



One Health actions to support pandemic preparedness: OFFLU contributes invaluable support to the WHO biannual vaccine composition meeting

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Since 2011, the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH, founded as OIE)/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Network of Expertise on Animal Influenza (OFFLU) has attended the World Health Organization (WHO) biannual vaccine composition meeting (VCM). Organized by the Global Influenza Surveillance and Response System (GISRS) team, the meeting discusses important data including from the animal health community, which provides valuable context on zoonotic avian and swine influenza cases in humans. Zoonotic diseases with pandemic potential caused by animal influenza viruses represent a persistent threat to the international community. OFFLU works towards helping to improve pandemic preparedness by strengthening the response of the FAO-WHO-WOAH Tripartite.

The OFFLU VCM team gathers data through the network in the form of sequences, surveillance data and antigenic characterization of avian and swine influenza viruses. This collaborative effort between animal influenza laboratories strengthens the data available for analysis and contributes to evidence based decision making.

OFFLU particularly acknowledges the role of the participating network of laboratories and collaborators for the significant and valuable contribution of sequence data and antigenic characterization of viruses. In addition to the work of the Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data (GISAI) network, the FAO Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) Global Animal Disease Information System (EMPRES-i+) and the WOAH World Animal Health Information System (WAHIS), OFFLU also thanks all colleagues involved in the data analyses and generation of its reports.

Data for 588 highly pathogenic avian influenza H5 sequences, 60 H7 low pathogenic avian influenza sequences and 89 H9 sequences were contributed to OFFLU by animal health laboratories in countries representing Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe.

The OFFLU avian influenza report is available here: <https://www.offlu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Avian-OFFLU-September2022-Final.pdf>

Data for 345 swine H1 sequences were contributed to OFFLU from animal health laboratories from 18 different clades and 116 swine H3 sequences from eight different clades from Asia, the Americas, Europe and Oceania.

The OFFLU swine influenza report is available here: <https://www.offlu.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/OFFLU-vcm-swine-2022c-final.pdf>

This September, after consultation, two new candidate vaccine viruses were proposed against avian origin viruses. These included for an H5 clade 2.3.4.4b-like virus and an H3N8-like human, avian lineage virus. There were no new candidate vaccine viruses proposed for swine origin viruses.

A recording of the WHO information meeting on the composition of influenza vaccines for use in the 2023 southern hemisphere influenza season can be found here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SX6S_G1Ulwc

The WHO “Antigenic and genetic characteristics of zoonotic influenza A viruses and development of candidate vaccine viruses for pandemic preparedness” report can be found here:

https://cdn.who.int/media/docs/default-source/influenza/who-influenza-recommendations/vcm-southern-hemisphere-recommendation-2023/202209_zoonotic_vaccinivirusupdate.pdf?sfvrsn=a91f123b_4