This week in techniques

Approach	Summary	Licensing status	Publication and contact information
Markers			
Genetic markers underlying respiratory droplet transmission of influenza virus	Reverse genetics and guinea pig studies identified components of influenza virus that enable respiratory droplet transmission, which could aid epidemiological studies. The H1N1 influenza strain A/Sichuan/1/2009 is transmissible via respiratory droplets, whereas the H5N1 strain A/duck/Guangxi/35/2001 is not. Plasmid-based reverse genetics was used to generate 127 hybrids of the 2 influenza strains that retained H5 hemagglutinin. In guinea pigs, hybrids bearing the acidic polymerase and nonstructural protein gene of the H1N1 strain were shown to be transmissible via respiratory droplets. Next steps could include studies to determine how the H1N1 acidic polymerase and nonstructural protein enable respiratory droplet transmission of the influenza virus. SciBX 6(21); doi:10.1038/scibx.2013.534 Published online May 30, 2013	Patent and licensing status unavailable	Zhang, Y. <i>et al. Science</i> ; published online May 2, 2013; doi:10.1126/science.1229455 Contact: Hualan Chen, Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences, Harbin, China e-mail: hlchen1@yahoo.com