

Vaccines Developed For H5N1, H7N9 Avian Influenza Strains

A recent study with Kansas State University researchers details vaccine development for two new strains of avian influenza that can be transmitted from poultry to humans. The strains have led to the culling of millions of commercial chickens and turkeys as well as the death of hundreds of people.

The new vaccine development method is expected to help researchers make vaccines for emerging strains of avian influenza more quickly. This could reduce the number and intensity of large-scale outbreaks at poultry farms as well as curb human transmission.

It also may lead to new influenza vaccines for pigs, and novel vaccines for sheep and other livestock, said Jürgen Richt, Regents distinguished professor of veterinary medicine and director of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Center of Excellence for Emerging and Zoonotic Animal Diseases.

Richt and his colleagues focused on the avian influenza virus subtype H5N1, a new strain most active in Indonesia, Egypt and other Southeast Asian and North African countries. H5N1 also has been documented in wild birds in the U.S., though in fewer numbers.