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ASIA EDITION

SK bioscience expands global reach with influenza vaccine exports to Southern Hemisphere

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SKYCellflu is the world's first cell culture-based influenza vaccine to obtain WHO PQ (Prequalification) certification



South Korea-based SK bioscience, a global innovative vaccine and biotech company committed to promoting human health from prevention to cure, has begun shipping its self-developed influenza vaccine, SKYCellflu, from its vaccine manufacturing facility L HOUSE to Southern Hemisphere markets, including Southeast Asia and Latin America. A total of 750,000 doses will be supplied in the first half of the year.

This shipment marks the company's second export of influenza vaccines for Southern Hemisphere use, following its initial export to Thailand last year. Although Thailand is geographically located in the Northern Hemisphere, it follows both WHO's flu vaccination guidelines for the Northern and Southern Hemispheres due to its north-south span.

The WHO forecasts circulating influenza strains and recommends vaccines twice a year - once for the Northern Hemisphere and once for the Southern Hemisphere. By increasing exports to the Southern Hemisphere, SK bioscience can maintain year-round vaccine production, improving supply stability and cost efficiency in the global market.

SKYCellflu is the world's first cell culture-based influenza vaccine to obtain WHO PQ (Prequalification) certification. This advanced technology offers key advantages over traditional egg-based production, including a reduced risk of viral mutations during manufacturing, resulting in better strain matching with circulating viruses. Additionally, cell culture technology allows for a shorter production timeline, enabling faster response during outbreaks or pandemics.

According to Grand View Research, the global influenza vaccine market is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 8.5% by 2030 from $7 billion in 2023. The company has expanded its contracts with countries in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, where seasonal influenza-related hospitalizations are increasing.

Beyond SKYCellflu, SK bioscience is actively expanding exports of its other proprietary vaccines. The company is increasing the supply of its varicella vaccine, SKYVaricella, to Latin America and Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, it is pursuing entry into Asian markets with its shingles vaccine, SKYZoster. To address high typhoid incidence rates in Africa and South Asia, SK bioscience is making an entry into these markets with its typhoid conjugate vaccine, SKYTyphoid, which received WHO PQ certification last year. SKYTyphoid provides strong immunogenicity and long-term protection with just a single dose.