8 background (six gene segments were from Vero cell-adapted PR8; PA, PB1, PB2, M. NS and NP) (FIG. **11**). The HA2 N117D mutation enhanced the replication efficiency of all three tested viruses in Vero cells. Such a strategy may be employed to prepare vaccine viruses with enhanced replication in Vero cells.

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All publications, patents and patent applications are incorporated herein by reference. While in the foregoing specification this invention has been described in relation to certain preferred embodiments thereof, and many details have been set forth for purposes of illustration, it will be apparent to those skilled in the art that the invention is susceptible to additional embodiments and that certain of the details described herein may be varied considerably without departing from the basic principles of the invention. SEQUENCE LISTING

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<213> ORGANISM: Influenza virus

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n \mbox{Trp} Leu Thr Lys Ser Gly Ser Thr Tyr Pro Val Leu Asn Val Thr Met Pro Asn Asn Asp Asn Phe Asp Lys Leu Tyr Ile Trp Gly Ile His His Pro Ser Thr Asn Gln Glu Gln Thr Ser Leu Tyr Val Gln Ala Ser Gly Arg Val Thr Val Ser Thr Arg Arg Ser Gln Gln Thr Ile Ile Pro Asn Ile Gly Ser Arg Pro Trp Val Arg Gly Leu Ser Ser Arg Ile Ser Ile Tyr Trp Thr Ile Val Lys Pro Gly Asp Val Leu Val Ile Asn Ser Asn Gly Asn Leu Ile Ala Pro Arg Gly Tyr Phe Lys Met Arg Thr Gly Lys Ser Ser Ile Met Arg Ser Asp Ala Pro Ile Asp Thr Cys Ile Ser Glu Cys Ile Thr Pro Asn Gly Ser Ile Pro Asn Asp Lys Pro Phe Gln Asn Val Asn Lys Ile Thr Tyr Gly Ala Cys Pro Lys Tyr Val Lys Gln Asn Thr Leu Lys Leu Ala Thr Gly Met Arg Asn Val Pro Glu Lys Gln Thr Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 17 <211> LENGTH: 326 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Influenza virus <400> SEQUENCE: 17 Asp Gln Ile Cys Ile Gly Tyr His Ala Asn Asn Ser Thr Glu Gln Val Asp Thr Ile Met Glu Lys Asn Ile Thr Val Thr His Ala Gln Asp Ile Leu Glu Lys Thr His Asn Gly Lys Leu Cys Asp Leu Asn Gly Val Lys Pro Leu Ile Leu Arg Asp Cys Ser Val Ala Gly Trp Leu Leu Gly Asn

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Aap	Thr	Ile	Met 20	Glu	Lya	Asn	Ile	Thr 25	Val	Thr	His	Ala	Gln 30	Aap	Ile
Leu	Glu	Arg 35	Thr	His	Asn	Gly	Lys 40	Leu	Суз	Asp	Leu	Asn 45	Gly	Val	Lys
Pro	Leu 50	Ile	Leu	Arg	Asp	Суя 55	Ser	Val	Ala	Gly	Trp 60	Leu	Leu	Gly	Asn
Pro 65	Met	Сүз	Asp	Glu	Phe 70	Ile	Asn	Val	Pro	Glu 75	Trp	Ser	Tyr	Ile	Val 80
Glu	Lys	Ala	Ser	Pro 85	Ala	Asn	Asp	Leu	Сув 90	Tyr	Pro	Gly	Asn	Phe 95	Asn

