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(54) Title: FUNCTIONAL INFLUENZA VIRUS-LIKE PARTICLES (VLPS)

ATGAATCCAAATCAAAAGATAATAGCACTTGGCTCTGTTTCTATAACTATTGCGACAATATG
TTTACTCATGCAGATTGCCATCTTAGCAACGACTATGACACTACATTTCAATGAATGTACCA
ACCCATCGAACAATCAAGCAGTGCCATGTGAACCAATCATAATAGAAAGGAACATAACAGAG
ATAGTGCATTTGAATAATACTACCATAGAGAAGGAAAGTTGTCCTAAAGTAGCAGAATACAA
GAATTGGTCAAAACCGCAATGTCAAATTACAGGGTTCGCCCCTTTCTCCAAGGACAACTCAA
TTAGGCTTTCTGCAGGCGGGGATATTTGGGTGACAAGAGAACCTTATGTATCGTGCGGTCTT
GGTAAATGTTACCAATTTGCACTTGGGCAGGGAACCACTTTGAACAACAAACACTCAAATGG
CACAATACATGATAGGAGTCCCCATAGAACCCTTTTAATGAACGAGTTGGGTGTTCCATTTC
ATTTGGGAACCAAACAAGTGTGCATAGCATGGTCCAGCTCAAGCTGCCATGATGGGAAGGCA
TGGTTACATGTTTGTGTCACTGGGGATGATAGAAATGCGACTGCTAGCATCATTTATGATGG
GATGCTTACCGACAGTATTGGTTCATGGTCTAAGAACATCCTCAGAACTCAGGAGTCAGAAT
GCGTTTGCATCAATGGAACTTGTACAGTAGTAATGACTGATGGAAGTGCATCAGGAAGGGCT
GATACTAAAATACTATTCATTAGAGAAGGGAAAATTGTCCACATTGGTCCACTGTCAGGAAG
TGCTCAGCATGTGGAGGAATGCTCCTGTTACCCCCGGTATCCAGAAGTTAGATGTGTTTGCA
GAGACAATTGGAAGGGCTCCAATAGACCCGTGCTATATATAAATGTGGCAGATTATAGTGTT
GATTCTAGTTATGTGTGCTCAGGACTTGTTGGCGACACACCAAGAAATGACGATAGCTCCAG
CAGCAGTAACTGCAGGGATCCTAATAACGAGAGAGGGGGCCCAGGAGTGAAAGGGTGGGCCT
TTGACAATGGAAATGATGTTTGGATGGGACGAACAATCAAGAAAGATTCGCGCTCTGGTTAT
GAGACTTTCAGGGTCGTTGGTGGTTGGACTACGGCTAATTCCAAGTCACAAATAAATAGGCA
AGTCATAGTTGACAGTGATAACTGGTCTGGGTATTCTGGTATATTCTCTGTTGAAGGAAAAA
CCTGCATCAACAGGTGTTTTTATGTGGAGTTGATAAGAGGGAGACCACAGGAGACCAGAGTA
TGGTGGACTTCAAATAGCATCATTGTATTTTGTGGAACTTCAGGTACCTATGGAACAGGCTC
ATGGCCCGATGGAGCGAATATCAATTTCATGTCTATA**TAA**

(57) Abstract: Recombinant influenza virus proteins, including influenza capsomers, subviral particles, virus-like particles (VLP), VLP complexes, and/or any portions of thereof, are provided as a vaccine for influenza viruses. The invention is based on the combination of two vaccine technologies: (1) intrinsically safe recombinant vaccine technology, and (2) highly immunogenic, self-assembled protein macromolecules embedded in plasma membranes and comprised of multiple copies of influenza virus structural proteins exhibiting neutralizing epitopes in native conformations. More specifically, this invention relates to the design and production of functional homotypic and heterotypic recombinant influenza virus-like particles (VLPs) comprised of recombinant structural proteins of human influenza virus type A/Sydney/5/94 (H3N2) and/or avian influenza virus type A/Hong Kong/1073/99 (H9N2) in baculovirus-infected insect cells and their application as a vaccine in the prevention of influenza infections and as a laboratory reagent for virus structural studies and clinical diagnostics.

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