~~WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:~~CLAIMS

1. An isolated modified H5 protein selected from the group consisting of a modified H5 protein having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6 and a modified H5 protein having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:8.

2. The isolated modified H5 protein of claim 1 which is the modified H5 protein having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:6.

3. The isolated modified H5 protein of claim 1 which is the modified H5 protein having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:8.

4. A nucleic acid molecule encoding the modified H5 protein of claim 1.

5. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 4 having the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:5.

6. The nucleic acid molecule of claim 4 having the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:7.

7. A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6.

8. A host cell comprising the vector of claim 7.

9. A recombinant avian influenza virus comprising the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3.

10. The recombinant avian influenza virus of claim 9 comprising a nucleic acid molecule encoding the modified H5 protein.

11. The recombinant avian influenza virus of claim 10 having the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:5.

12. The recombinant avian influenza virus of claim 10 having the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:7.

13. A composition comprising the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3

14. A composition comprising the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12.

15. The composition of claim 13 or 14 which further comprises a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

16. The composition of any one of claims 13 to 15 which further comprises an adjuvant.

17. The composition of any one of claims 13 to 16 which is a vaccine.

~~18. A method of eliciting a protective immune response to an avian influenza virus in a subject comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 to a subject.~~

~~19. A method of treating or preventing a disease associated with an avian influenza virus comprising administering the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 to a subject.~~

~~20. A method of the treatment or prophylaxis of avian influenza virus infections comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 to a subject in need of such a treatment.~~

~~21. A method of preventing a subject from becoming afflicted with an avian influenza-associated disease comprising administering to the subject a prophylactically, therapeutically or immunologically effect amount of the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17.~~

~~22. A method of delaying the onset of or slowing the rate of an avian influenza-associated disease in an avian influenza-infected subject comprising administering to the subject a~~

~~prophylactically, therapeutically or immunologically effect amount of the composition of any one of claim 13 to 17.~~

~~23~~18. A vaccine comprising (i) one or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12 and (e) combinations thereof and (ii) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier and/or excipient.

~~24~~19. The vaccine of claim ~~23~~18, wherein the excipient is one or more adjuvants.

~~25. A method of eliciting a protective immune response to an avian influenza virus in a subject comprising administering a prophylactically effective amount of the vaccine of claim 22 or 23 to a subject.~~

~~26. A method of treating or preventing a disease associated with an avian influenza virus comprising administering the vaccine of claim 23 or 24 to a subject.~~

~~27. A method of the treatment or prophylaxis of avian influenza virus infections comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of the composition of claim 23 or 24 to a subject in need of such a treatment.~~

~~28. A method of preventing a subject from becoming afflicted with an avian influenza-associated disease comprising administering to the subject a prophylactically, therapeutically or immunologically effect amount of the vaccine of claim 23 or 24.~~

~~29. A method of delaying the onset of or slowing the rate of an avian influenza-associated disease in an avian influenza-infected subject comprising administering to the subject a prophylactically, therapeutically or immunologically effect amount of the vaccine of claim 23 or 24.~~

~~30~~20. The modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any

one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for use in eliciting a protective immune response in a subject.

~~31~~21. The modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for use in preventing a subject from becoming afflicted with an avian influenza-associated disease.

~~32~~22. The modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for use in delaying the onset of or slowing the rate of an avian influenza-associated disease in an avian influenza-infected subject.

~~33~~23. Use of the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for the manufacture of a medicament for eliciting a protective immune response in a subject.

~~34~~24. Use of the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for the manufacture of a medicament for treating or preventing a disease associated with an avian influenza virus in a subject

~~35~~25. Use of the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, the vector of claim 7, the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, the composition of any one of claims 13 to 17 or the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 for the manufacture of a medicament for delaying the onset of or slowing the rate of an avian influenza-associated disease in an avian influenza-infected subject.

~~36~~26. A kit for immunization of a subject to avian influenza comprising (i) one or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12, (e) the vaccine of claim ~~23~~18 or ~~24~~19 and (f) combinations thereof, and (ii) an instructional material for the use thereof.

~~37~~27. The kit of claim ~~36~~26 which further comprises an applicator.

~~38~~28. A method of making a vaccine using one or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12 and (e) combinations thereof.

~~39~~29. Use of one or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12 and (e) combinations thereof for vaccine development.

~~40~~30. One or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12 and (e) combinations thereof for use in vaccine development.

~~41. Use of one or more immunogenic agents selected from the group consisting of (a) the modified H5 protein of any one of claims 1 to 3, (b) the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 4 to 6, (c) the vector of claim 7, (d) the recombinant avian influenza virus of any one of claims 9 to 12 and (e) combinations thereof.~~