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Asp	Tyr	Glu	Glu 100	Leu	ГÀа	His	Leu	Leu 105	Ser	Arg	Ile	Asn	His 110	Phe	Glu
Lys	Ile	Gln 115	Ile	Ile	Pro	Lya	Ser 120	Ser	Trp	Ser	Asn	His 125	Asb	Ala	Ser
Ser	Gly 130	Val	Ser	Ser	Ala	Cys 135	Pro	Tyr	Leu	Gly	Arg 140	Ser	Ser	Phe	Phe
Arg 145	Asn	Val	Val	Trp	Leu 150	Ile	Lys	ГЛа	Asn	Ser 155	Ala	Tyr	Pro	Thr	Ile 160
Lys	Arg	Ser	Tyr	Asn 165	Asn	Thr	Asn	Gln	Glu 170	Asp	Leu	Leu	Val	Leu 175	Trp
Gly	Ile	His	His 180	Pro	Asn	Asp	Ala	Ala 185	Glu	Gln	Thr	ГЛЗ	Leu 190	Tyr	Gln
Asn	Pro	Thr 195	Thr	Tyr	Val	Ser	Val 200	Gly	Thr	Ser	Thr	Leu 205	Asn	Gln	Arg
Leu	Ile 210	Pro	Glu	Ile	Ala	Thr 215	Arg	Pro	Lys	Val	Asn 220	Gly	Gln	Ser	Gly
Arg 225	Met	Glu	Phe	Tyr	Trp 230	Thr	Ile	Leu	Lys	Pro 235	Asn	Asp	Ala	Ile	Asn 240
Phe	Glu	Ser	Asn	Gly 245	Asn	Phe	Ile	Ala	Pro 250	Glu	Tyr	Ala	Tyr	Lys 255	Ile
Val	Lys	Lys	Gly	Asp	Ser	Thr	Ile	Met 265	Lys	Ser	Glu	Leu	Glu 270	Tyr	Gly
Asn	Суз	Asn	Thr	Lys	Суз	Gln	Thr	Pro	Met	Gly	Ala	Ile	Asn	Ser	Ser
Met	Pro	Phe	His	Asn	Val	His	Pro	Leu	Thr	Ile	Gly	Glu	Cys	Pro	Lys
Tyr	290 Val	Lys	Ser	Asn	Arg	∠95 Leu	Val	Leu	Ala	Thr	Gly	Leu	Arg	Asn	Thr
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Aap	Thr	Leu	Met 20	Glu	Thr	Asn	Ile	Pro 25	Val	Thr	His	Ala	Lys 30	Asp	Ile
Leu	His	Thr 35	Glu	His	Asn	Gly	Met 40	Leu	Суз	Ala	Thr	Asn 45	Leu	Gly	His
Pro	Leu 50	Ile	Leu	Asp	Thr	Cys 55	Ser	Ile	Glu	Gly	Leu 60	Ile	Tyr	Gly	Asn
Pro	Ser	Сув	Asp	Leu	Leu	Leu	Gly	Gly	Arg	Glu	Trp	Ser	Tyr	Ile	Val
Glu	Lys	Pro	Ser	Pro	Val	Asn	Gly	Met	Cys	75 Tyr	Pro	Gly	Asn	Phe	Glu
Asn	Leu	Glu	Glu	85 Leu	Lys	His	Leu	Phe	90 Ser	Arg	Ala	Ser	Ser	95 Tyr	Gln
۵ra	T10	Gln	100 Tle	T10	Pro	Aan	Thr	105 Tle	ዋጥ	Aan	ніе	Ser	110 Tvr	Ser	Ser
		115				P	120					125	- y -	-	-
Gly	Thr 130	Ser	Arg	Ala	Сүз	Ser 135	Asp	Ser	Phe	Phe	Arg 140	Ser	Met	Arg	Trp

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Leu Ile Gln Lys Asn Asn Ala Tyr Pro Thr Gln Asp Ala Gln Tyr Thr Asn Thr Arg Gly Lys Ser Ile Leu Val Met Trp Gly Ile Asn His Pro Pro Asp Asp Thr Val Gln Thr Asn Leu Tyr Thr Arg Thr Asp Thr Thr Thr Ser Val Thr Thr Glu Asp Ile Asn Arg Arg Phe Lys Pro Val Ile Ala Pro Arg Pro Leu Val Asn Gly Gln His Gly Arg Met Asp Tyr Tyr Trp Ser Ile Leu Lys Pro Asn Gln Thr Ile Arg Phe Arg Ser Asn Gly Asn Phe Ile Ala Pro Trp Tyr Ala His Ile Leu Ser Gly Glu Ser His Gly Arg Ile Leu Lys Thr Glu Leu Asn Ser Gly Asn Cys Asn Val Gln Cys Gln Thr Glu Arg Gly Gly Leu Asn Thr Thr Leu Pro Phe His Asn Val Ser Pro Tyr Ala Ile Gly Asn Cys Pro Lys Tyr Val Gly Val Lys Ser Leu Val Leu Ala Val Gly Leu Arg Asn Thr Pro Ala Arg Ser Ser Arg Arg Lys Lys Arg <210> SEQ ID NO 20 <211> LENGTH: 325 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Influenza virus <400> SEQUENCE: 20 Asp Lys Ile Cys Ile Gly Tyr Gln Ser Thr Asn Ser Thr Glu Thr Val Asp Thr Leu Met Glu Thr Asn Ile Pro Val Thr His Ala Lys Asp Ile Leu His Thr Glu His Asn Gly Met Leu Cys Ala Thr Ser Leu Gly His Pro Leu Ile Leu Asp Thr Cys Ser Ile Glu Gly Leu Val Tyr Gly Asn Pro Ser Cys Asp Leu Leu Leu Gly Gly Arg Glu Trp Ser Tyr Ile Val 65 70 75 80 Glu Lys Pro Ser Pro Val Asn Gly Thr Cys Tyr Pro Gly Asn Phe Glu Asn Leu Glu Glu Leu Lys Thr Leu Phe Ser Arg Ala Ser Ser Tyr Gln Arg Ile Gln Ile Ile Pro Asp Thr Ile Trp Asn His Ser Tyr Thr Ser Gly Thr Ser Arg Ala Cys Ser Gly Ser Phe Phe Arg Ser Met Arg Trp Leu Ile Gln Lys Ser Gly Phe Tyr Pro Thr Gln Asp Ala Gln Tyr Thr Asn Thr Arg Gly Lys Ser Ile Leu Val Met Trp Gly Ile Asn His Pro Pro Asp Tyr Thr Val Gln Thr Asn Leu Tyr Thr Arg Asn Asp Thr Thr

