The global antigenic diversity of swine influenza A viruses

Swine influenza presents a substantial disease burden for pig populations worldwide and poses a potential pandemic threat to humans. There is considerable diversity in both H1 and H3 influenza viruses circulating in swine due to the frequent introductions of viruses from humans and birds coupled with geographic segregation of global swine populations. Much of this diversity is characterized genetically but the antigenic diversity of these viruses is poorly understood. Critically, the antigenic diversity shapes the risk profile of swine influenza viruses in terms of their epizootic and pandemic potential. Here, using the most comprehensive set of swine influenza virus antigenic data compiled to date, we quantify the antigenic diversity of swine influenza viruses on a multi-continental scale. The substantial antigenic diversity of recently circulating viruses in different parts of the world adds complexity to the risk profiles for the movement of swine and the potential for swine-derived infections in humans.

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