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Thr	Ser	Val 195	Thr	Thr	Glu	Asp	Leu 200	Asn	Arg	Arg	Phe	Lys 205	Pro	Val	Ile
Ala	Pro 210	Arg	Pro	Leu	Val	Asn 215	Gly	Gln	Gln	Gly	Arg 220	Met	Asp	Tyr	Tyr
Trp 225	Ser	Ile	Leu	Гла	Pro 230	Asn	Gln	Thr	Ile	Arg 235	Phe	Arg	Ser	Asn	Gly 240
Asn	Phe	Ile	Ala	Pro 245	Trp	Tyr	Ala	His	Val 250	Leu	Ser	Gly	Gly	Ser 255	His
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Суа	Gln	Thr 275	Glu	ГЛа	Gly	Gly	Leu 280	Asn	Ser	Thr	Leu	Pro 285	Phe	His	Asn
Val	Ser 290	Pro	Tyr	Ala	Ile	Gly 295	Thr	Суз	Pro	Lys	Tyr 300	Val	Arg	Val	Lys
Ser 305	Leu	Val	Leu	Ala	Val 310	Gly	Leu	Arg	Asn	Thr 315	Pro	Ala	Arg	Ser	Ser 320
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Ala	Asp	Thr	Leu 20	Сүз	Ile	Gly	Tyr	His 25	Ala	Asn	Asn	Ser	Thr 30	Asp	Thr
Val	Asp	Thr 35	Val	Leu	Glu	Гла	Asn 40	Val	Thr	Val	Thr	His 45	Ser	Val	Asn
Leu	Leu 50	Glu	Asp	Гла	His	Asn 55	Gly	Lys	Leu	Суз	Lys 60	Leu	Arg	Gly	Val
Ala 65	Pro	Leu	His	Leu	Gly 70	ГЛа	Сүз	Asn	Ile	Ala 75	Gly	Trp	Ile	Leu	Gly 80
Asn	Pro	Glu	Суз	Glu 85	Ser	Leu	Ser	Thr	Ala 90	Ser	Ser	Trp	Ser	Tyr 95	Ile
Val	Glu	Thr	Pro 100	Ser	Ser	Asp	Asn	Gly 105	Thr	Суз	Tyr	Pro	Gly 110	Asp	Phe
Ile	Asp	Tyr 115	Glu	Glu	Leu	Arg	Glu 120	Gln	Leu	Ser	Ser	Val 125	Ser	Ser	Phe
Glu	Arg 130	Phe	Glu	Ile	Phe	Pro 135	Гла	Thr	Ser	Ser	Trp 140	Pro	Asn	His	Asp
Ser 145	Asn	Lys	Gly	Val	Thr 150	Ala	Ala	Суз	Pro	His 155	Ala	Gly	Ala	Lys	Ser 160
Phe	Tyr	Lys	Asn	Leu 165	Ile	Trp	Leu	Val	Lys 170	Lys	Gly	Asn	Ser	Tyr 175	Pro
Lys	Leu	Ser	Lys 180	Ser	Tyr	Ile	Asn	Asp 185	Lys	Gly	Гуз	Glu	Val 190	Leu	Val
Leu	-	Gly	TIO	ILia	114 -	D	<i>a</i>	Thr	Cor	Ala	Asp	Gln	Gln	Ser	Leu
	Trp	195	TTE	нтр	HIS	Pro	Ser 200	1111	DCI		T	205		501	
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Lys 225	Lys	Phe	Lys	Pro	Glu 230	Ile	Ala	Ile	Arg	Pro 235	Lys	Val	Arg	Asp	Gln 240	
Glu	Gly	Arg	Met	Asn 245	Tyr	Tyr	Trp	Thr	Leu 250	Val	Glu	Pro	Gly	Asp 255	ГЛа	
Ile	Thr	Phe	Glu 260	Ala	Thr	Gly	Asn	Leu 265	Val	Val	Pro	Arg	Tyr 270	Ala	Phe	
Ala	Met	Glu 275	Arg	Asn	Ala	Gly	Ser 280	Gly	Ile	Ile	Ile	Ser 285	Asp	Thr	Pro	
Val	His 290	Asp	Cys	Asn	Thr	Thr 295	Cys	Gln	Thr	Pro	Lys 300	Gly	Ala	Ile	Asn	
Thr 305	Ser	Leu	Pro	Phe	Gln 310	Asn	Ile	His	Pro	Ile 315	Thr	Ile	Gly	Lys	Cys 320	
Pro	Lya	Tyr	Val	Lys 325	Ser	Thr	rÀa	Leu	Arg 330	Leu	Ala	Thr	Gly	Leu 335	Arg	
Asn	Ile	Pro	Ser 340	Ile	Gln	Ser	Arg	Gly 345	Leu	Phe	Gly	Ala	Ile 350	Ala	Gly	
Phe	Ile	Glu 355	Gly	Gly	Trp	Thr	Gly 360	Met	Val	Asp	Gly	Trp 365	Tyr	Gly	Tyr	
His	His 370	Gln	Asn	Glu	Gln	Gly 375	Ser	Gly	Tyr	Ala	Ala 380	Asp	Leu	Lys	Ser	
Thr 385	Gln	Asn	Ala	Ile	390 390	Glu	Ile	Thr	Asn	Lys 395	Val	Asn	Ser	Val	Ile 400	
Glu	Lys	Met	Asn	Thr 405	Gln	Phe	Thr	Ala	Val 410	Gly	Lys	Glu	Phe	Asn 415	His	
Leu	Glu	Lys	Arg 420	Ile	Glu	Asn	Leu	Asn 425	Lys	Lys	Val	Asp	Asp 430	Gly	Phe	
Leu	Asp	Ile 435	Trp	Thr	Tyr	Asn	Ala 440	Glu	Leu	Leu	Val	Leu 445	Leu	Glu	Asn	
Glu	Arg 450	Thr	Leu	Asp	Tyr	His 455	Asp	Ser	Asn	Val	Lys 460	Asn	Leu	Tyr	Glu	
Lys 465	Val	Arg	Ser	Gln	Leu 470	Lys	Asn	Asn	Ala	Lys 475	Glu	Ile	Gly	Asn	Gly 480	
Сүз	Phe	Glu	Phe	Tyr 485	His	Lys	Суз	Asp	Asn 490	Thr	Суз	Met	Glu	Ser 495	Val	
Lys	Asn	Gly	Thr 500	Tyr	Asp	Tyr	Pro	Lys 505	Tyr	Ser	Glu	Glu	Ala 510	Lys	Leu	
Asn	Arg	Glu 515	Glu	Ile	Asp	Gly	Val 520	Lys	Leu	Glu	Ser	Thr 525	Arg	Ile	Tyr	
Gln	Ile 530	Leu	Ala	Ile	Tyr	Ser 535	Thr	Val	Ala	Ser	Ser 540	Leu	Val	Leu	Val	
Val 545	Ser	Leu	Gly	Ala	Ile 550	Ser	Phe	Trp	Met	Сув 555	Ser	Asn	Gly	Ser	Leu 560	
Gln	Сүз	Arg	Ile	Сув 565	Ile											
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Gly	Phe	Ile	Glu 20	Gly	Gly	Trp	Thr	Gly 25	Met	Val	Asp	Gly	Trp 30	Tyr	Gly	

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Tyr	His	His 35	Gln	Asn	Glu	Gln	Gly 40	Ser	Gly	Tyr	Ala	Ala 45	Asp	Leu	Lys
Ser	Thr 50	Gln	Asn	Ala	Ile	Asp 55	Glu	Ile	Thr	Asn	Lys 60	Val	Asn	Ser	Val
Ile 65	Glu	Lys	Met	Asn	Thr 70	Gln	Phe	Thr	Ala	Val 75	Gly	ГÀа	Glu	Phe	Asn 80
His	Leu	Glu	ГЛа	Arg 85	Ile	Glu	Asn	Leu	Asn 90	Lys	ГЛа	Val	Asp	Asp 95	Gly
Phe	Leu	Asp	Ile 100	Trp	Thr	Tyr	Asn	Ala 105	Glu	Leu	Leu	Val	Leu 110	Leu	Glu
Asn	Glu	Arg 115	Thr	Leu	Asp	Tyr	His 120	Asp	Ser	Asn	Val	Lys 125	Asn	Leu	Tyr
Glu	Lys 130	Val	Arg	Ser	Gln	Leu 135	Lys	Asn	Asn	Ala	Lys 140	Glu	Ile	Gly	Asn
Gly 145	Cys	Phe	Glu	Phe	Tyr 150	His	Lys	Cys	Asp	Asn 155	Thr	Сүз	Met	Glu	Ser 160
Val	Lys	Asn	Gly	Thr 165	Tyr	Aab	Tyr	Pro	Lys 170	Tyr	Ser	Glu	Glu	Ala 175	Lys
Leu	Asn	Arg	Glu 180	Glu	Ile	Aab	Gly	Val 185	Lys	Leu	Glu	Ser	Thr 190	Arg	Ile
Tyr	Gln	Ile 195	Leu	Ala	Ile	Tyr	Ser 200	Thr	Val	Ala	Ser	Ser 205	Leu	Val	Leu
Val	Val 210	Ser	Leu	Gly	Ala	Ile 215	Ser	Phe	Trp	Met	Cys 220	Ser	Asn	Gly	Ser
Leu 225	Gln	Сүз	Arg	Ile	Cys 230	Ile									
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Glu Leu Lys Ser Gly Tyr Lys Asp Trp Ile Leu Trp Ile Ser Phe Ala Ile Ser Cys Phe Leu Leu Cys Val Val Leu Leu Gly Phe Ile Met Trp Ala Cys Gln Arg Gly Asn Ile Arg Cys Asn Ile Cys Ile <210> SEQ ID NO 24 <211> LENGTH: 222 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Influenza virus <400> SEQUENCE: 24 Gly Leu Phe Gly Ala Ile Ala Gly Phe Ile Glu Gly Gly Trp Gln Gly Met Ile Asp Gly Trp Tyr Gly Phe His His Ser Asn Glu Gln Gly Ser Gly Tyr Ala Ala Asp Lys Glu Ser Thr Gln Lys Ala Ile Asp Gly Thr Thr Asn Lys Val Asn Ser Val Ile Asp Lys Met Asn Thr Gln Phe Glu Ala Ile Gly Lys Glu Phe Asn Asn Leu Glu Arg Arg Ile Glu Asn Leu Asn Lys Lys Met Glu Asp Gly Phe Leu Asp Val Trp Thr Tyr Asn Ala Glu Leu Val Leu Met Glu Asn Glu Arg Thr Leu Asp Phe His Asp Ser Asn Val Lys Asn Leu Phe Asp Lys Val Arg Leu Gln Leu Arg Asp Asn Ala Lys Glu Leu Gly Asn Gly Cys Phe Glu Phe Tyr His Lys Cys Asp Asn Glu Cys Met Glu Ser Ile Lys Asn Gly Thr Tyr Asp Tyr Pro Gln Tyr Ser Glu Glu Ala Arg Leu Asn Arg Glu Glu Ile Ser Gly Val Lys Leu Glu Ser Met Gly Ile Tyr Gln Ile Leu Ser Ile Tyr Ser Thr Val Ala Ser Ser Leu Ala Leu Ala Val Met Ile Ala Gly Leu Ser Leu Trp Met Cys Ser Asn Gly Ser Leu Gln Cys Arg Ile Cys Ile <210> SEQ ID NO 25 <211> LENGTH: 222 <212> TYPE: PRT <213> ORGANISM: Influenza virus <400> SEQUENCE: 25 Gly Leu Phe Gly Ala Ile Ala Gly Phe Ile Glu Gly Gly Trp Gln Gly Met Ile Asp Gly Trp Tyr Gly Phe His His Ser Asn Glu Gln Gly Ser Gly Tyr Ala Ala Asp Lys Glu Ser Thr Gln Lys Ala Ile Asp Gly Thr Thr Asn Lys Val Asn Ser Val Ile Asn Lys Met Asn Thr Gln Phe Glu

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Asn	Lys	Lys	Met	Glu 85	Asp	Gly	Phe	Leu	Asp 90	Val	Trp	Thr	Tyr	Asn 95	Ala
Glu	Leu	Leu	Val 100	Leu	Met	Glu	Asn	Glu 105	Arg	Thr	Leu	Asp	Phe 110	His	Asp
Ser	Asn	Val 115	Lys	Asn	Leu	Phe	Asp 120	Lys	Val	Arg	Leu	Gln 125	Leu	Arg	Asp
Asn	Ala 130	Lys	Glu	Leu	Gly	Asn 135	Gly	Cys	Phe	Glu	Phe 140	Tyr	His	Lys	Суз
Asp 145	Asn	Glu	Суз	Met	Glu 150	Ser	Ile	Lys	Asn	Gly 155	Thr	Tyr	Asp	Tyr	Pro 160
Gln	Tyr	Ser	Glu	Glu 165	Ala	Arg	Leu	Asn	Arg 170	Glu	Glu	Ile	Ser	Gly 175	Val
Lys	Leu	Glu	Ser 180	Met	Gly	Thr	Tyr	Gln 185	Ile	Leu	Ser	Ile	Tyr 190	Ser	Thr
Val	Ala	Ser 195	Ser	Leu	Ala	Leu	Ala 200	Val	Met	Val	Ala	Gly 205	Leu	Ser	Leu
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Asn Asn Glu Cys Met Glu Ser Val Lys Asn Gly Thr Tyr Asp Tyr Pro

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What is claimed is:

1. An isolated Vero cell infected with a recombinant reassortant influenza virus having PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments from a first influenza vaccine virus isolate, an influenza virus NA gene segment, and an influenza virus HA gene segment selected to encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2residues is that for H1 HA.

2. The isolated cell of claim **1**, wherein the NA gene segment and the HA gene segment in the reassortant virus are from the same influenza virus isolate and the HA gene segment in the reassortant virus is mutated to encode the 45 aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117.

3. The isolated cell of claim 1, wherein the PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments in the reassortant virus comprise sequences for at least one of the following: a PB1 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:2 50 or PB1 with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PB1 encoded by SEQ ID NO:2; a PB2 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:3 or PB2 with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PB2encoded by SEQ NO:3; a PA having the amino acid sequence encoded 55 by SEQ ID NO:1 or PA with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PA encoded by SEQ ID NO:1; a NP having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:4 or NP with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the NP encoded by SEQ ID NO:4; a M having the amino acid 60 sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:5 or M with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the M encoded by SEQ ID NO:5; or a NS having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:6 or NS with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the NS encoded by SEQ ID NO:6. 65

4. The isolated cell of claim **1**, wherein the PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments in the reassortant virus

comprise sequences for at least one of the following: a PB1 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:10 or PB1 with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PB1 encoded by SEQ NO:10; a PB2 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:11 or PB2 with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PB2 encoded by SEQ ID NO:11; a PA having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:12or PA with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the PA encoded by SEQ ID NO:12; a NP having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:13 or NP with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the NP encoded by SEQ ID NO:13; a M having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:14 or M with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the M encoded by SEO ID NO:14; or a NS having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:15 or NS with with at least 95% amino acid sequence identity to the NS encoded by SEQ ID NO:15.

- 5. The isolated cell of claim 1, wherein the HA gene segment is a H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, or H9 gene segment.
- **6**. An isolated recombinant reassortant influenza virus having enhanced replication in Vero cells, prepared by:
- providing a vector comprising sequences for a HA gene segment that does not encode an aspartic acid or glutamic: acid at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2;
- altering the residue at position 117 in HA2 in the HA to aspartic acid or glutamic acid;
- contacting cells with one or more vectors for expression of vRNAs for PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, M, HA and NA gene segments, wherein the vector for expression of HA vRNA comprises the sequences for a HA gene segment with the altered residue; and
- isolating from the cells recombinant reassortant influenza virus having enhanced replication in Vero cells.

7. The isolated recombinant virus of claim 6, wherein the HA gene segment is a H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, or H9 gene segment.

8. The isolated recombinant virus of claim **6**, wherein the NA gene segment and the HA gene segment are from the 5 same influenza virus isolate.

9. The isolated recombinant virus of claim 6, wherein the HA gene segment that does not encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117 in HA2 has an alanine, asparagine, arginine or lysine at position 117 in HA2. 10

10. The isolated recombinant virus of claim **6**, wherein the PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments are from the same influenza virus isolate.

11. The isolated recombinant virus of claim 6, wherein the 15PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments comprise sequences for a PB1 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:2; or PB1 with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the PB1encoded by SEQ ID NO:2; a PB2 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID 20 NO:3 or PB2 with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the PB2 encoded by SEQ ID NO:3; a PA having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:1 or PA with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the PA encoded by SEQ NO:1; a NP having the amino acid sequence encoded 25 by SEQ ID NO:4 or NP with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the NP encoded by SEQ ID NO:4; a M having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:5 or M with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the M encoded by SEQ ID NO:5; or a NS having the amino acid 30 sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:6 or NS with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the NS encoded by SEQ ID NO:6.

12. The isolated recombinant virus of claim 6, wherein the PA, PB1, PB2, NP, NS, and M gene segments comprise 35 sequences for a PB1 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:10 or PB1 with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the PB1encoded by SEQ ID NO:10; a PB2 having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:11 or PB2 with at least 90% amino acid 40 sequence identity to the PB2 encoded by SEQ ID NO:11; a PA having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:12 or PA with at least 05% amino acid sequence identity to the PA encoded by SEQ ID NO:12; a NP having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:13 or NP with at least 45 90% amino acid sequence identity to the NP encoded by SEQ ID NO:13; a M having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID NO:14 or M with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the M encoded by SEQ ID NO:14; or a NS having the amino acid sequence encoded by SEQ ID 50 NO:15 or NS with at least 90% amino acid sequence identity to the NS encoded by SEQ ID NO:15.

13. The isolated recombinant of claim **6**, wherein the cells are isolated avian cells.

14. The isolated recombinant virus of claim **6**, wherein the 55 cells are isolated mammalian cells.

15. The isolated recombinant virus of claim **14**, wherein the isolated mammalian cells comprise a Vero cell, an isolated human cell or an isolated hamster cell.

16. The isolated recombine of claim **6**, wherein the HA 60 gene segment is a H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, or H9 gene segment.

17. A method to prepare an influenza virus with enhanced replication in Vero cells, comprising:

providing a vector comprising a recombinant nucleic acid molecule comprising sequences for an influenza virus 65 HA gene segment from a first influenza virus isolate, which segment encodes an HA with an alanine, asparagine, arginine or lysine at position 117 in HA2, wherein the numbering for HA2 residues is that for H1 HA2; modifying the HA gene segment to encode an aspartic acid or glutamic acid at position 117in HA2, thereby

yielding a modified HA segment; and contacting a cell with a vector comprising promoter that

- yields full length, genomic influenza, virus RNA or its complement, operably linked to an influenza virus PA segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus PB1 segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus PB2 segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to the modified HA segment linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus NP segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus NA segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus M segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence, and a vector comprising a promoter that yields full length, genomic influenza virus RNA or its complement operably linked to an influenza virus NS segment DNA linked to a transcription termination sequence; and
- a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PA, a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PB1, a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus PB2, and a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NP, and optionally a vector comprising a promoter that vields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus HA, a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NA, a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus M1, a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus M2, or a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NS1 or a vector comprising a promoter that yields mRNA operably linked to a DNA segment encoding influenza virus NS2;

in an amount effective to yield infectious influenza virus. **18**. The method of claim **17**, wherein the PA, PB1, PB2,

NP, NS, and M segments are from an influenza vaccine virus isolate.19. The method of claim 17, wherein the NA segment and

the HA segment are from a different isolate than the PA, PB1, PB2, NR, NS, and M segments.

20. The method of claim 17, wherein the HA gene segment is a H1, H2, H3, H5,H7, or H9 gene segment.

* * * * *